

**Earswick Parish Council**  
**Neighbourhood Plan Working Party**

**31<sup>st</sup> July 2015**

***Dear Fellow Resident,***

Given the recent 'interest' in housing development in Earswick and City of York Council's pending Local Plan development, our Parish Council believes now is the right time to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Earswick to ensure our views and opinions are understood and we are better placed to influence any future development of our village.

A few weeks ago, a Neighbourhood Plan Working Party was set up to explore this further and to agree the next steps. All members of the group were passionate about engaging with you in an honest, open and transparent way and hence this note on our thinking.

Over the next few weeks, we will be preparing and delivering a brief questionnaire to you to:

1. Understand what you like and enjoy about our village and what you'd like to retain;
2. What you'd like to see change or develop; and
3. What your vision is for our village in, say, 10-15 years.

We also recognise that some of you may not be interested in this and/or not want to share your views and we respect that. However, given the opportunity that this may present as well as the implication of any proposed changes to our village that may come through the City of York Council Local Plan process, we'd very much welcome your input.

We set out overleaf a few questions and answers that are hopefully of help. Further information is also available on the Parish Council website ([www.earswick.org](http://www.earswick.org)) including details of the Working Party.

If you have any questions, you can email them to us at [earswickneighbourhoodplan@aol.co.uk](mailto:earswickneighbourhoodplan@aol.co.uk). We would also like to invite you for an informal chat ahead of the next Parish Council meeting on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> September from 6.30pm to 7.30pm.

We hope that you can make some time for this and look forward to getting your views following the delivery of the questionnaire in the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely,

*Bill*

Bill Gambold  
On behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

### ***So what is a Neighbourhood Plan?***

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. A neighbourhood plan is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only. A Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the area, if successful at referendum. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than some other local documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements (Source: [www.locality.org.uk](http://www.locality.org.uk)).

### ***Why prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?***

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

### ***What is the difference between a Neighbourhood Plan and a Local Plan?***

A Local Plan is a local government led plan and is prepared on a large scale, for us this means a City of York Council Local Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan tends to be prepared on smaller scale and is community-led, for us this means an Earswick Village Neighbourhood Plan. To be successful, the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be prepared in line with the Local Plan. We are awaiting details of the CYC Local Plan process, timetable and direction and will feed in to our Neighbourhood Plan as soon as we know.

### ***How does the Keep Earswick Rural Action Group fit in to the Neighbourhood Plan?***

The Keep Earswick Rural Action Group was formed in June 2014 to persuade City of York Council to remove from its proposed Local Plan the Green Belt land in Earswick that it had identified for potential housing development. This activity continues in parallel with the Neighbourhood Plan process.

### ***What's the process and timeline?***

Although the Working Party has just been established and is working up 'a plan for the plan', the key stages of the plan include gathering residents' views, drafting an initial plan document, independent examination and a community referendum. In parallel, it is key that we understand how the Local Plan is developing and so engagement with City of York Council will be maintained as well as open dialogue with you. As many of you know, we already have a Parish Plan, pulled together in 2011, that will provide a good starting point (this is available on the Earswick Parish Council website, [www.earswick.org](http://www.earswick.org)).

Our indicative timeline is as follows:

- July – Application to City of York Council to produce a neighbourhood plan
- July – Establishment of Working Party and indicative plans
- August – Development and issuance of residents' questionnaire
- September – Consultation with residents/CYC
- October – Consultation with residents/CYC
- November – Collation of residents' feedback
- December – First draft plan and presentation to residents
- January 2016 – Submission of draft plan to CYC
- March – Independent examination
- April – Neighbourhood referendum