

It's time to make your views known about the future of your town

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have published a new Local Plan consultation document. The Local Plan will establish where development will take place up until 2036 and how big the development will be.

This is a first stage in the process of agreeing a Local Plan which will take a couple of years to complete. At this stage the District Council has put forward some options. These include some strategic options about the distribution of development - concentrate around Ipswich, along the A14 corridor or around Market Towns. Eye is identified as a Market Town. It also puts forward some site options. For Eye it identifies three potential sites which could see 600 new homes being built (290 of these already have planning permission).

The Town Council will be responding to the District Councils on these issues on behalf of the Town and its response will be based on your views. This is how you can find out about the proposals and make your views known:

- A summary of the Local Plans key proposals that affect Eye is on the Town Council's website – www.eyesuffolk.org
- The full consultation document is on the District Council website at www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/joint-local-plan-consultation-document
- The Town Council will be holding a drop-in event at the Town Hall on the 20th September between 15.30 and 19.00 where you can see the local plan proposals and leave your comments.
- You can also record your views by emailing Wendy Alcock, the Town Clerk, at townclerk@eyesuffolk.org

The Local Plan Consultation Document encourages towns and villages to prepare a neighbourhood plan. Neighbourhood Development Plans become part of the Local Plan and the policies contained within them are then used in the determination of planning applications. They are prepared by the Town or Parish Council with the full involvement of local people. In spite of having its proposal to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan rejected by MSDC in 2014, Eye Town Council thinks that now would be a good time to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan to influence the new draft Local Plan. Conditions may be more conducive to MSDC accepting this as a proposal and not to respond to this could weaken the town's say in our future built environment. The council will consider whether to prepare one at its meeting on the 20th September. Please let us know whether you support this by using the voting buttons on the website or by sending an email to townclerk@eyesuffolk.org.

Finally, the Town Council is considering whether or not to propose that some of the land it owns should be included in the Local Plan possibly for development either instead of or as well as the sites in the District Council's consultation document. This site is at Victoria Mills just north of the allotments. It is currently used by a farmer for crops. It is surrounded on three sides by land which already has permission for housing and it is unlikely to be useful for agriculture once this housing development is completed. Housing is the most likely type of development and because the site is owned by the Town Council there are two potential advantages compared to privately owned sites. First the type of development can be designed to meet local needs - for example, low cost housing for younger people. Second, all of the financial benefit would come back into the Town compared to a privately owned site where only a small part of the profit benefits the Town through developer contributions. There is some archaeological interest in the land which may restrict or prevent development and the Town Council is currently having this investigated. The inclusion of this site or not will be considered in the consultation on the Local Plan and in the Neighbourhood Plan if you support one being prepared.

Eye Town Council

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