

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background to Neighbourhood Plans

The Chelveston-cum-Caldecott Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council in partnership with the residents of Chelveston-cum-Caldecott, local land owners and East Northamptonshire Council.

Under the provisions of the Government's Localism Act (2011), a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a new type of planning instrument that is created "bottom up" by residents of the neighbourhood concerned. It is an opportunity for local people to have control over the future of their area, by actively planning what quantity and type of development should be permitted. Once approved, through a local referendum, the District Council is obliged to give "weight" to the plan in determining planning applications that are submitted. Planning applications which are not in line with the policies in the NDP are unlikely to be approved.

If a neighbourhood declines to create and adopt an NDP, then they lose control over the nature and quantity of development that might take place in their area. Developers would be free to propose development on any site they can purchase. If they can demonstrate that the development is sustainable and meets national guidelines, then planning authorities would find it difficult to refuse permission. Uncoordinated development could substantially change the character of the Parish, in a way that existing residents might not wish. This NDP is the opportunity for residents to shape their own futures, mapping out how the Village will develop over the next 20 years from 2015-2035.

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their areas, the Localism Act sets out some important principles that the plan must follow. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Development Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. Therefore the Plan must have appropriate regard to the National Planning Policy Framework [Ref: xx] and conform to the requirements of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (2008) [Ref: xx]. There is no other local plan at a District Level which covers this Parish as the previous local plan from 1996 [Ref: xx] has now lapsed with the exception of a few saved policies outlined in appendix 1.

It is the intention of East Northamptonshire Council that the Chelveston-cum-Caldecott NDP will be adopted as a core part of the Local Plan for the South of the District if it is approved at referendum.

### 1.2 How the plan has been developed

The plan was developed by a Working Party setup by the Parish Council in July 2013. The Working Party had 9 members – four serving Parish Councillors and five volunteer residents from across the Parish (listed in appendix 2). Each of the Councillors and volunteers were carefully vetted to ensure that they had no existing conflicts of interest and no pre-determined views on how the Parish should develop. The goal was to ensure that the Working Party could operate in a way that had the full confidence of land owners and residents alike. It was important that all discussions and deliberations on the evidence collected were seen to be open and transparent, free from bias and undue influence.

The Working Party held formal monthly meetings in public at which all decisions were taken. Decisions were then reported to the full Parish Council at their next meeting in order that any necessary resolutions could be formally adopted and acted upon.

The Working Party also held informal "round table" meetings every month at which much of the work and discussion took place. These meetings were open to all residents and their representatives who were invited to join the table and contribute their ideas and comments. A number of land owning residents (or

their representatives) played a regular part in these round table meetings. Whilst declaring their own interest, they were still able to make a very valuable contribution to the work of the overall Working Party. Strict protocols were adopted to ensure that these residents played no part in the decision making processes which involved sites in which they had declared an interest.

### 1.3 How the plan is organised

Layout of the following sections.