

Irchester Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan

Please Return this questionnaire by 12 noon, Monday 30th June 2014

This is an official consultation on your Neighbourhood Plan

It is independent and for the community

**It is in no way linked to other consultations
on development proposals in the village**



Your Community – Your Voice

www.irchesterparishnhp.com

What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

Over the last few months we have been reviewing your comments from our consultation events and surveys, and meeting with key stakeholders to understand the issues facing the parish and how the Neighbourhood Plan can shape the future of our area. Under the Localism Act 2011 the Irchester Parish Council acquired powers that will give local people opportunities to express their views on how they would like their area to be shaped by community needs and development in the period 2011-2031.

In 2012 the Parish Council held a public meeting in Irchester Village Hall. They asked for volunteers to come forward to form a Steering Group to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. In December 2012 the Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated. It encompasses the Parish taking in Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester.

The Steering Group have to develop the Plan in consultation with the community, but the Plan must conform to both local and national policies and frameworks. Much research work has been completed. The information gathered from any surveys, consultation and events will be used by the Steering Group to form the final Neighbourhood Plan document.

The completed Plan will be assessed by the Borough Council of Wellingborough who will send it to an Independent Inspector for approval. The Plan will go to a parish referendum. If more than 51% of the people vote for the Plan it will be adopted and will become part of the statutory development plan for the period up to 2031.

Vision Statement

Irchester Parish must maintain its character as a rural and vibrant community. It must continue to have a close relationship with its surrounding countryside. It must remain attractive to visitors and residents.

Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston must each have their own identity and provide community cohesion for all their inhabitants for current and future generations.

New Homes

A key issue for the Plan will be the need to accommodate additional housing. Irchester has to contribute to the amount of housing required by the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and the Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan. Because these higher level strategies are still under review, we do not yet know what the exact housing requirement for Irchester will be.

However, it is likely to be in the region of 150 homes in the period 2011-2031. This requirement has been confirmed by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. It is also worth noting that since 2011, 18 dwellings have either been completed or have planning permission in Irchester.

There are some brownfield sites in Irchester, but not enough. This means some greenfield land on the edges of the village will need to be developed. It should be noted that development at Knuston and Little Irchester cannot count towards the overall housing target for Irchester.

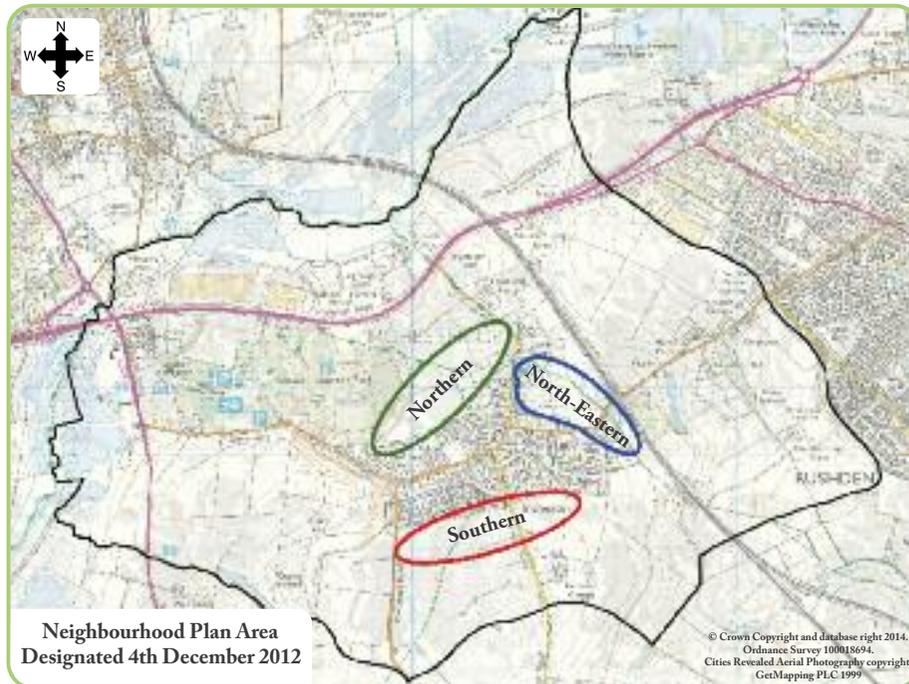
In recent months, Irchester has been subject to speculative planning applications for major residential development. Given this pressure, and the importance of this issue for the whole community, we have decided at this stage to concentrate our Neighbourhood Plan on the issue of housing growth.



Options

Saying no to any development is not an option. The Neighbourhood Plan offers the chance to have your say and to help shape the future of the Parish. This leaflet sets out the various options for housing growth in Irchester and asks for your views on the best places for new homes.

In the past few months we have engaged with key stakeholders including local landowners and have undertaken site analysis work to consider the opportunities and constraints of various sites. From this work we have identified the following options of 'broad directions of growth' for Irchester. Three development zone choices are indicated below. They are Northern, North-Eastern and Southern.



Each zone has planning development history. Our approach has been to look at each zone afresh, bearing in mind that our Neighbourhood Plan must conform with local and regional plans, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Stage 1

At this stage, we are asking you to give your views on 'broad locations of growth' for Irchester. It is not suggested that all of the land within the zones indicated will be brought forward for development. Only a proportion of the land within the zones will be developed.

In addition to housing, any development may also provide open space, infrastructure improvements and the potential for community facilities.

It is important to bear in mind that the plan will cover the period up to 2031 so the new homes may not come forward all at once.

Stage 2

Once we have gathered the initial views from the community on the preferred area of growth for Irchester, we will look at specific sites within these zones in more detail. We will then do a further round of consultation to seek your views on these sites.

Stage 2 will also ask your views on other issues for the Neighbourhood Plan, such as employment, recreation areas and local services.

Area Not Considered

We do not consider that land to the west of Irchester, south of Gypsy Lane, is suitable for housing. This is because the site faces several physical constraints on development. The area was part of a large ironstone extraction concern and has been subject to quarrying and subsequent reinstatement. There are ecological constraints in the form of Irchester's Old Lodge Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within the eastern boundary of the site. Access to this site has also been assessed and is constrained. The site is not well related to the existing settlement boundary and is on raised ground with no visual enclosure. Because of this, we consider development here would result in an unnatural extension of the village.

Windfall

In any settlement, there is always the possibility for some previously developed land to be redeveloped for houses in the future. These are said to be windfall sites. Examples for Irchester are the old factory sites which are now Mansfield Way and Biscay Close. Windfall sites are defined as sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. By their definition, these sites cannot be planned for and we cannot count them towards our overall housing requirement.

The Neighbourhood Plan can however shape any windfall development in the future, and ensure it is sympathetic to the community and is of a limited scale.

Key Achievements to Date

April 2012: Irchester Parish Council sets up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which decides to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) in August, 2012. The Steering Group continues to meet monthly to discuss options and objectives.

January 2013: Irchester Rural Housing Needs Assessment completed.

April-May 2013: Consultation events held in Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester, which community groups, businesses and residents attend.

June 2013: Regular meetings with Borough Council of Wellingborough and other NHP Groups to discuss current NHP issues. Activities include meetings with representatives of Northamptonshire County Council's Education and Highways Departments.

October-December 2013: NHP Grant applied for and received from the Community Development Foundation to pay for professional advice.

December 2013: NHP Consultants appointed.

February-April 2014: NHP Consultant have meetings with Key Stakeholders and Landowners.

April-May 2014: Preparation of Draft Assessments: Highways, Environmental (Landscape, Archaeology and Ecology), and an Irchester Character Appraisal of Historic Buildings.

Knuston and Little Irchester

There may also be the potential to support some additional development in Knuston or Little Irchester. This could be either for business use or housing.

It is important to note that because of their distance from Irchester village, development here would not count towards the overall housing requirement for the village. This means that development at Knuston or Little Irchester would be in addition to new development in Irchester village.



What to do with this form

Complete and return by 12 noon, Monday 30th June 2014.

Please drop it into the collection boxes available at:
Irchester Library (*letterbox available at all times*)
Irchester Co-op
Irchester Village Hall (*if you are attending an event*)
UR Local Express, Arkwright Road, Irchester
Knuston Hall

Or return in the pre-paid envelope provided, by
Monday 30th June 2014 to:

Irchester Library
High Street
Irchester
NN29 7AA

We will be holding drop-in events, so please come along
if you would like to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan:
Wednesday 18th June, Irchester Library, 4pm – 7pm
Thursday 26th June, Irchester Library 4pm – 7pm

For further information and help you may phone:
Nikki Daft,
Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator: 07525 909528
or email: parishclerk123@gmail.com
Geoff Armstrong,
Consultant: geoff.armstrong@arplanning.co.uk

If you would like more information on the Plan please visit
our website: www.irchesterparishnhp.com
A large print version of this questionnaire is available
for viewing at Irchester Library.

Now we need your views for Stage 1...

1) There are three zones for development in Irchester: Northern, North-Eastern and Southern. Please rank zones in your order of preference with Option 1 being your most preferred choice for development.

Option 1:

Option 2:

Option 3:

And the reasons why...

2) Do you have any additional suggestions as to where the required new housing should go?

3) Do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should support additional development at Knuston and Little Irchester?

4) Do you have any concerns about the impact of new housing?
How could these concerns be addressed?

5) What type/size of housing should be given priority? (*tick boxes*)

1 bedroom: 2 bedrooms: 3 bedrooms: 4 bedrooms:
5+ bedrooms: Affordable housing: Sheltered accommodation:
Flats: Bungalows: Houses:

Please continue overleaf...

6) New development presents the opportunity for some improvements to local facilities in the area. Now is the time through the Neighbourhood Plan when you can have your say as to which benefits you want new housing to bring. What local facilities do you think need improving in the Plan area?

Rank these local facilities in order of your priority (1 to 9) with '1' being your most important and '9' being your least important community improvement.

Local Facilities	Rank Importance (1 to 9)	Comments
Improvements to School		
Improvements to Health Services		
Improvements to Sports/Recreational Leisure Provision		
Improvements to Community Spaces (e.g. Meeting Halls)		
Shops and Pubs		
Public Transport		
Pedestrian and Cycle Links		
Public Green Spaces		
Other <i>(please state what)</i>		

Additional comments:

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