

PERASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

SUFFOLK COASTAL LOCAL PLAN

RESPONSE TO THE FIRST DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – JULY 2018

Peasenhall Parish Council has recently considered the contents of the draft local plan as far as it relates to the parish and to some extent the neighbouring parish of Sibton. Following public consultation on the plan and debate within the parish council the following representations are put forward for consideration.

- It is essential that there is proper representation of the extent of the village of Peasenhall on the policies maps. The plan on page 42 of the policies maps currently excludes most of the Mill Road area of the village. This area contains a large area of housing and sites currently being developed or with existing planning permission. This area is an integral part of the settlement and should therefore be included in the policy map to give a full picture.
- The revised categorisation of settlements in the draft plan places Peasenhall as a small village. This revision from Key Service Centre is disputed bearing in mind the facilities that the village has to offer in terms of shops and businesses. Designation as a small village has a significant impact in terms of the applied proposed development policies and this could in turn diminish opportunities for development that may assist in supporting current facilities. The loss of the primary school may have been the critical criteria for the proposed designation but consideration should take into account other relevant factors. Is it right to say that the range of service provision in Peasenhall is 'modest' and that it generally serves only the needs of residents and not a wider catchment? Page 78 para 5.13. What larger villages such as Bramfield, Orford or Yoxford can demonstrate that it has better facilities for residents and passing trade than Peasenhall? It is requested that the designation of Peasenhall as a small village be reviewed.
- It would appear that despite support from the parish council for a number of sites put forward for development, there are no changes proposed to the settlement boundary which makes it difficult for the village to grow in order to protect the existing facilities such as the shop, post office etc. On the last local plan consultations, the parish council made a request for the Mill Road area of the village to be considered for its own development boundary in order to provide greater control over proposed developments. This was not pursued by the District Council and the result has been more housing permissions that in turn exacerbates the present highway difficulties particularly at the A1120 junction with Mill Hill.
- What is the assessment of the District Council of the future of Peasenhall in the context of the Vision for Suffolk Coastal 2016 to 2036 particularly in terms of the first sentence "By 2036 the quality of life for everyone growing up in, living in, working in and visiting will have been substantially improved through a healthy economy, a healthy population and a healthy environment". How will the planning policies that may apply to the village should the plan be approved in its current form achieve this vision. Councillor Fryatt at the briefing meeting on 18 July made some interesting remarks about the proposed plan namely that:-
 - The plan will help build Communities
 - If you want houses say so
 - Policies can be relaxed
 - Look for opportunities in site allocation

Bearing in mind that Peasenhall may now be classified as a small village for planning purposes, the very tight settlement boundary proposed and the possible restrictive policies that will in due course be applied to any planning proposals, how can the views expressed be achieved? It is difficult to see the

necessary flexibility in the current plan proposals that will allow future development in the village.

- The policy approach to small villages as it relates to Peasehall is flawed in that there are no new housing allocations and due to the very tight and therefore restrictive settlement boundary, less likelihood of any new development taking place on potential infill sites. At the 'Call for Sites' stage, the parish council provided an assessment of all those sites put forward, some supported others not. In the assessment of site suitability, many of the sites put forward are considered as potentially suitable for development with varying degrees of identified constraints. However, none of the sites have made it into the proposed plan. The parish council would like to see a full re-appraisal of suitability prior to the publication of the next draft and therefore request site meetings to explain our views. On a point of clarification, can site 1042 be described as land adjacent to Farthings Sibton Road, as its present description is causing confusion in the village.
- Table 3.5 as far as it relates to Peasehall and part Sibton does not appear to be up to date and needs to be changed.
- It would appear from para 5.16 that it might be easier to secure development in the countryside where it can 'sustain thriving rural communities'. The policy on Clusters in the countryside appears to be less restrictive than those applied to small villages para 5.21 page 80. How can this be justified in the context of such restrictive policies for development where there is a strictly defined settlement boundary as is the case with Peasehall. It is surely better to promote development in well-established settlements than piecemeal within the countryside and on this basis we would ask that the two policies be reviewed so as to enable suitable development in suitable places.
- The strategy for Rural Areas – page 250 – says that it is important to ensure that rural communities continue to be vibrant and that a key part of the strategy is around sustaining and supporting rural communities. Peasehall is well related to the existing infrastructure being on the A1120 and only a few miles from the A12 and in the policy it is stated that such areas present greater opportunities for new development. This policy does not fit with others that are primarily designed to severely restrict development in Peasehall.
- Tourism is a vital part of the economy of the region. Visitors appreciate the nature of the village and its facilities and these must be protected. Growth is part of this protection to support its existing facilities so important for tourism and of course its residents.
- The prospect of the 'Garden Neighbourhoods' proposed for Saxmundham and Felixtowe, may not appeal to all potential house hunters, which is why a more diverse range of development proposals in suitable villages should be encouraged to enhance the nature of housing opportunity. It is an easy option to designate large areas for development to satisfy Government targets but is it the right policy for housing choice. The restrictive policies that will apply to Peasehall in terms of future development will not enable the village to contribute to housing choice particularly as it has much to offer in terms of its location, shops and other facilities. Is the sustainability of smaller communities being sacrificed through the creation of these 'Garden Neighbourhoods'.
- Concern has been expressed about the ability of the current infrastructure, roads, sewerage, water, electricity to cope with the new large developments proposed in the draft plan. The County Highways and utility companies need to properly plan and implement improvements prior to development taking place. The sewerage system for Peasehall on particular is already in need of improvement.

Mick Trovell
Peasehall Parish Council Clerk.
6 September 2018