



## Rural Area Working Party 15 June 2011

### Rural Vision 2031: Issues consultation summary

#### Summary

1. On 13 January 2011, the Rural Area Working Party narrative item on the process for preparing the Rural Vision 2031 document and asked for suggestions for engaging local people in the process (Minute 40 refers).
2. The initial public engagement events took place between 3 March and 30 May 2011. A wide variety of consultation methods were used that conformed to the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF).
3. The local community and stakeholders were invited to submit their views on the issues in the rural area and their vision for the future for the rural area.
4. A summary of the events which took place during the consultation period is attached for information as Appendix A. Comments received during the consultation period are attached as Appendix B and the Working Party is asked to note comments.
5. The Working Party is asked to **NOTE** the comments arising from the consultation.

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to inform the Working Party of the outcomes of the Rural Vision 2031 issues consultation.**

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council prepared a vision document for the whole of St Edmundsbury in 2005 called Vision 2025. It was designed to give a clear and shared vision of *"how we see the beautiful and successful area of St Edmundsbury in 20 years' time"*. It was prepared after talking to a range of partner organisations and the local community to identify the main challenges that needed dealing with by 2025. Vision 2025 now needs looking at again to see what has changed and to extend the period that it covers. Three documents called Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031, Haverhill Vision 2031 and Rural Vision 2031 will do this.

- 2.2 Vision 2031 is a new project to create a community-led shared vision for each part of the Borough for the next 20 years. It considers the whole of each area and what makes it function, as well as what new development will be needed to meet the future needs. This wide ranging exercise will take over a year to complete and covers all the service issues that need to be addressed by 2031. The first step in the process was to consult the community on issues and what their vision is for their area.
- 2.3 On 13 January 2011, the Rural Area Working Party noted the narrative on the process for preparing the Rural Vision 2031 document on 18 January 2011, the Sustainable Development Working Party recommended to the Cabinet that the Issues consultation on Rural Vision 2031 should commence (Sustainable Development Working Party Minute 50 refers). This recommendation was endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 January 2011 (Cabinet Minute 104 refers) and consultation took place between 3 March and 30 May 2011.
- 2.4 The consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement for the preparation of Local Development Framework documents as adopted by the Council on 26 February 2008 following examination by a government Planning Inspector.

### **3. Rural Vision 2031 and the Local Development Framework**

- 3.1 Between April and June 2010 the Council consulted on the Rural Site Allocations Preferred Options document which set out the Council's preferred development sites in the rural area. Since then a number of changes including the new Government in May 2010, the impending Localism Bill and some changes to National Planning Policy have meant that the process for preparing this document needed to be reviewed.
- 3.2 The comments received in 2010 in relation to the proposed sites in the Rural Site Allocations Preferred document will be reviewed and will form part of the evidence base in the preparation of the Rural Vision 2031 document. As well as allocating sites for development in the rural area it is important to note that the Rural Vision will encompass wider issues to allow a vision for the rural areas to be developed as outlined in paragraph 2.1 above.

### **4. Issues Consultation Events**

- 4.1 Set out below is a summary of the advertising and publicity which has taken place for the Rural Vision 2031 issues consultation:-
- (a) launch event at Rougham Village Hall on 2 March 2011 which was followed by a number of consultation drop-in events across the rural area (Appendix A refers);
  - (b) dedicated website which contains links to background information and fact sheets by town area and theme;
  - (c) freepost postcards distributed across the rural area, at consultation events and via the dedicated website to allow people to highlight the big issues in the rural area and their vision for their area 2031;

- (d) freepost fact finding questionnaires distributed across the rural area, at consultation events, and via the dedicated website to gather information on how people use and live in the villages and use the two towns;
- (e) LDF Newsletter advertising all consultations sent by email to 1700 people/organisations;
- (f) letter to statutory consultees informing of consultation dates in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement;
- (g) details of all events given to Parish Councils for distribution in local newsletters/magazines where possible;
- (h) advertising of consultation drop in events in the Members Bulletin (27 January and 11 February);
- (i) theme of the week updates on the St Edmundsbury twitter site to stimulate interest and link through to the Vision 2031 websites;
- (j) advertising of events in local newspapers;
- (k) posters advertising drop in events put in strategic locations around the villages;
- (l) use of external parties websites/Twitter sites to link to the Vision 2031 websites including Homelink, The Theatre Royal and Art Gallery;
- (m) packs of questionnaires, postcards and a poster provided at each Polling Station on election day for display; and
- (n) engagement with County Upper and King Edwards Schools and Horringer Court Middle School (the latter two arranged and still to take place).

## **5. Consultation results**

- 5.1 Whilst consultation postcards and questionnaires are still being submitted as a result of the publicity on the Election Day, to date a total of 102 freepost postcard responses have been received in relation to the consultation. Six of these were received via the Council's dedicated web-site. A summary of the responses received is attached at Appendix B.
- 5.2 A total of 188 'fact finding' questionnaires have been received in response to the consultation. 153 were received by post and 35 were received online via the website. These will be analysed over the next few weeks and the information used to assist us in the provision of services during the next stage of the Vision 2031 project.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 Officers are currently working up the draft document for consideration by the Working Party for a period of public consultation in late summer, taking into consideration the comments received in relation to this issues consultation. Officers will make a presentation to the Working Party outlining the process, timeline and the next steps of the project.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Working Party is requested to **NOTE** the outcomes from the Rural Vision 2031 issues consultation, as detailed in Appendix B to Report C20.

For further information, please contact:-

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## Rural Vision 2031 events

## Council run events

Date/Time	Venue	Approximate number of attendees
Thursday 3 March 2011, 3.30pm - 6pm	Rural Vision 2031 Launch Event, Rougham Sports Hall	
Monday 9 May 4pm – 7pm	Chedburgh Village Hall	15 attendees
Monday 9 May 4pm – 7pm	Rougham Sports Hall	5 attendees
Wednesday 11 May 4pm – 7pm	Cavendish Memorial Hall	9 attendees
Wednesday 11 May 4pm – 7pm	Great Barton Village Hall	15 attendees
Monday 16 May 4pm – 7pm	Hopton Village Hall	17 attendees
Monday 16 May 4pm – 7pm	Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre	12 attendees
Wednesday 18 May 4pm – 7pm	Ingham, The Nave, The Church	9 attendees
Wednesday 18 May 4pm – 7pm	Great and Little Whelnetham Village Hall	12 attendees
Thursday 19 May 4pm – 7pm	Barningham Village Hall	13 attendees
Thursday 19 May 4pm – 7pm	Great and Little Thurlow Village Hall	2 attendees
Tuesday 24 May 4pm – 7pm	Hundon Village Hall	18 attendees
Tuesday 24 May 4pm – 7pm	Risby Village Hall	12 attendees
Thursday 26 May 4pm – 7pm	Bardwell Primary School	7 attendees

## Rural Vision 2031 'Issues' launch event feedback

### Introduction

Initial feedback was obtained from delegates at the Rural Vision 2031 launch event on 3 March 2011. Invited delegates included statutory providers, local businesses and those actively involved in the community.

Issues raised have been summarised by theme as follows:

The number of people who agreed/disagreed with each issue is indicated in brackets after each sentence and these issues have been ordered from most popular to least popular.

<b>Theme – Homes and Community</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Funding for affordable homes (5 agree), HM Government to instruct banks to lend at lower rate for affordable homes (1 agrees)
Housing not in isolation- consider local employment opportunities, services, community facilities & organisations (3 agree)
Quality good sized family homes, to keep up with demand (3 agree)
Sell volunteering (1 agrees)
Creating opportunity for people to meet
Identify local needs
Encroachment of urban sprawl on peripheral rural Parishes
Provision of play areas/community centres
Advice/training/funding to encourage development of community spirit in villages- village halls
<b>Future Issues</b>
Affordability (6 agree) (concerted effort between councils) for families/young people (8 agree)
Homes for local people (3 agree)
Place shaping (2 agree/1 disagrees)
Homes for ageing population, big homes move to smaller housing (1 agrees)
Availability of suitable sites- release of land (1 agrees)
Homes for key workers (1 agrees)
Locating homes where existing services & facilities are (but upgrade services)
Encourage houseboat communities
Use infill sites effectively, more smaller development instead of few big development
Good quality sustainable homes which help to maintain communities
Supporting community projects
Community sports provision in new building sites (1 disagrees) affordable costs
<b>Theme – Jobs &amp; Economy</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Promote tourism in our rural areas
<b>Future Issues</b>
Local jobs for young people (8 agree)
Broadband (5 agree)
Linking jobs & homes (5 agree)
Encourage more economic development (jobs) in rural areas (4 agree)

Facilitate working from home (3 agree)
Local apprenticeships (2 agree)
Communicating what business & employment opportunities exist in rural areas (2 agree)
Need for business support and advice for new enterprises- entrepreneurship (1 agrees)
Improve image of rural employment- not noisy or polluting
Review of empty property rates, support for rural enterprises by planning & use of consultants

<b>Theme – Travel</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Public transport infrastructure- daytime for employment (1 agrees) (minibuses/small transport), evening for entertainment (6 agree)
Buses for elderly into town (2 agree)
Cycle ways (2 agree)
Park & ride/walking facilities (1 agrees)
Car parking cost impacting small businesses in small market towns (1 agrees)
Alternatives- bicycle pods at bus stops
More parking at rail station
Joining up public transport, buses to train stations
<b>Future Issues</b>
Travel expensive- sharing, enhanced public transport, Green issues- electric cars- charging?/park & ride (3 agree)
Encourage models of local transport enterprise, 'share' best practice, shops to support transport solutions

<b>Theme – Sustainability and Climate Change</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Promote energy efficient homes by education, publicity & grants (4 agree)
Price of fuel (1 agrees) / oil / buying clubs for oil (3 agree)
Accessible grants for double glazing, new boilers etc (1 agrees)
Bottle bank/recycling at home (1 agrees)
Closing waste sites will increase fly tipping
Carbon footprints
Village surveys
Higher energy efficiency standards for all buildings (locally)
Education on wind farms
Better cheaper transport links
Windfarm (1 disagrees), depending on distance from housing, consider environmental impact on villages during construction e.g. transporting blades in along bendy rural roads
Promote use of wood as fuel, renewable energy (1 disagrees)
<b>Future Issues</b>
Join up 'sustainability' planning- local power, updated infrastructure (1 agrees)
Electric cars/charging points
Village have own blue bin, recycling income to invest in renewables, environment etc.
Link to accessibility to services

<b>Theme – Crime and Safety</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Dealing with speeding through rural villages, enforcement, community speed watch (6 agree)
More responsive Police service in the right situations (2 agree)

Education in what you can do to prevent crime/individual responsibility (1 agrees)
Join up mobile library & mobile police unit
Perceived & actual levels of crime
Improve detection rates above 1 in 3
Urban encroachment a threat to rural feel + safe feeling in community/identity
Like to see uniformed presence- Police or PCSO's
Security- feeling safe (Great Barton)
Double yellow lines- parking on paths & bends
Reduce spending on PCSO's/lack of powers (1 disagrees), spend on Police itself (1 disagrees)
<b>Future Issues</b>
More neighbourhood watch organisations (3 agree)
Urban encroachment on villages (1 agrees)
Safe and well lit paths
Prioritise roads that matter for local economy e.g. tourism
Location of traveller sites
Lack of volunteers
Maintaining signposts so not 20yrs out of date or rusting (1 disagrees)

<b>Theme – Infrastructure and Accessing Services</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Access from home- high speed broadband (5 agree)
Local buses (3 agree)
Village websites, knowing what the services are to access (1 agrees)
Responsive transport to get vulnerable people to local services (1 agrees)
Maintaining local facilities
Keeping and developing use of mobile libraries
<b>Future Issues</b>
Cycle paths in the country, linking villages (4 agree)
New ideas for rural transport 1. Qualify more volunteer drivers 2. Small electric share vehicles (4 agree)
Retain village shops (1 agrees)
What services do rural tax payers get, better services (1 agrees/1 disagrees)
Vernacular services
Pressurise utilities to renew rural infrastructure e.g. gas in Clare
Village pubs
Large new housing developments need new facilities- pub, community centre, shop to create identity
Make more use of schools
Local petrol station Wickhambrook
Communicate- Go Local
Community café for hub for informal drop-in
Need to know current services to know what is needed in future
Broadband- faster services (1 disagrees) (cohesive plan for broadband in Suffolk)

<b>Theme – Leisure and Recreation</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
More of the same (3 agree)
Better publicity for footpath network to encourage use (2 agree) /expand footpath network & reactivate lost rights of way
Allotments needed/ small gardens (2 agree)



Multi-generational activities, get age groups meeting
Nature reserve (continuity)
Over 60's walks (with maps)
Continued provision of youth services
<b>Future Issues</b>
More for young people to do (sports/play/youth club/evenings & weekends) (3 agree), interacting with communities, respecting their local environment/youth services, uses energy & encourages sociability (3 agree)
Cycle paths (3 agree)
Affordable fitness for all ages & abilities (1 agrees)/green outdoor gym (2 agree)
Better funding for play areas/safe play parks (1 agrees)/multi-use play areas (1 agrees)
Accessing recreation from rural areas (1 agrees)
Provision/maintenance/diversification e.g. reading rooms, IT centre, luncheon clubs, of village halls, to be sustainable (1 agrees)
Affordable hire rates for community venues (1 agrees)
Community events- celebration
Community spaces/centres
Better signage to facilities and details of local clubs/contacts (2 disagree)

<b>Theme – Health</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Lack of provision in many villages, need for micro-surgeries, rural health networks, reliance on the car (2 agree)
Promotion of well-being, prevention over cure, through education/facilities (2 agree)
Getting a doctors appointment (1 agrees)
Ageing population (1 agrees)
Air quality (traffic related)
Availability of mental health care
Effective medical referrals (health walks)
<b>Future Issues</b>
Access to/mobile dentist (day a week) (2 agree) /clinic, surgeries in village halls (1 agrees)
Future of NHS and keep doctor surgery/dispensary in village (2 agree) (Wickhambrook)/boots delivery service in rural areas
NSD & impact on health/well-being
Disconnection between healthcare & social care with GP led commissioning process
Quality healthcare
Sheltered housing for elderly
Any new hospital in Westley to have good bus access and parking

<b>Theme – Education and Skills</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Apprenticeships/on-the-job training (5 agree)
Uncertainty of employment & investment for re-training (2 agree)
Reduce courses for non-existent careers e.g. beauticians
Training for potential community leaders- skills, knowledge, confidence
Localised support for schools & pre-schools
Adult learning
<b>Future Issues</b>
Strategy for maintaining access to libraries (3 agree)/community use e.g. computers (1 agree), play equipment
Schools in suitable condition/quality schools for teaching and be able to grow with demand

(2 agree)
Improving broadband speeds to enable learning in communities (2 agree)
Funding education via tax relief to parents to support localism
Availability of on the job training
Access & expense of further education

<b>Theme – Historic and Natural Environment</b>
<b>Current Issues</b>
Stop historic trees being cut down e.g. Fornham (1 agrees)
<b>Future Issues</b>
Maintain areas (3 agree/1 disagrees) (open space (1 agrees)/heritage buildings (3 agree)) /Increase no. of conservation areas (1 agrees/1 disagrees)
Bus routes (2 agree)
Vibrancy of villages, improved infrastructure (1 agrees)
Cost-effective public transport e.g. dial-a-ride (1 agrees)
Less council regulations on natural & local, encourage building ,materials & houseboats (1 agrees)
Funding (1 agrees)
Get connected with green spaces, form open days & community green projects/biodiversity (1 agrees)
Schools could be 'guardians' of local heritage and history in their villages (gathering archives and memories) (1 agrees)
Keep rural churches open (1 agrees)
Access to countryside- more footpaths
Sympathetic to local surroundings/housing development
Locally generated power? Biomass, heat pumps, solar in the right places, wind?

<b>Theme – Any Other Issues</b>
<b>Current</b>
Community orchards
Village farm/allotments
Local village websites to encourage use of local facilities/employment/events
Training in community leadership to give people knowledge/skills/confidence to act as local organisers for any community activities
<b>Future</b>
Communities need 'sustainable' solutions (1 agrees)
Grants for community development plan (1 agrees)
Loss of confidence about coming out when lose services
Local fire & rescue service
Speed-barrier to getting out
Villages newsletter (Award for All Lottery)
Faith in the village, benefits of part-time minister
Better use of waterways for living & recreation, houseboat Community
Village procurement group

## Conclusion

It is apparent that a wide range of issues for the Rural areas have been identified by delegates over the next 20 years. These issues will be used to develop a range of options which will be consulted on for the way the Rural areas will be developed in the future.

## **Rural Vision 2031 'Issues' public consultation feedback**

### **Introduction**

St Edmundsbury Borough Council have been consulting people on what they feel the main issues facing Rural areas are over the next 20 years as part of the Rural Vision 2031 exercise. These have been collected in the format of 'postcards' asking for peoples top three issues. In total, 102 postcards have been received to date and the issues raised have been summarised by theme as follows:

The number of people who raised each issue is indicated in brackets after each sentence and issues have been ordered from most common to least common.

### **Homes and Communities**

- There is a fear of over-development or large/inappropriate development and a need for careful planning to avoid this (15)
- Need for more affordable housing for young people or those on low incomes (10)
- Poor village community and community cohesion/involvement (3)
- Residents of villages close to Haverhill are worried about coalescence with the town and losing the rural character of their village (3)
- There is a need to finalise housing need and completed the proposed new homes (2)
- People do not wish for further homes to be built in their villages (2)
- High cost of housing (1)

### **Jobs and Economy**

- Problem of local unemployment (2)
- Pressure on community volunteers to take over services (1)
- Poor economy (1)

### **Travel**

- Too much road traffic which is noisy and damages the roads and flooding of roads (23)
- Lack of public transport especially at evenings/weekends (23)
- There are too many big/heavy lorries using village roads (12)
- There is a lack of sufficient buses, particularly at evenings and weekends, and ticket prices are too high (7)
- Need more footpaths (5)
- Poor condition of pavements (2)
- Need safe access for wheelchairs- scootermobility (1)
- Need better links to London (1)
- There is a growing need for a bypass (round Great Barton) (1)

### **Sustainability and Climate Change**

- Dislike wind turbines/wind farms (6)
- The sustainability of an aging population (4)

### **Crime and Community Safety**

- Speeding cars/motorbikes/lorries (17)
- Lack of policing and crime prevention (3)
- Need more street lighting (2)
- Issue of vandalism and anti-social behaviour particularly by youths (2)

### **Infrastructure and Services**

- Risk of closure of local shops and post offices and need to expand local shops (18)

- There is insufficient provision of parking at local shops and schools (6)
- Threat of closure of local village amenities/services/facilities (6)
- Need better maintenance of public spaces to deal with dog fouling/litter/trees and hedges (4)
- Ageing sewage infrastructure (2)
- Need for cultural facilities (1)
- Need better drainage provision (1)
- Need better child facilities (1)

### **Leisure and Recreation**

- Need more facilities/activities for young people and teenagers (15)
- Need for more playgrounds and recreational/amenity areas (5)
- Need good community pub (4) although pubs are noisy (1)
- Need more sports facilities (3)
- Need more museums (1)

### **Health**

- Lack of/poor GP service (2)

### **Education & Skills**

- Need to maintain library (1)
- Fear over loss of schools due to school reorganisation (1)
- Need homes to support schools (1)
- Need pre-school facilities (1)
- Need to expand schools (1)

### **Historic and Natural Environment**

- Wish to maintain rural character and village identity (6)
- Development/accessibility of public open space (3)
- Risk of closure of country park (2)
- Need to preserve and develop agricultural land for wildlife (1)

### **Conclusion**

It is apparent that a wide range of issues for the Rural areas have been identified by local residents over the next 20 years. These issues will be used to develop a range of options which will be consulted on for the way the Rural areas will be developed in the future.

**Rural Vision 2031 events**

**Council run events**

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Approximate number of attendees</b>
Thursday 3 March 2011, 3.30pm - 6pm	Rural Vision 2031 Launch Event, Rougham Sports Hall	41 attendees
Monday 7 March 4pm - 7pm	Clare Town Hall	30 attendees
Wednesday 9 March 4pm - 7pm	Barrow Village Hall	30 attendees
Wednesday 9 March 4pm - 7pm	Ixworth Village Hall	15 attendees
Monday 14 March 4pm - 7pm	Kedington Community Centre	20 attendees
Tuesday 15 March 4pm - 7pm	Stanton Village Hall	12 attendees
Monday 9 May 4pm - 7pm	Chedburgh Village Hall	15 attendees
Monday 9 May 4pm - 7pm	Rougham Sports Hall	5 attendees
Wednesday 11 May 4pm - 7pm	Cavendish Memorial Hall	9 attendees
Wednesday 11 May 4pm - 7pm	Great Barton Village Hall	15 attendees
Monday 16 May 4pm - 7pm	Hopton Village Hall	17 attendees
Monday 16 May 4pm - 7pm	Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre	12 attendees
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