

## **Consultation Report**

# **Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan Group and Wilmslow Town Council**

**February 2019**



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The following document forms the Consultation Report which seeks to provide an overview of the consultation and engagement of stakeholders in preparation of the Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan (WNP).
- 1.2. The document collates work sourced from a range of different types of events and methods for collecting the views of local residents, landowners and agents, businesses, statutory bodies, local groups to name a few.
- 1.3. Using such a range of methods aims to ensure that all those that want to input into the project have the opportunity to, and the plan seeks to represent all stakeholders.
- 1.4. Key findings from each form of consultation were recorded and summarised in order to draw out the key themes and concerns raised by stakeholders.
- 1.5. Several documents that were produced during the different stages of consultation have been identified through this document and can be located either in the appendices at the end of this document or in the core documents.

## 2. The Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan Group (WNPNG)

- 2.1. Wilmslow Town Council first considered producing the WNP in October 2015 and called for volunteers to form a steering group. The group and the formal constitution was confirmed early in 2016 and the Wilmslow Town Clerk acted as secretary to the group
- 2.2. Within the WNPNG there were sub sections of volunteers that led individual topic areas. These were called working groups. The working groups are arranged according to the following themes, however, there was some overlap with multiple groups dealing with matters such as design and heritage:
  - Town Centre and Commerce
  - Community Leisure and Recreation
  - Transport, Access, and Infrastructure
  - Natural Environment
  - Townscape and Heritage
  - Housing.
- 2.3. The WNPNG and each individual working group met throughout the process at meetings, individual topic discussion groups, and workshops in order to produce the WNP and its associated documents.
- 2.4. An application was submitted to Cheshire East in 2016, and the Neighbourhood Area was formally designated on the 22st June 2016 (see Appendix 1).
- 2.5. From the outset, the WNPNG has issued press releases to inform local residents of its activities and to invite contributions and thereafter to report progress. A website for the WNP was established at an early stage and was advertised widely. Throughout the

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**preparation of the WNP, information was made available and all relevant documents were posted on the website:**  
<http://www.wilmslownp.org>

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## 3. Stage 1: Engaging the Community

- 3.1. Stage 1 consultation was about engaging with the community to inform local residents that a Neighbourhood Plan was to be produced and to encourage people to complete a questionnaire which gave them the opportunity to have their say on the future of Wilmslow.**
- 3.2. Prior to the commencement of the survey, the WNPG laid out a consultation strategy that has been amended and updated throughout the following processes, these details can be located as Appendix 2.**
- 3.3. A consultation register was established listing all of the groups, societies, organisations in the town including points of contact and details of whom contact was made.**

### What Happened

- 3.4. All groups listed in the consultation register (core document 46) were contacted and informed of the intent to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. The group invited them to attend meetings and presentations.**
- 3.5. A questionnaire 'Have your say on the future of Wilmslow' (Appendix 3), was drawn up in order to capture the views of the population of the town.**
- 3.6. The questions asked which topics were most important to the individual; 3 things they liked about Wilmslow; 3**

**things they disliked and 3 things they would most improve in the town.**

- 3.7. The post-paid reply questionnaire was distributed to approximately 12,500 houses in the town and was made available on the WNP website. In addition, members of the WNPG set up stalls with display boards and leaflets advertising and offering advice about the WNP and engaged with attendees, these events are listed below:**

- **The Artisan Market 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016**
- **Party on the Carrs 19<sup>th</sup> June 2016**
- **The Wilmslow Show 10<sup>th</sup> July 2016**
- **The Artisan Market 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016**
- **Styal Beer Festival 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

### Results

- 3.8. Approximately 1200 responses to the questionnaire were received which generated some 7800 individual comments for analysis. These comments were grouped for analysis on a topic by topic basis and placed on a spreadsheet for the individual groups of the WNPG to analyse.**
- 3.9. Dr Anna Gilchrist, a researcher and lecturer at the University of Manchester, supported the group in analysing trends within the results and presenting the findings. Appendix 3 is an extract from one Dr Gilchrist's presentations.**
- 3.10. From the findings of the questionnaire, specific subject groups were formed from the original working groups. The**

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**new groups focused on the town centre, environment, transport and housing. Each individual group would focus on more specific factors, for example, the environment group would address matters such as landscape, biodiversity etc.**

**3.11. Following the level of response from the initial survey, the Wilmslow Town Council and the WNPG employed town planning consultants Urban Imprint to assist the groups with the following stages of the WNP.**

**3.12. Urban Imprint and the WNPG worked together to produce some emerging policies in preparation for further consultation (stage 2).**



*Image 1: members of the WNPG working of mapping aspects for the WNP*

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## 4. Stage 2: Emerging Policies Consultation

**4.1. The second consultation involved the publication of the Emerging Policies Document (core document 47) which outlined the aspirations and emerging planning policies prepared following information and feedback received from the stage 1 consultation and further engagement with the community.**

What we did

**4.2. This consultation period lasted for 14 weeks over the summer of 2017.**

**4.3. The document was advertised and circulated widely throughout the town. The advertisement and the document itself guided people to complete the interactive feedback form on the website or to complete and return a detachable feedback form found at the back of the Emerging Policies Document.**

**4.4. Once again the group used the consultation register to contact specific groups and businesses to ensure that as many groups of people had the opportunity to comment of the Emerging Policies Document.**

**4.5. A round of consultation presentations, attendance at public events and open events took place, including:**

- **The Wilmslow Show, attended on 09/07/2017**

- **Drop in session at United Reform Church, on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

Feedback

**4.6. 79 people responded to the website survey generating 3946 items of data.**

**4.7. Five local developers wrote specific responses to the document and there was a broad response across Wilmslow from the general public.**

**4.8. From the feedback Urban Imprint produced a summary and recommendations report (Appendix 5).**

**4.9. Using the report made final amendments to the policy evolution.**

Next steps

**4.10. The next step was to use the feedback and the emerging policies to create the first draft of the Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan with full policies, explanatories and mapping.**



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## **5. Stage 3: Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan**

**5.1. Following stage 2 consultation the emerging policies were expanded to create full policies and explanatory, taking into account the responses and suggestions.**

**5.2. The draft WNP (core document 49) contained 46 policies and eight aspirations split into five themes. Supporting documents contributing to the formation of the policies included a Landscape Character Assessment specific to Wilmslow and a Shop Front Design Guide.**

### What we did

**5.3. Stage 3 involved the Draft WNP being subjected to the formal 6 weeks consultation (in compliance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (general) Regulations 2012).**

**5.4. The formal consultation period on the draft WNP was between 16<sup>th</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018. During this time the group attended:**

- **The Wilmslow Show on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018**
- **Two public drop in sessions held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018.**

**5.5. At these events the group had a series of exhibition boards made up to showcase the WNP (Appendix 8).**

**5.6. A summary document of the Draft WNP (Appendix 7) along with a**

**questionnaire (Appendix 6) was produced and distributed to every household in Wilmslow and sent to various businesses which have interests in the town.**

**5.7. The summary also told people how to access the website and where hard copies could be seen at the local Parish Hall and in the Town Library, where a specific display was erected for the consultation period.**

**5.8. A list of Statutory Consultees was obtained from Cheshire East and each were contacted in line with the regulations, as well as the previous groups, business and personal from the consultation register (as had been previously done in stages 1 and 2).**

### Feedback

**5.9. 283 people responded through the website resulting in 161 pages of comments. 14 written submissions were made and 14 people filled out the questionnaire attached.**

**5.10. All of the comments received from the website and written submissions were read and sorted into the policy areas and aspirations covered by the draft plan. These were then considered by the relevant policy sub group and assessed as to whether or not a draft policy, aspiration or written text should be altered.**

**5.11. These responses were put into a excel spread sheet and analysed (core document 50). The planning consultants worked with the group to suggest recommendation and actions**

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that could be effected based on the feedback.

**5.12. Following the response from Cheshire East Council, a meeting was held with the neighbourhood planning officer, Tom Evans, to discuss his comments further and take on board any alteration that may be required.**

**5.13. All proposed amendments were discussed at a group meeting to ensure consensus from the group.**

## Conclusion

**5.14. The WNP has been consulted on twice, at the emerging policy stage and at the statutory regulation 14 consultation. A survey was also undertaken at the beginning of the process and many meetings between the WNPG, and interested parties have taken place to ensure everyone that wished to have an opportunity to comment has had their say.**

**5.15. Throughout each stage of consultation, the plan was generally well supported by the community and the majority of the local developers.**

**5.16. Minor amendments have been suggested at each stage of consultation, mostly regarding points of clarity. However over the course of its preparation policies and aspirations have been combined, deleted, introduced and divided to produce the final plan ready for the regulation 15 submission**

**5.17. Following the confirmation of final alterations to be made the final WNP is now submitted along with other supporting documents (including the**

**Core Documents and this report as required) to Cheshire East Council.**

**5.18. Cheshire East Council will run a further 6 week consultation on the plan (Regulation 16).**

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## **6. Additional Documentation**

**The below document can be located within the Core document Library, however are specifically mentioned within this report Consultation Register**

- **Emerging Policies Document with Attached Feedback form**
- **Draft Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan Document for Regulation 14**
- **Regulation 14 consultation Responses and Recommendations**

## **7. Appendices list**

- **Appendix 1: Neighbourhood Plan area designation acknowledgment and Map**
- **Appendix 2 : Consultation Strategy**
- **Appendix 3: Initial Survey**
- **Appendix 4: Initial Survey Results Presentation**
- **Appendix 5: Emerging Policies Recommendations report**
- **Appendix 6: Regulation 14 Feedback form**
- **Appendix 7: Regulation 14 Consultation Summary Document**
- **Appendix 8: Regulation 14 Consultation Exhibition Boards**

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## **9. Appendix 1: Neighbourhood plan area designation acknowledgment and map**

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## **12. Appendix 2: Consultation strategy**

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## **13. Appendix 3: Initial survey**

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## **16. Appendix 4: Initial survey presentation results**

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## **24. Appendix 5: Emerging Policies Recommendations Report**

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## **26. Appendix 6: Regulation 14 feedback form**

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## **28. Appendix 7: Regulation 14 consultation summary document**

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## **30. Appendix 8: Regulation 14 consultation exhibition boards**

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