

# Pocklington Town Council



## ***Pocklington Neighbourhood Plan Shaping the Future of Pocklington***

### ***Update – July 2020***

Our Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document created by local people to guide and shape development in the local area and its policies will be used in determining planning applications. A Steering Group has been voluntarily working together to develop a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Pocklington Town Council and the local community.

Pocklington Town Council decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan because it was concerned about the scale, quality and nature of development taking place in the town. An important early stage was the production in early 2019 of a *Townscape Character Assessment* for Pocklington. This study helped to build an understanding of the character and special distinctiveness of the town.

An extensive *Community Survey* then followed in April 2019. We had a great response with 963 survey returns (from 4,300 copies distributed to all households) and all the responses were analysed and summarised. These two key exercises allowed us to develop our early ideas about policies to guide the future development of Pocklington. These ideas were set out in a *Policy Directions* document issued in September 2019. All three reports are available on the Pocklington Town Council website.

Since then, the steering group has been developing a draft neighbourhood plan for public consultation. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic we have had to put our consultation plans on hold for the time being though we still hope to publish and advertise a *consultation draft* neighbourhood plan before the end of 2020 to get your comments. A revised plan would then be submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire Council for their consideration and independent examination. Consultation on the East Riding Local Plan Review is also programmed to take place later this year so we will all be able to have a look at both plans and provide our thoughts and views on these key documents that will shape the future of the town.

More detail on the above is set out in the rest of this newsletter which we hope you find informative. If you do have any questions please contact the Town Council.

### ***Background to neighbourhood planning***

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in 2012 by an Act of Parliament and are a voluntary means whereby towns and parishes can better influence planning and development in their locality. Central government lays down the steps involved in producing neighbourhood plans and these are published on the Internet. It does this to ensure that fair, effective and transparent processes have been followed in preparing a plan. These include ensuring that good consultation with the public and other stakeholders has taken place and that the plan does not conflict with the policies of the Local Plan produced by the parent Local Authority.

By now the steps requiring major input from the Pocklington project team have in the main been completed and although key steps still remain, they are ones that will in the most part be carried out by East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) and the planning inspector.

### ***Early 2019 – Townscape Character Assessment***

Using funds from Locality and Pocklington Town Council, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) commissioned the writing of a Townscape Character Assessment from Richard Wood Associates (RWA) and BG Design. The aim of the document they produced was to identify the character and distinctive features of Pocklington and to propose a framework and guidance that would identify the best directions for future development of the

town. Their Townscape Character Assessment report is available online on the Pocklington Town Council website.

### **Spring 2019 – Public Consultation Survey**

In April 2019 copies of a public consultation survey prepared by the NPSG were sent to all 4,300 households in the town along with requests to complete the survey online if possible. In the event, a total of 963 survey returns were received, the overwhelming majority of which had been submitted online. The survey contained about 30 questions, some of which were "tick box" with the remainder inviting free text responses.

The survey analysis company People and Places Ltd was employed to collect the returns, analyse them and produce a report, which along with a copy of the survey form itself, is available on the Pocklington Town Council website. The survey company gave a public presentation of results in June 2019. The information from this survey is the largest single collection of evidence available to the steering group in its work.

### **Summer 2019 – Policy directions**

With the data from the public consultation survey available and analysed, the project steering group commissioned RWA to produce a Policy Directions document that would propose a set of policy areas and the objectives that policies should meet.

The document developed these main policy areas for the Neighbourhood Plan in detail and related them to both the National Planning Policy Framework and the East Riding Council's own Local Plan. The areas proposed were: overall sustainability; housing; the environment; transport; economy and employment; and community, leisure and tourism. The document was accepted and published in September 2019 on the Town Council website.

### **Winter 2019 to July 2020 – producing the consultation draft**

From late 2019 to the present time the steering group has been working with RWA to produce the *consultation draft* of the neighbourhood plan. By March RWA had produced a complete consultation draft based upon the earlier policy directions document. Following this work, which had captured RWA's specialist and professional knowledge, development of the draft has been handled by the project steering group and a working draft has recently been discussed with the Town Council.

Alongside this, drafts have been shared with ERYC which have provided the steering group with detailed feedback. The project steering group continues to maintain contact with ERYC, in part because they are presently updating their Local Plan.

### **What are the next steps for the Neighbourhood Plan?**

- 1 Finalise the consultation draft.
- 2 Publish and advertise the consultation draft to local people and consult them for their comments (6 weeks).
- 3 Revise the consultation draft in the light of feedback and produce the *examination draft* of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4 Submit the examination draft to ERYC, after which the independent examiner they appoint will produce an examination report. If this is satisfactory, a *referendum draft* of the Plan will be produced and ERYC will run a *community referendum*, with a 50% acceptance threshold, which will be voted on by local people. Because of the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, government legislation excludes carrying this out before May 2021.
- 5 The referendum outcome being satisfactory, the plan will be adopted by ERYC ("made" in planning terminology) and will come into force with the same weight as any other planning policy of the East Riding.

The steering group is working to complete the above steps and to ensure that while doing this it remains in effective consultation with ERYC.