

Orwell Neighbourhood Plan

You will have heard a lot about the plans for significant levels of development to be undertaken in and around Cambridge as the Government seeks to promote the city as a centre of excellence for the semiconductor industry in particular. This implies that we will be under increasing pressure to build new housing on a significant scale in the area and Orwell will not be able to escape that pressure.

We cannot be completely resistant to development, but we must be concerned to protect those things we value in the village and the Government has established the method by which we can do this. Villages such as Orwell have to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which defines the key priorities of the people of the village when it relates in any way to planning. When anyone applies for planning consent the planners will consult the Neighbourhood Plan and it will have a strong influence on their decision.

We have been engaged in the process of formulating the Neighbourhood Plan for about a year now and you may recall we have undertaken a preliminary survey amongst residents last year. We are now progressing the next phases of the work where we create two documents that define the key issues that will be important to the Plan: The Design Code and the Housing Needs Assessment.

The Design Code defines the key characteristics of housing in the village that need to be maintained and the Housing Needs Assessment is a detailed evaluation of the need for development in the village. Both of these documents require outside consulting support for which we receive grants to cover the work being undertaken. However, the Steering Group still has a lot to do to coordinate the work, especially in respect of community engagement and surveying the opinions of the community.

We are always looking for additional help to conduct this work. We hope that you will recognise its importance to our community. We would particularly welcome volunteers to join us on the Steering Group. If you would like more information on what we do, please drop us an email.

You can keep up to date with our work on the web site: orwellneighbourhoodplan.co.uk. If you want to get in touch, you can email the Steering Group on info@orwellneighbourhoodplan.co.uk.

Steering Group, Maggie Gould, Emma Tabor, Philip Hodgson, Steven Thain, Mark Collins. Please feel free to speak to any of us.