

Witton Gilbert Neighbourhood Plan

Witton Gilbert Parish Council

2017 – 2032

STATUS

Vision, Objectives and Aspirations for Witton Gilbert
(A Consultation Document)

FOREWORD

“ This is not essential, however it could provide an opportunity to open the document with a ‘local’ flavor and tell the story by letting the reader know the background to the area, the reasons for preparing the plan and briefly summarising what the plan is in a local and friendly language.”

“ It is really a chance to enthuse the reader about the Neighbourhood Plan before it gets into the technical language and statutory aspects of the plan. The members of the Neighbourhood Plan group or the Chair of the Parish Council could sign it. It need only be about 1 or 2 sides that sets the scene...”

E.g. Witton Gilbert Parish Council decided to use new powers outlined in the Localism Act 2011 to apply for status to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Witton Gilbert.

The Parish had already prepared a Parish Plan for the area in xxxx but learned that a

Neighbourhood Plan would become part of the statutory planning documents used by Durham County Council to determine planning applications and help manage the use and development of land and buildings in the neighbourhood area over the next 15 years. Etc. etc.

CONTENTS

Introduction

National and Local Planning Policy Context

Witton Gilbert Today

Community Engagement

Key Issues

Vision and Objectives

The Plan Topics

- Sustainable Development
- Achieving Quality Design
- The Village Centre
- Housing
- Heritage
- Green Spaces
- Transport
- The Local Economy

Monitoring and Review

Appendices

“ These are some of the key headings that will eventually end up being populated in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. It may be worthwhile to put the sections in here now, even though some will have more information attached to them than others. The document can “grow as you go”

1. INTRODUCTION

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

1.0 A Neighbourhood Plan is a new tool included as a part of new measures in the Localism Act 2011 that allows a Parish or Town Council or a Neighbourhood Forum, where there is no such council in place, the opportunity to apply to their Local Planning Authority (LPA) to prepare a neighbourhood level set of planning policies and proposals that will be used to determine planning applications by the LPA over the next 15 to 20 years.

1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will form part of the development plan for the area and applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with this unless material considerations indicate otherwise etc. etc.

“ Further sections that can be added include:

- *Who prepared the plan?*
- *What is the neighbourhood area (Map, boundary etc.)?*
- *LPA information*
- *Formal Designation, when?*
- *Plan period*
- *What stage has been reached in the statutory process?*
- *Purpose of this particular document*

- *The Process*
- *Why we decided to prepare the Plan*

2. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

“ This section is where the plan includes an explanation of the National Planning Policy Framework. What does the NPPF say about the importance of sustainable development? What does the Framework say about neighbourhood planning?

What is the adopted Local Plan for the area? The WGNP needs to consider what particular Local Plan policies and proposals apply to the neighbourhood area. What is the status of the emerging County Durham Plan? There will be a need to briefly outline the overall objectives in the emerging Local Plan, the strategic policies and proposals that the WGNP has had regard to when preparing the plan. What does the emerging Local Plan say about your area?

What are the housing requirements, any locations? Are there any other planning issues that affect the neighbourhood area?

Any significant planning applications currently being determined?

It will be also important to Provide a brief explanation of what the Basic Conditions are...”

3. WITTON GILBERT TODAY

“ This section allows the plan to “paint a spatial portrait” of the area and will form part of the evidence base...

This section could include things like: -

Population today

- *Profile of the neighbourhood area in terms of size and age*
- *Ethnic background*
- *Where do people work? Inward or outward commuting, home based, unemployment levels*
- *Past and forecast trends in terms of demographic change*

Housing today

- *Existing housing stock in terms of type, age and condition*
- *Housing stock in terms of tenure e.g. percentage of market housing, council/social housing or private housing*
- *Housing need over the plan period in terms of scale, mix and tenure*

- *Any affordability issues?*
- *Describe the availability, suitability and viability of housing land e.g. floodplain issues*

Business today

- *Businesses located in the neighbourhood area*
- *Anticipated business and employment trends in the future*
- *Telecommunications, quality of broadband*
- *Any barriers to future investment and development?*
- *Quantity and quality of land required for future economic activity*
- *Supporting the rural economy e.g. agricultural diversification, leisure and tourism, activities, conversions of buildings*

The Village Centre today

- *Role and function of the Village Centre*
- *Thriving or in decline?*

- *Any current problems e.g. accessibility, car parking*
- *Capacity and ability to attract investment*

Our Infrastructure today

- *The quality and capacity of infrastructure within the neighbourhood area (e.g. transport and car parking, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy, telecommunications, utilities, waste, health facilities, social care, education facilities, flood risk)*
- *Future demands and anticipated trends*

The Natural Environment today

- *Any landscape character assessment undertaken or landscape designations*
- *Natural features in the neighbourhood area e.g. topography, watercourses, trees and hedgerows*

- *Any important wildlife habitats and biodiversity e.g. any national or local designations such as SSSIs or Local nature Reserves*
- *Agricultural land quality*
- *Any geological interest*
- *Evidence of brownfield land, contamination issues, light pollution, noise and tranquility issues.*

Heritage today

- *Any important heritage assets?*
- *Has a historic character assessment been undertaken?*
- *The quality of the built environment and local distinctiveness e.g. settlement pattern, linear or radial village, design characteristics, building materials*
- *Conservation areas and Listed Buildings*

All of the above should be properly referenced quoting the source and date of the information.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement has been at the heart of the Witton Gilbert Neighbourhood Plan preparation since the process started. The volunteers involved in helping prepare the plan have always signed up to a work ethic that “the plan is your plan and not the Parish Councils” etc. etc.

“The Consultation Statement will become the detailed account of how the community were involved in the plan preparation process. The Statement would normally be included as a separate document

This section therefore only need to briefly summarise:

- *Details of people and organisations consulted*
- *Details of how they were consulted*
- *Summary of the main issues and concerns they raised*
- *How these concerns were addressed*

The aim of this section included in the plan is to highlight the salient points that have emerged and influenced your decision making...

5. KEY ISSUES

“This section will bring together the various aspects of the evidence gathering described in the 3 previous sections:

- *Section 2 National and Local Planning Policy Context*
- *Section 3 Witton Gilbert Today*
- *Section 4 Community Engagement*

This section should summarise the issues that have emerged in the evidence gathering so far and consider any issues likely to emerge over the plan period that could have an affect on the Neighbourhood Plan.

This section should be identifying, what the priorities are for the NP and how the local community have shaped these priorities

PLANNING ISSUES (Potential Policies and Proposals)

NON-PLANNING ISSUES (Potential Projects)

6. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

“The Neighbourhood Plan should set out the local communities overall vision for the neighbourhood area. The vision will be an overarching statement, or series of statements, describing your area in 15-20 years time. It may cover what the area will look like, what facilities will be provided and what it will be like to live and work in.

The objectives will be more specific and will set out what you want to achieve in order to help make the ‘vision’ a reality. For each element of the vision there may be one or more objectives, depending on the different priorities the community have highlighted.

Detailed policies and actions can then follow on from these objectives.

Here are some key points to consider when undertaking this exercise:

- *Look ahead to the end of the plan period*
-

- *Reflect on what will happen if you do nothing*
- *What do you want your area to be like?*
- *Consider how you might achieve this*
- *Assess different approaches to reaching this end*
- *Describe what the neighbourhood should look like at the end of the plan period*
- *Your Vision should be locally distinctive not just an “anywhere vision”*
- *Concise and easy to understand*
- *Have you identified objectives to deliver that vision?*
- *These should be broad statements of intent*
- *The objectives should link back to the issues*

This then provides you with a framework on which to develop policies and proposals to achieve each of these objectives...

7. THE PLAN TOPICS

“For each topic the final draft plan will need to:

- Provide an introduction to that particular topic and its relationship to the Vision and Objectives.*
- It will need to outline the policy intention i.e. an explanation of what the policy is trying to achieve*
- It will need to contain the policy itself which will be used to assess planning applications*
- It will need to have supporting justification i.e. some explanation of the reasoning for the policy and evidence supporting this policy (summarising the main points from the evidence base)*

For the purposes of this consultation document, by completing all of the above sections thoroughly the plan will contain the plan topics and an aspiration on what the plan would like to achieve through a

policy based on the Vision and Objectives rather than a draft policy at this stage.

Once the community have been able to see the Vision, Objectives and Aspirations and the NP group have consulted on these using different forms of engagement there will be a basis on which to start developing any relevant policies and proposals following this.

8. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9. ACHIEVING QUALITY DESIGN

10. THE VILLAGE CENTRE

11. HOUSING

12. HERITAGE

13. GREEN SPACES

14. TRANSPORT

15. THE LOCAL ECONOMY

16. MONITORING AND REVIEW

17. APPENDICES

