



Rendlesham Parish Council

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Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan

Application

Neighbourhood Plan Area: The Parish of Rendlesham (see attached map).

Qualifying body: Rendlesham Parish Council

Statement submission for the Rendlesham Neighbourhood Area:

Please accept this as the formal application for the Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan. The application is submitted by Rendlesham Parish Council who would be the lead in taking the project forward.

The proposal is very much one which is driven by the local community with the impetus coming direct from the Parish Council.

Rendlesham Parish is almost entirely made up of the former RAF Bentwaters airbase, vacated by the USAF in 1993, plus some 100 scattered older dwellings in the near vicinity. The airbase consisted of the 'Technical Base', the operational airfield and military infrastructure, to the south of the B1152 road, and the 'Domestic Site' to the north of the road, a substantial area of housing and social facilities. Since approximately 1999 the former base housing has been gradually occupied. In 2001 there was a housing stock of 751 which has increased to 1231 by March 2011 to create a substantial young community. Parts of the technical base have been slowly occupied by businesses, but further expansion and improvements are envisaged. The time is ripe for both the residential and business elements to take a fresh step forward into a maturing and cohesive community. Given the specific issues affecting that community, a Neighbourhood Plan is clearly the ideal and much needed tool to guide that process.

The current Parish Council was elected in May of this year, with eight out of 11 being totally new members who have brought an entirely fresh approach. They have engendered a very positive approach to what is happening within their parish, and looking forward as to how this relatively new community can come together and move forward, working in parallel with the District Council's work on the Core Strategy.

The Parish Council, in conjunction with Suffolk Coastal District Council were successful in their bid for Front Runner status submitted in November 2011. This has resulted in a grant of £20,000 being awarded to produce the Rendlesham Neighbourhood Plan.

Parish Office, Rendlesham Community Centre
Walnut Tree Avenue, Rendlesham, Suffolk, IP12 2GG

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The Parish Council have responded positively to the District Councils concerns that it was important for the bid to be able to demonstrate support from the local business community and in relation to the suggestion that the area covered should incorporate the whole of the parish. These form part of the supporting documentation to this bid.

The Parish Council's attitude is summed up in a phrase they used when meeting with the District Council which was "*making links – establishing friendships*". This is being actively pursued by them in terms of getting to know local community groups, and neighbouring businesses to see how they can better work together and plan positively for the future. This includes initially giving the community time to adjust to its expanded state, looking to secure additional retail and other infrastructure to support their community, including building business cases to bring the Angel Centre (former theatre) and Sports Centre into multi purpose use. Rendlesham's unique situation and Front Runner Status also offers the potential to learn a significant number lessons which can be applied to the wide variety of circumstance of the 100 plus individual towns and parishes which make up Suffolk Coastal. These include:

- Ways of integrating new and existing communities;
- How to motivate groups and individuals to become involved in the planning process and the future of their area;
- To identify the skills and resources needed for communities to take community plan projects forward
- To assist in identifying the type and nature of help required from organisations such as the District Council; the County Council and others. The aim is to dovetail with other work currently in its initial stages which is being looked at from the public sector perspective.

Supporting documentation:

- Neighbourhood Plan Area map
- Neighbourhood Plan Team – Terms of Reference
- Neighbourhood Plan – Project Plan
- Letters of support from local businesses

10 August 2012

Updated 8 November 2012