

### A. Sustainable Pegswood

Pegswood is already a sustainable community. Further, the community of Pegswood is beginning to take a more active look at itself and seems to want to develop and grow, as demonstrated by the following

#### Parish Council

The development of a communications strategy has led to a greater degree of contact with the Parish Council than ever before and this has stimulated the Council to develop the following strategies and vision:

- A better identity for the Parish Council, by moving into its own premises. The cemetery lodge will transfer from the County council and be developed into council offices
- To take on more of the proposed transfer of services and operate them for the benefit of residents
- The Parish Council has initiated a regular walk-about with Isos Housing, which is making inroads in the improvement of not only the existing housing stock but also the immediate amenity of the area
- The above sessions include Northumbria Police, who again are regular attendees at the Parish Council meetings, improving the reporting of and the curtailment of anti-social and criminal activities
- The Parish Council will work in partnership with Morpeth Town Council and other parish councils to develop the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan to help steer and develop its aspirations
- The vision for the Welfare Fields is to make it the sport and recreational centre of the village. Major activities at this moment are
  - continuing to develop the Juliet Oakley Activity Area, with under 8 provision to be completed during Spring
  - To develop a skateboard park with external funding of approx. £100k
  - To work with a local businessman to relocate a 3g surface five-a-side pitch to the old bowling green, and use the new changing rooms
  - To work with Morpeth Junior Football Club to develop a mixed size pitch provision
- To consider the best practice for the cemetery, which may include joint working with the County Council and the development of a natural burial area

#### Community Groups

**Pegswood Welfare** has a lease which expires in 2022. Discussions have been held with the lease holder as to the possibilities of future development of the site, should

## Northumberland Core Strategy Preferred Options

Consultation Response March 2013

Pegswood Parish Council

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the group decide not to renew. It is a prime development site in the middle of the village, and at present provides well supported community activities

**Pegswood Community Hub** is a growing and developing organisation. Long established in the village it provides training, support and leisure classes/activities for all ages. There have been discussions on the possible 'merger' with Pegswood Welfare

**Pegswood Community Action** is a group that, again, is finding more members of the community interested in the village. It holds an annual fete day, local fund raising discos, lunch sessions to help with litter pick events etc. It is supported by the Parish Council and it is envisioned that it will take a growingly active role in the village

**Pegswood Allotment Association** is a real success story. Instrumental in taking forward the Parish Council's plans for the development of Station Cottages Allotments, they raised the equivalent of c. £30k in four months to create 18 new allotments. The waiting list has subsequently grown as a result of the interest they have generated

### Retail

The shopping facilities within the village have improved quite considerably in the past year and are set to continue

- The vets at Whorral Bank are the new addition to the parish, and sets a high standard of development
- De Walden Terrace has recently been upgraded and brought back into the main stream of commercial activity. The re-introduction of a greengrocers and a bakers have been universally applauded
- The potential re-development of the former Ex-servicemen's Club on Front Street into a convenience store retailer, with three additional units to the rear for local businesses, has been supported by the Parish Council. Potential traders for this unit could be the Co-op or Sainsbury's
- The proposal for a public house to the rear of this site is again supported by the Parish Council

### Housing

The final infrastructure works are being completed to the Beaumont Park housing estate. It is believed that all houses have now been sold. It appears to the Parish Council that this demonstrates that Pegswood is a location that people will move to, seemingly confirmed by the administrators of the original developer who appointed new builders to complete the site rather than 'mothball' it. It appears to have paid off

Social housing providers, Isos Housing, currently work with the Parish Council in identifying issues within the estates. The Parish Council is preparing to initial a similar inspection of the private estates and the village as a whole. This will increase

## Northumberland Core Strategy Preferred Options

Consultation Response March 2013

Pegswood Parish Council

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the level of public participation as well as enable the Parish and County Council to target issues in a managed way

### **Transport**

Pegswood has a direct rail link to Newcastle. It has a 20 minute bus service to Morpeth and Ashington, and a hourly service to Newcastle and Alnwick

### **Environmental**

The Community Park Phase I and II are large tracks of open space within the parish. They provide natural landscape (although the result of open cast) in which all residents can enjoy leisure facilities and wildlife can thrive

## **B. Future Vision**

It is essential, in the eyes of the Parish Council that this sustainability is developed and Pegswood allowed and encouraged to continue to grow, not least because of the significant impact the building of the Morpeth Northern Bypass will have on the village and its hinterland.

It is because of this vision that Pegswood readily agreed to take a strong role in the development of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan. There are aspects of this vision that need much more work to be done and the Parish Council is working to incorporate them into the Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council wishes that these aspirations are reflected in the Core Strategy to ensure that they are achievable goals. The Parish Council understands that there is much work to do in firming up a deliverable sustainability plan, and many organisations it needs to consult with. These are outlined below

### **Education**

There is a disconnection between the desire of where residents want children to be educated and where they are actually offered placement. This is primarily down to the location of First school in education pyramid.

This is not just a Pegswood issue, outlying villages that would normally see their children enter the education stream at Pegswood First School have appeared to 'channel' their children via the stream directly into the Morpeth pyramid. This results in a slower rate of take up of places in Pegswood. The First School is a quality school, receiving good Ofsted reports, linking it to the Morpeth pyramid would improve Pegswood in the eyes of potential home buyers, but could also help to raise school admissions and participation levels within the community

## Northumberland Core Strategy Preferred Options

Consultation Response March 2013

Pegswood Parish Council

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The Parish Council intends to discuss this topic with Northumberland County Council Education Department as part of the Neighbourhood Plan development

### **Housing**

To continue the development of the village it is essential that the village grows. In a real sense housing growth is probably the real driver to the continued vibrancy of Pegswood. Without it additional retail, business and transport improvements may not be achievable

The Parish Council has identified that potential additional housing could be achieved by expanding to the North of the existing settlement. It is envisaged that such a housing development will not have any one type of housing: but that it will maintain the current mix of market, social and affordable housing

Road links could be achievable onto the Longhirst Road, behind the school playing fields; and/or to the West behind the Cookswell Estate onto the Morpeth Road; and/or through Cookswell Estate. There is sufficient developable land for Pegswood's needs before the land drops away towards the boundary with Longhirst Parish. Footpath links within the fabric of the village have been identified to link these new developments to the retail 'heart' of the village

It is recognised that Isos Housing, or other social housing providers, may well have a significant part to play in any future housing development

Additionally, the possible relocation of the Industrial Estate would free up a suitable brown field site, already fringed by housing development. Further areas of land have been identified for specific housing needs such as sheltered housing, something residents of the village have long called for. Open space adjacent to the medical centre and the possibility of the relocation of Cookswell Garage could be offered up

This should replace the existing SHLAA plan that is now out-of-date. It will assist Morpeth Town Council with its housing needs by easing the pressure on space within Morpeth. It is being discussed as part of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan and should encompass a variety of mixed affordable housing needs

The Parish Council recognises that further work needs to be carried out with the Highways Department on the capacity of the roads in question, as well as with housing providers such as Isos etc., for affordable homes and a possible remodelling and improvements to the existing housing

### **Village Heart**

The Parish Council have identified suitable brown field land within the heart of the village that could provide the additional retail space that would be required with the

## Northumberland Core Strategy Preferred Options

Consultation Response March 2013

Pegswood Parish Council

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housing development. This 'heart' would be encouraged to develop as more housing came on stream. The Parish Council recognises that more housing would require suitable convenience stores, which would not compete with the supermarkets and main shopping area in Morpeth, but complement it with local provision

The development of other 'community use within this land, and the footpath links would regenerate the village heart. The Parish Council intends to discuss proposals with Arch Development Group to produce the right conditions to support a quality neighbourhood

### **Community Groups**

The Parish Council is working towards assisting the three main community groups to work in partnership with one another. Each have differing skills and experience that if combined would provide an active and progressive force within the community. A partnership of these groups is essential to provide a level of self-help to the community. To tackle health issues, social exclusion and inequalities, to promote skills development and to promote growth and social enterprise for all age groups in the parish

### **Business Use**

The Parish Council would wish to see the growth of employment opportunities within the parish. It has identified the land lying between the railway line and the By-pass as being potential suitable to develop business and employment use. This will allow for the possible transfer of the existing industrial estate, which position in the village is not attractive to potential users and is unable to expand being completely bounded by residential development; and Cookswell Garage out of the heart of the village and allow better development of that 'freed' land

Access could be directly onto the By-pass or via the service road behind the Community Fire Station

Development of this land would assist not only Pegswood on employment issues but also surrounding settlements and Morpeth itself, via the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council understands that discussion will need to take place with the Highways Department on linkages to the By-pass. It is also considering using Arch Development Group to ensure the sustainability of such a development and its impact on the local area. Hopefully this will increase and diversify the employment opportunities and skill base in the parish area, and attract low carbon economic development

## Northumberland Core Strategy Preferred Options

Consultation Response March 2013

Pegswood Parish Council

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### Infrastructure

In defining this vision for a sustainable Pegswood it is recognised that the infrastructure needs to be good enough to allow the plans to develop. The Parish Council have highlighted within the vision a multi-agency partnership that it recognises will need to be included in any plans

Additionally, the following areas do need to be considered:

- **Drainage and Sewerage.** Like most of the settlements, including Morpeth, there is an issue on the capacity of the existing sewerage and drainage system. Discussions will need to be held with Northumbrian Water on the capacity of the works in Pegswood. The Parish Council has identified that there appears to be suitable 'expansion' land adjacent to the existing works
- **Transport.** Pegswood is currently served by transport links to Morpeth and beyond. However, with growth comes more demand. It is the view that the railway station is underused at this present time. Discussions will be held with SENRUG as to how these can be achieved  
The Parish Council also considers that the development of a park and ride car park on land North of the cemetery, and a short distance from the station could not only provide better access for Pegswood residents but attract users from outlying settlements and towns such as Morpeth and Ashington. This could help alleviate the parking congestion at Morpeth Station, assisting in a lower carbon footprint
- **Green Corridor.** Pegswood remains a semi-rural community, and the Parish Council wishes to maintain that position. The development of the Community Park Phase I and II will assist in this policy. Work still needs to be undertaken with Banks Mining as to the suitable completion of the Phase II 'leaking lake' to enhance the recreational space of the village. The wildlife corridor and green 'break' between the village and Morpeth at Whorral Bank is to be maintained, although with the development of country footpaths. This will enable Pegswood to be identified as a separate community too Morpeth
- **Others.** Other infrastructure provision are already in place, mains gas supply, superfast broadband, which could enhance the provision of a low carbon business development

### **C. CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTION PEGSWOOD RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

#### **Designation of Pegswood as a Service Centre**

As a consequence of the above vision and the work that the Parish Council is undertaking on the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, we view Pegswood as a service centre to Morpeth and, as such, should be so designated in the Northumberland County council Core Strategy

It is the view of the Parish Council that the community of Pegswood supports, and is supported by Morpeth Town. The village has intrinsic links through retail and housing needs, as well as transport and environmental issues. Not only was it part of the former Castle Morpeth Borough Council (and not Wansbeck District Council), but it is serviced by the same County Council Neighbourhood Services Team and it is part of the same Northumbria Police command area – even the Scouts and Brownies are linked with the Morpeth division

It is a major player in the development of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan and its further development will be embodied in this document. It has already begun to work closely in a multi-agency partnership and would see that this will continue to develop

#### **Housing**

The Parish Council believes that Pegswood's housing needs and those of Morpeth are inter-related; and that that link will be strengthened through the Neighbourhood Plan

The village's aspirations also reflect the key recommendations in the Northumberland County Wide Housing Need Survey Final Report 2012

This view would require Pegswood being considered as part of the SHMA Area 13, together with Morpeth, and not within Area 14; where it is only very loosely attached to one of the detailed parishes

#### **Education**

The Parish Council believes passionately that the close association with Morpeth also needs to embrace the education stream. The potential of new housing and the attractiveness to new home owners/residents will be affected by the education stream

### **D. Conclusion**

The Parish Council understands that there is still a lot that it needs to do to produce a final plan for the village; and that there is a lot of work still to do in ensuring that the vision for Pegswood is achievable in real terms

Nevertheless, the intention is to produce the relevant evidence for inclusion in the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan and the final consultation on the Core Strategy

The Parish Council looks towards the Core Strategy as the first building block to allow the further development of a sustainable and vibrant community in Pegswood