**Wimbotsham Parish Council**

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**Detailed Policies and Sites Plan ‘Preferred Options’ Consultation – Wimbotsham Parish Council Response**

In response to the earlier consultation Wimbotsham Parish Council submitted a copy of our Parish Plan which emphasises that open countryside separates Wimbotsham from Downham Market and that following a questionnaire a *high level of respondents agreed that these fields which separate the village should be protected.* This shows that the village majority does not support these proposals.

Page 78 of the Preferred Options Document in respect of Wimbotsham states...".No suitable sites put forward" yet there are two proposed sites within the Parish under Downham Market. These sites would house as many as 400 houses and are either wholly (DW1) or partially (DW2) on Wimbotsham Parish land. Wimbotsham should not be used to meet Downham's quota of 400, when 7.124 (page 634) of the document states Wimbotsham should have only 6 additional dwellings.

The Parish Council feel that by including the Wimbotsham Development within ‘Downham Market’ that they have not had the opportunity to consult with the village in respect of these major proposals. We feel that the Borough Council have provided misleading information by stating that there are no proposed sites within the village.

The Planning Inspector stated:

‘*It seems to me....the easterly direction would have 2 particular advantages: it would be generally better related to the town centre (particularly that part of it south of Bexwell Road) and to other areas via the A10 and A1122; and it would tend to be less prominent and obtrusive in the landscape. Since there seems to be sufficient land available within this eastern sector to accommodate the level of growth envisaged in policy CS09, I am not recommending any extension of the area to the north (as suggested, for example, by the submissions for Albanwise Ltd. and Bennett plc)17. In my view, growth of the town in that more northerly direction might best occur after the eastern growth sector is completed, and (presumably) after the CS plan period.’*

Page 175 of the Preferred Options document indicates that the Council has not selected site 480 on the grounds that it would 'impact the character of the locality. This area could house all 400 houses with and only impact a further 10 properties. There would be no need for DW1 or DW2.

 The Parish Council oppose the use of Wimbotsham Parish land to meet Downham Markets allocation for housing. Site DW1 will bring Downham’s developments to within 350 metres of Wimbotsham village properties.

The Parish Council oppose the encroachment of Downham Market’s housing expansion onto Wimbotsham parish land. The allocation of 3 major sites for housing development will destroy three natural green sites rather than one. Developing DW3 affects fewer residents and no businesses. We agree with the Planning Inspectors advice that land to the east but particularly the area south of Bexwell Rd would be preferable. Failure to include part of site 480 within DW3 should be investigated by the Planning Inspectorate. Inclusion would enable the entire allocation to be placed on DW3 and impact only a further 10 properties.

The Parish Council disagree with the Wimbotsham Rd extension from Clack Close into DW1. This will adversely affect a quiet estate and create rat runs. No highway problems exist. New sites should have suitable safe access to main highways and not impact local roads. Safe pedestrian and cycle routes and crossings should be assured for schoolchildren. Site DW3 is preferable in all respects.

The Parish Council object to both DW1 and DW2 as the housing complex will necessitate significant infrastructure changes in respect of the Lynn Rd /Church Rd junction, which has a history of accidents and the widening of Lynn Rd, would necessitate the installation of safe pathways and street lighting. This will change the character of the locality

The sites being within Wimbotsham Parish will impact on the village school as the children will be in the catchment of this school.

This has implications regarding sustainable transport particularly the installation of pedestrian paths across from Low Rd to the school (current right of way across field) and lighting again. The village do not want the light pollution but children need safe well lit paths.

Low Rd will need to be widened to allow a path to be installed along its length for sustainable transport from the eastern end of DW3 and Western end of DW2. Again lighting will be needed.

The installation of wider roads replacing country lanes and the installation of all the extra street lighting connecting Wimbotsham will remove the rural feel. Wimbotsham had been designated a rural village!

Yours sincerely

Pippa Winson

Parish Clerk