



Downham Market Neighbourhood Plan Update

February 2019

Housing target slashed in half

Updated Government figures mean fewer new houses

The number of new homes needed in Downham Market has been reduced following updated Government figures provided to the Borough Council in Kings Lynn.

Last year, the Town Council consulted residents on plans to build 700 homes in the town. According to the latest figures a minimum of 320 homes* will be needed and approved; these will be phased over the next fifteen years, although it is likely that most will be built on a small number of sites.

The Borough Council is expected to announce that it will build 11,100 homes in the plan period up to 2036; most of these will be built in Kings Lynn. National policy means that the number of new homes to be built under a Neighbourhood Plan is determined by the Borough council, so the Town Council cannot alter this figure. The original figures put forward by the Borough council suggested we would need to find sites for 700 homes, but the council have since reduced this figure.



The consultation we carried out last year showed that the majority of Downham Market residents felt that Downham Market does not need more housing. We will therefore have to consider carefully how these new homes are designed and located so that they have the minimum impact on the town.

**The 320 homes does not include planning permission already granted.*

Thumbs up for Downham Market's vision

The consultation carried out in September 2018 gave a positive thumbs up to the Vision for Downham Market to be set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is seen to be supported by the community, so this vote of confidence is important as we develop the plan.

Now the Vision has been set, the Neighbourhood Plan group will set down some specific objectives to deliver the Vision, and planning policies to deliver these objectives will form the Draft Plan.

Downham Market: Your Vision, Your Town, Your Future

How does a Neighbourhood Plan work?

Downham Market Town Council have been writing a Neighbourhood Plan for the town for some time, but how does the process actually work?

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in 2011 and they allow local communities more power in how planning applications are decided. The Downham Market Neighbourhood Plan will form a part of the wider Development Plan for Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, meaning that any planning application in the town will have to conform with both the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan.

The Town Council held a consultation in September last year to find out what the town's priorities were on Key Issues, such as housing, services and transport.

Having listened to what the people of Downham Market want, the council is now drafting a set of planning policies to deliver it.

The next stage will be to consult on a Draft Neighbourhood Plan later this year, before submitting the Draft Plan to independent examination and public referendum to be approved by the majority of voters. Once all the stages are passed, the Borough Council adopts the plan and it is known as a "made" plan.

Once the plan has been made, any planning application in the town will have to abide by the policies in the plan, as well as the policies of the Borough Council.

Support for new shops tops survey responses

New retail and fashion shops topped the survey responses when the Town Council asked what new businesses would be suitable for Downham Market.

Proposals for retail or fashion stores were supported by the most respondents, with new IT or high tech businesses coming in second place. New restaurants or cafes were the third most requested new businesses, just pipping banks and a supermarket or a cinema into fourth, fifth and sixth places.

While planning policies cannot open shops of a particular brand or style, we can promote these in the supportive text. It is also useful for the Town Council to know what the town would like to see more generally.

KEEP IN TOUCH

This newsletter was produced by Downham Market Town Council to keep you up to date with our Neighbourhood Plan process. If you'd like more information, or to be kept up to date regularly, please email info@downhammarkettc.co.uk.



Planning Direct is proud to work with Downham Market Town Council to help deliver their Neighbourhood Plan.



"More trains" call from Downham Market residents

Residents of Downham Market have called for more trains in order to help them make the switch to more sustainable transport.

The Town Council's survey revealed that almost 6% of respondents use public transport on a daily basis, with a further 7.5% using public transport more than three times a week. When asked what would encourage more use of public transport, the top answer was "more trains".

Proposals for improvements included more direct links to Norwich, Cambridge, Peterborough, Wisbech and Ely, as well as a better service to Stansted Airport - with earlier and later trains.

Passenger numbers at Downham Market have increased by 111% since April 2002 and rail improvements are a key area for survey respondents.