

Draft Elmsett Neighbourhood Plan Review Consultation

In December 2019 a Neighbourhood Plan for our parish was adopted by Babergh District Council after it was supported by over 90% of residents that turned out at a parish referendum. Since then, the Neighbourhood Plan has been used by them when making decisions on planning applications in the parish.

In November 2023, Babergh District Council adopted Part 1 of a new Joint Local Plan for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. Whereas the previous Local Plan allowed development, including housing, to take place outside of defined "Built-Up Area Boundaries" where a need could be demonstrated, the new Local Plan (Policy SP03) limits all but specific exceptions of development to take place within "Settlement Boundaries". However, the same policy states that "Outside of the settlement boundaries, development will normally only be permitted where... it is in accordance with a made Neighbourhood Plan...".

The current Elmsett Neighbourhood Plan states that "Proposals for development located outside the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB) or Rookery Road Hamlet Settlement Boundary will only be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there is an identified local need for the proposal and that it cannot be satisfactorily located within the BUAB/Settlement Boundary."

The consequence of the adoption of the new Local Plan is that our Neighbourhood Plan policy is now "out of sync" with many other neighbourhood plans across Babergh.

THIS CONSULTATION

The Review effectively replaces Chapter 's 4 (Planning Policy Context) and 7 (Planning Strategy) of the 2019 Plan with new and up-to-date chapters, as well as Policy EMST1 that will, if approved, bring our neighbourhood plan in-line with the newly adopted Local Plan and reduce the pressure for speculative development outside our settlement boundaries.

In a nutshell, we are amending two of the ten chapters of the 2019 Neighbourhood Plan to bring it up-to-date and bring the policy that determines where new development can take place in line with national and district policies. Without the update we are vulnerable to speculative housing development.

Elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan, reference is made to the 2012 version of the National Planning Policy Framework. The most recent version of this was published in December 2023 and the references will also be updated in the Review.

An eight-page leaflet has been produced and circulated to every home and known business in the parish. The leaflet contains all the information about the Review and can be downloaded here [Review leaflet](#)

Consultation lasts until **Monday 13 May**. It's your chance to say whether or not you support the proposed changes.

We would welcome your comments. These can be submitted by using the comments form at the back of the leaflet. Alternatively, you can comment online using the link below, which we would prefer if possible.

Modification Process

Government Planning Practice Guidance notes that there are 3 types of modification which can be made to a neighbourhood plan or order. The process will depend on the degree of change which the modification involves. The Parish Council has prepared a [Statement](#) setting out that the new Plan makes “material modifications” to the original Plan but which do not change the nature of the Plan. The Parish Council considers that it would require independent examination but not a new referendum. However, the Independent Examiner will make the ultimate decision on this matter.

What next

Following the completion of the consultation, we will review comments received, make any necessary amendments and then submit the new chapters and amended Policy EMST1 to Babergh District Council in order that it can proceed to examination and, if necessary, a parish referendum.

View the [2019 Plan](#)

View the new [Joint Local Plan](#)