

**BRAMFORD
PARISH PLAN**

2005

A PROFILE OF BRAMFORD

The village of Bramford consists of 1050 houses and lies at the southern extreme of Mid Suffolk District Council's area and just west of Ipswich Borough Council's area.

The main built-up parts of Bramford are towards the east of the parish, as are the River Gipping, and the railway line connecting Norwich to London and the A14. Bramford consists of a larger and a smaller settlement each side of the river and railway, and there is also an outlying hamlet, Bramford Tye, and some scattered dwellings and farms to the west.

The land to the south and west is mainly arable farmland, and there are also ancient woods, traditional grazing lands, and watermeadows beside the river. There are archaeological sites around the village from Roman, Anglo- Saxon and medieval eras. Some medieval housing remains, but most of the development took place in the second half of the 20th century.

The village has various shops, a post office, a primary school and two public houses, but there is little local employment. Bramford has many social and sporting organizations and recreational facilities.

The road network consists of a village bypass, the B1113, and two long-established village roads, one running north-south, meeting one running east (to Ipswich, the county town, over the river), and west, to connect with the road to London. There remains a network of historic lanes heading towards the west, and an old lane to the east of the village, running north-south. There is easy access from Bramford to the A14 (Europe - Midlands link) and to the A12 to London.

Bramford is not an isolated rural community, but is fiercely proud of its village identity, which keeps it separate from Ipswich and Sproughton. The expanse of the valley, the natural features of the river, and the man-made features of the railway and the A14 keep Bramford physically separated from Ipswich helping to retain our village identity.

In 1568, a comprehensive Survey of Bramford was completed for tax purposes and included the land, housing, other buildings and sources of wealth. The village boundaries are not much changed and 12 of the 23 houses, which then stood in the core of the village, still remain today.

WHAT IS MEANT BY A PARISH PLAN?

The objectives of a Parish Plan are to:

- consider social, environmental and economic issues including the provision of services and amenities for residents, businesses and organisations;
- identify those amenities, facilities and services that need particularly to be safeguarded or improved for the future;
- define any shortcomings within the village environment that need to be addressed and tackled;
- indicate how the continuance of the distinctive character of the parish and its valued local features can be assured for the benefit of future generations;
- formulate the quality and design standards that any new development should meet and how it might be accommodated within the village;
- present a vision, together with the Village Design Statement, of Bramford's future.

In other words it is a chance for the residents of Bramford to say what they like about the village, what they want to improve and what they see as local issues and then record it all in a way that is recognised by Local Authorities.

A BIT OF BACKGROUND

In November 2000 the Government published a White Paper that launched the concept of Parish Plans. Bramford Parish Council could see clear benefits to having a Parish Plan that could link with the work of District and County Councils but understood that the Plan would have to come from the residents if it was to have credibility.

THE STEERING GROUP

To handle the task a team of volunteers was set up to collate the views of the residents and present them as a plan of actions. This team became the Parish Plan Steering Group.

The main method chosen to collate those views was a questionnaire, which was circulated in the summer of 2004. 65% of the questionnaires were completed and returned, and it is the results of these, along with the results from a separate youth questionnaire, that form the input to this Parish Plan.

SUMMARY

The residents value the fact that Bramford is a rural community and not a suburb of Ipswich and are keen for that status to remain. Although its proximity to Ipswich and major road transport links are seen to be advantageous, being part of the Suffolk countryside is equally important.

Two very high priority needs have been identified as a result of the questionnaire: the safety of pedestrians crossing The Street must be improved, particularly for the very young and the elderly, and some form of activity for the younger element of the community, such as a Youth Club, is also very high on the list of suggestions.

In the main the other initiatives that have developed from analysing the questionnaires fall into two camps: those that are aimed at enhancing the community spirit, and those that are intended to protect and improve what we already have, although there are a few projects that fall outside these categories. The full list can be found in Appendix 1. In some cases further investigative work will need to be carried out before plans can be finalised, and those feasibility studies are specified in Appendix 2.

Finally, there are some views expressed in the questionnaires that cannot be responded to by positive actions in the form of projects. For instance, it is recognised that development will occur in the village, but to maintain the character it is imperative that it should be sympathetic to the existing setting. New housing should maximise the use of infill and brownfield sites before encroaching on fresh land. Wherever possible these views have been documented within the body of this report as recommendations for use when considering planning applications.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Residential Profile

- A total of 1050 households were invited to complete the questionnaire. 687 responses were received;
- The questionnaires represent the views of 1630 people;
- The male/female ratio of respondents is almost exactly 50:50;
- One in five respondents are under 18, half are working adults and 30% are retired.

Community

- The most popular way of broadcasting and receiving information around the village is by use of the Community Newsletter, closely followed by word of mouth and then posters in shops, on notice boards etc.
- There are some concerns that the Community Newsletter delivery is sporadic and that some events have already taken place by the time it is received;
- 150 people are interested in joining a Credit Union;
- More than 200 people are interested in forming a Time Bank.

Recommendations:

- Improve delivery of the Community Newsletter (Appx 1 A12)
- Support interested parties in setting up a Credit Union (Appx 1 A21)
- Set up a Time Bank (Appx 1 A22)

Village Character

- There is a strong desire to keep the character of the village as close as possible to what it is now and to maintain the narrow green belt area separating Bramford from Ipswich;
- The survey clearly shows that Bramford's residents prize its unique character. The river, the water meadows, the village history, the local road links and proximity to Ipswich, are all seen as good reasons for living in the parish;
- The careless disposal of litter and areas that have become untidy through lack of attention (e.g. the By-Pass nursery site on River Hill) are thought to be eroding the appeal of the village;
- The mechanical road sweeper employed by the council is seen as ineffective because parked vehicles mean it has to miss the areas where they are left standing, its visits are not frequent enough and it does not sweep the footpaths;
- Over 200 people responded favourably to the suggestion of either an annual or six-monthly 'Spring Clean Day';
- Other issues include the noise of low-flying aircraft, traffic noise and light pollution, the latter two of which are expected to increase if the Snoasis project is given approval;
- Within the built up area of the village there are a number of areas people would like to see visually improved. The main ones are:
- The sort of improvements most people would like to see in The Street are simple ones such as more flowers, hanging baskets, window boxes, maybe a tree, tidier shop fronts and somewhere to sit.

Recommendations:

- Adopt the Village Design Statement (Appx 1 A2 & Appx 3)
- Conduct an anti-litter campaign (Appx 1 A7)
- Organise a Village Centre Redesign competition (Appx 1 A8)
- Appoint a Village Conservation Officer (Appx 1 A17)
- Erect “Welcome to Bramford” road signs (Appx 1 A18)

Landscape

- The landscape features thought to most need protecting are: the river (91%), the meadows (80%), open spaces (69%) and groups of trees (66%);
- Responses indicated Bramford’s environment would be improved if trees are not cut down, woodlands are looked after, single trees are preserved and hedges are kept short and tidy. River care is the most important factor (93%).

Recommendations:

- Investigate planting trees to the East of the village to soften and/or screen the Whitehouse Industrial Estate Building (Appx 1 A15)
- Appoint a Conservation Officer (Appx 1 A17)

Sports and Social

- About 80% of residents believed that they are reasonably well informed about what is going on in Bramford. But 38% claimed that they didn’t participate in village leisure activities because there are none available or that they are poorly advertised;
- 56% of the community would welcome local information points and a further 25% felt that more notice boards or re-sited boards were required;
- The most popular social amenity is the public houses. The Loraine Victory Hall is high on the list with 73% of residents using the hall at least occasionally;
- Comments suggest that there might be support for a brand new community centre on a new site, perhaps adjacent to the Playing Field, with a more limited and dedicated new use found for a thoroughly refurbished Victory Hall;
- Nearly half of all respondents believe that the provision of social facilities in the village for the up to 16 age group is poor. A Youth Club was proposed by many of those commenting on social facilities for young people;
- While 29% think the children’s play area is reasonable there were several comments that were critical. There are some who believe the facilities to be “disappointing”, “dangerous”, “unsafe”, “out of date” and “in need of redeveloping” (*Note: the playing field is regularly assessed for safety by an independent inspector*).

Recommendations:

- Launch a Youth Club (Appx 1 A4)
- Organise a Village Activity Day (Appx 1 A5)
- Publish a new Bramford Directory (Appx 1 A6)
- Improve delivery of the Community Newsletter (Appx 1 A12)
- Utilise school buildings after school hours (Appx 1 A14)
- Conduct an investigation into the possibility of a new build Community Centre (Appx 2 B3)

Traffic

- The speed at which traffic travels through the village is a major concern and the danger to pedestrians, cyclists and others a major anxiety. The Street, Ship Lane, Bramford Road, Paper Mill Lane and Loraine Way are identified as being particularly hazardous;
- A slight preference for speed restrictions rather than traffic calming schemes is expressed;
- Pedestrian crossings in The Street and at Gables Corner are identified as possible needs;
- There is a general belief that parked cars are causing congestion particularly in The Street and Ship Lane. Available parking for patrons of the Angel is felt to be inadequate and the British Legion non-existent. The result is causing a great deal of inconvenience for residents;
- The delivery and collection of school children in Duckamere is identified as a specific cause of congestion in Fitzgerald Road and Loraine Way;
- Concern was voiced at the possible loss of the car park in Gippingstone Road;
- A bicycle/foot way to link Bramford with Claydon is a popular suggestion;
- The bus services are generally held to be reasonable. Among the comments were: - requests for services along Paper Mill Lane, to Ipswich Station, Needham Market and Stowmarket;
- Road maintenance is an issue with a number of places identified as being in poor condition;
- Road noise from the A14 is intrusive for a number of people;
- Hedges and verges, some private and some public are thought to require more thorough attention.

Recommendations:

- Undertake a traffic survey (Appx 2 B1)
- Improve pedestrian crossing safety in The Street (Appx 1 A3)
- Develop a long term Traffic Plan for Bramford (Appx 2 B2)
- Build a cycle path between Bramford and Claydon (Appx 1 A9)
- Transfer ownership of the Gippingstone Road car park to the Parish (Appx 1 A10)
- Request bus routing to include Paper Mill Lane (Appx 1 A20)

Housing

- 82% of Bramford's houses are owner occupied, the local authority or housing associations let a further 10% of homes and the remainder are principally private rentals;
- One in three dwellings are bungalows, semi detached are the next largest group followed by detached houses.
- A quarter of the homes in Bramford were built before 1939 and a third in the 1950's and '60's. Housing development in the village has significantly reduced since the 1970's;
- 39 households indicated that they need alternative accommodation, half for the entire family and half for their children or parents. The majority require local authority or housing association homes citing high house prices and a general housing shortage as the factors that are preventing them moving;
- 28% of the respondents feel that Bramford could absorb more housing although 52% believe this should be limited to the conversion of existing and redundant buildings. 27% want only single property development and 21% support expansion at the village edge;
- The largest demand is massively for young single and small family homes. This demand it is felt would be best satisfied by semi detached houses (26%), bungalows (16%) with some support for terraced and detached houses and cottages;
- 82% believe that Bramford should have a conservation area. 71% felt that 2000 years of history is a significant influence on the village's character and general environment indicating that proper regard should be given to vernacular styles of design.

Recommendations:

- Adopt the Village Design Statement when considering planning applications (Appx 2 & Appx 3)
- Encourage the conversion of existing and redundant buildings, the use of infill and brownfield sites before developing beyond the existing settlement boundaries
- Support a small development of low price or affordable housing provided it meets the design criteria set out in the Village Design Statement (Appx 3)
- Appoint a Conservation Officer (Appx 1 A17)

Education

- 86% of respondents are unaware of any adult learning opportunities in Bramford;
- 40% would be interested in further educational facilities in the village;
- Added comments show that a shortage of places at Bramford School is an issue with community implications.

Recommendations:

- Publish a new Bramford Directory (Appx 1 A6)
- Utilise school buildings after school hours (Appx 1 A14)

Health

- 10% of respondents (120 people) have problems getting to medical facilities.
- The idea of a G.P. in the village is supported by nearly 83% and virtually half the respondents think the village would benefit from a health centre providing a baby clinic, optician, dentist, chiropodist etc.
- Useful suggestions among the comments include combining a health centre with a new community centre and setting up a voluntary car pool to assist those needing transport to medical facilities.

Recommendations:

- Conduct a Feasibility Study into the provision of Health Services in the village (Appx 2 B4)
- Organise a Voluntary Car Pool (Appx 1 A19)

Security

- There are currently two active Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the village. About one third of the people responding indicated that they are interested in joining a scheme;
- A substantial number of people have expressed a desire for a village policeman capable of providing a more visible presence in the community.

Recommendations:

- Promote membership of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
- Notify Suffolk Constabulary of the strength of feeling for an increased police presence
- Set up a Bramford Security Liaison Group (Appx 1 A11)

Business

- There is a general consensus that the number of retail premises in the village is about right. A few people indicate support for additional specialist shops i.e. bakery, butcher and greengrocery. Services such as a veterinary surgery are also suggested;
- The majority of business people in Bramford (68%) would like more contact with similarly involved people in the village.

Recommendations:

- Establish a Business Mutual Interest Group (Appx 1 A13)
- Conduct a review of small businesses and small business opportunities in Bramford (Appx 2 B6)

Local Government

The group of questions covering Local Government attracted quite a high proportion of 'don't know' responses. This appears at first sight to show a low level of interest in the subject. However, many of the written comments are targeted critically at the costs and standards of services provided to the village by Mid-Suffolk District and Suffolk County Councils. This topic

has attracted some of the strongest comments suggesting that there is a significant level of discontent with Local Government.

- The majority of people do not think enough publicity is given to planning applications;
- Around half of the respondents who voiced an opinion consider that the parish council publicises its decisions and activities well;
- Moving from weekly to fortnightly collection of non-recyclable waste is seen as a retrograde step;
- Street cleaning and weed clearing are not considered to be frequent enough;
- Although the survey results show that only around one in four people are dissatisfied with the way money is spent, there are a number of passionate comments criticising Councils for raising taxes at levels outstripping inflation;
- At a local level the village is generally content that Parish Council representatives are aware of local concerns and feelings. On the other hand, this contentment rapidly evaporates as less than 2% of the residents feel that District or County Councillors are fully aware of local issues.

Recommendations:

- Improve awareness of Parish Council and its activities (Appx 1 A16)
- Develop better liaison between the Parish Council and others (IBC, neighbouring parishes etc.) (Appx 2 B5)
- Organise a Village Activity Day (Appx 1 A5)

Youth Questionnaire

- There is some disquiet about a few small areas of Bramford as places children would be nervous to go. The River Gipping is mentioned both as a splendid place and as somewhere that bullying and excessive peer pressure might occur;
- Social provision outside the home for children and teenagers is believed to be the single most important need that is currently not catered for in Bramford.

Recommendations:

- Set up a Bramford Security Liaison Group (Appx 1 A11)
- Launch a Youth Club (Appx 1 A4)

WHAT NEXT?

The Steering Group's responsibilities end with the adoption of this Parish Plan. To make sure that the Plan continues to the delivery stage the Steering Group highly recommends that an Action Group be formed to carry on the work.

The responsibilities of the Action Group will be to review the Plan, make changes as appropriate, and initiate projects. The Action Group will not necessarily run the projects themselves; Appendix 1 suggests who should take lead responsibility. The Action Group should consist primarily of, and be led by, residents of the village. The membership should also include two parish Councillors to provide liaison with the Parish Council and be responsible for involving the appropriate authorities (see Project A1, Appendix 1).

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Bramford Parish Council
Mid Suffolk District Council
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The Countryside Agency

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Appendix 1 – Action Plan

| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|--|----------|--|--|------------------------|--|
| A1. Set up a Parish Plan Guardianship Team (the Action Group) to advance the planned Projects into active status. | Request for volunteers from the village with an aim to appointing at least two residential members, plus appoint two Parish Councillors to the team. The team is to meet at least every six months with responsibilities to conduct or delegate Feasibility Studies and initiate projects. | High | Parish Council, volunteers | Immediate | Parish Council | Volunteers will be required. Costs should not exceed the value of any expenses incurred (minimal). |
| A2. Endorse the Village Design Statement. | Adopt the Village Design Statement (Appx 3) and employ it for Planning Activities. | High | Parish Council | Immediate | Parish Council | None |
| A3. Improve pedestrian road crossing facilities in the village. | Following Traffic Survey and recommendations from Suffolk CC (see below) undertake emplacement of pedestrian road crossing assistance. May take the form of Zebra Crossing and/or Lollipop person and/or road layout improvements. | High | Suffolk CC, Suffolk Police, Parish Council | Immediately following receipt of Traffic Survey results and recommendations from Suffolk CC. | Parish Council | Depends on solution. Manual assistance will require locally funded resourcing. Zebra Crossing could be high cost but will be funded by Suffolk CC. |
| A4. Launch a Youth Club. | Contact Suffolk CC for advice, guidance and assistance. Consult the Parish council to discuss suitable premises. Appeal for volunteers. Investigate costs and recommend fees. Investigate and recommend options for alternatives, e.g. Youth meeting place. | High | Parish Council, Suffolk CC, volunteers, commercial sponsors | To start by the end of Summer 2005 with a view to launch by mid-2006. | Action Group initially | Volunteers will be required. Suitable premises will need to be provided. Expected to be self-funding |
| A5. Organise a Village Activity Day ("The Bramford Show"). | Appoint a committee to invite local businesses, sports and social clubs, village groups, Parish, District and County Council Representatives (for Local Government awareness), Neighbourhood Watch, etc. to represent themselves in a one-day riverside event. The objectives are to advertise what is available in Bramford and offer information about local facilities. | High | Parish Council, Mid Suffolk DC, Suffolk CC, Suffolk Police, Local Businesses, Local Organisations, Bramford School, commercial sponsors. | Summer 2006 | Activity Day Committee | Low cost. Organisers to investigate raising revenue for expenditure items. |

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| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|---|----------|--|--|---------------------|--|
| A6. Publish a Bramford Directory of local businesses and organisations, including Sports and Social clubs, educational opportunities etc. | Approach local organisations for up to date contact details. Consider suitability of low cost publication (update Bramford Web Site, publishing in the Community Newsletter, publishing and distributing an information leaflet). Information could be obtained as part of the organisation of the Activity Day (A5. Above). Consideration also needs to be given to updating the directory on a regular basis, and the possibility of advertising revenue. | Medium | Parish Council, Mid Suffolk DC, Suffolk CC, Suffolk Police, Local Businesses, Local Organisations. | Long term. | Action Group | Low cost. Could be zero net cost depending on publishing channel and advertising revenue. |
| A7. Conduct an anti-litter campaign. | Organise a litter awareness and education campaign. Involve Bramford School in poster design. Publicise by poster and articles in the Community Newsletter. | Medium | Parish Council, Bramford School. | Could be accomplished in short timescales and at any time. | Action Group | Low cost. Could require manpower if it develops into a hands-on project such as a litter pick day. |
| A8. Organise a Village Centre Redesign competition. | Organise a small competition (different age groups) to redesign the village centre to accommodate visual and safety improvements. The results can be used as input to any redesign work resulting from pedestrian crossing improvement project (A3. Above) | Medium | Parish Council, MSDC, Suffolk CC, Suffolk police, Bramford School. | Could be accomplished in short timescales and at any time before finalising the pedestrian crossing improvement project (3. Above) | Parish Council | Low cost (prizes). |
| A9. Build a cycle path between Bramford and Claydon. | Consult MSDC and Suffolk CC to start the process and obtain prioritisation with a view to scheduling the work. Also consider options for extending to Sproughton. | Medium | Parish Council, Mid Suffolk DC, Suffolk CC | Long Term | Parish Council | High cost. Will require considerable County Council resources. |
| A10. Purchase Gippingstone Road Public Car Park. | Complete transactions to transfer ownership of car park to the Parish. Also consider other car parking needs and options in the village. | Medium | MSDC, Parish Council | Short Term. Expect completion by Summer 2005 | Parish Council | Will require local funding. Costs unknown at this stage. |

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|
| A11. Set up a Bramford Security Liaison Group. | Request volunteers to organise themselves into a Group to collate and report on security issues and seek help and guidance where necessary. | Low | Parish Council, Mid Suffolk Crime Reduction Partnership, Suffolk Police, Neighbourhood Watch Teams. | Medium Term. | Parish Council | Reliant on volunteers |
| A12. Improve delivery of Community Newsletter. | Contact the publishers of the Community Newsletter to discuss comments received from the Parish Plan Questionnaire and options for enhancing its status in the community. Investigate and implement improvements to the delivery process. | Low | Parish Council, Publishers | Short term. Can be started immediately. | Action Group | None |
| A13. Establish a Business Mutual Interest Group. | Determine objectives and set terms of reference. Interview local businesses to determine needs. Investigate options for collating and dispersing information. Feed back and get agreement to solution from businesses. Implement. | Low | Local businesses | Medium Term. Initial interviews can start quickly. Implementing a solution will be long term. | Action Group initially, then self managing. | Implementation costs unknown at this stage. Expect to be self-funding or voluntary. Initial human resource requirement will be heavy. |
| A14. Utilise Bramford School buildings for sporting and/or educational activities out of school hours. | Discuss with the school authorities opportunities that may exist for using the School for one-off and/or regular activities. Investigate the costs and issues and produce a plan including resourcing out of hours activities. | Low | Local Education Authority, Bramford School. | Initial discussion can start immediately. | Action Group initially then LEA | Self Funding. |
| A15. Recommend planting of tree screen to reduce impact of the Agilent building on the village horizon. | Investigate options for tree planting. Calculate costs and recommend site, tree species and contractor. | Low | Parish Council, Tree Warden | Initial investigation can start as soon as resources are available. | Action Group | Minimal costs for recommendation. Implementation will be subject to funding. |

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|---|----------|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| A16. Recommend steps to improve awareness of Parish Council and its activities. | Draft a report recommending options to improve residents' knowledge of the Parish Council and its operation. Could include publishing photos, increasing publicity, involving younger members of the community etc. | Low | Parish Council | When resources are available. | Action Group | Report will be at minimal cost. Implementation costs unknown. |
| A17. Recommend the appointment of a voluntary Village Conservation Officer. | Document the Terms of Reference for a Conservation Officer (i.e. identify the needs and responsibilities) and propose the appointment to the Parish Council. | Low | Parish Council | Short Term | Action Group | None |
| A18. Erect "Welcome to Bramford" roadside signs. | Determine location and design. Secure funding. Schedule work. | Low | Suffolk CC, Parish Council. | Short Term (depending on fund availability) | Action Group | Costs need to be identified and secured. |
| A19. Organise a voluntary car pool. | Advertise for volunteers to a) organise travel requirements and transport availability, b) provide transport | Low | Volunteers | Medium term. | Action Group (initially), Volunteers once up and running. | Minimal |
| A20. Request bus routing along Paper Mill Lane. | Consult with local public transport authorities. Discuss changes to timetabling and routing to include Paper Mill Lane in some bus routes (without reducing the service to the rest of the village). | Low | Public Transport organisations | Medium to Long Term | Action Group | None |
| A21. Set up a Credit Union. | Contact the Ipswich Credit Union branch and request help in offering savings and loan facilities in Bramford. | Low | Ipswich Credit Union | Short Term | Action Group initially, then self managing | None |
| A22. Set up a Time Bank. | Advertise for volunteers to a) organise a list of volunteers, availability and requirements, and b) run the Time Bank on a daily basis. | Low | Volunteers | Medium | Action Group initially, then self managing | None |

Appendix 2 – Feasibility Studies

| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| B1. Review of traffic issues including speeding through the village, abuse of weight restrictions, parking in The Street and school drop-off and pick up. | <p>Initial meeting with Suffolk CC requesting traffic survey to quantify issues and obtain recommendations for road system alterations. Study to cover the following known issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Crossing for The Street • Parking in The Street • School pick up and drop off (Duckamere, Fitzgerald Road, Loraine Way) • Speeding | High (to meet Project 3. above) | Parish, district and county councils, Suffolk Constabulary. | Urgent - required to determine details of project 3 above. | Parish Chairman to organise initial meeting. Action Group to continue. | Long term implications unknown at this stage (dependent on outcome of initial survey). |
| B2. Create a Long Term Traffic Plan. | Following the traffic survey and recommendations above determine a long-term plan for traffic management within the village. | Medium | Parish, district and county councils. | Medium term. | Parish Council | Unknown at this stage |
| B3. Conduct an investigation into the possibility of a new build Community Centre. | <p>Undertake a study to understand the implications of building a new Community Centre, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for new facilities for the village • Implications of closing/selling existing assets • Site for the Community Centre • Sources of funding • Inclusion of requirements from B4 below | Low | Parish Council plus all existing local user organisations of public buildings in Bramford | Long Term. Terms of Reference to be determined by end of 2005 | Action Group | To consider private funding. |

Appendix 2 – Feasibility Studies

| Project | How it will be tackled? | Priority | Partners | Timescale | Lead Responsibility | Resource Implications |
|---|--|----------|--|---|---------------------|--|
| B4. Feasibility Study into provision of Health Services in the village. | <p>Consider options for provision of Health Services in the village, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with a potential Community Centre (see B3. above) • Level of need within the village • Alternative options | Low | Parish Council, Local Health Partnerships | Long Term. Terms of Reference to be determined by end of 2005 | Action Group | Long term implications unknown at this stage |
| B5. Conduct study to develop better liaison between the Parish, District and other councils with regard to planning issues. | Identify issues, develop an understanding of the current processes, including restrictions on Parish Councils, and identify any opportunities for improvement. Recommend improvements. | Low | Parish Council, MS District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk CC and neighbouring parish councils. | Medium term. | Action Group | Unknown at this stage |
| B6. Review of Small Businesses in Bramford | <p>Approach the Suffolk Development Agency (SDA) to consider opportunities to improve business in Bramford. The SDA's objectives are to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract new business investment and re-investment • Build a world class workforce in a learning county • Improve communications • Improve business performance • Strengthen the economy of the rural areas | Low | Parish Council, SDA | Long Term | Action Group | Unknown at this stage |

BRAMFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

This Village Design Statement describes the visual character and qualities of Bramford within its landscape setting, and discusses how to achieve the aims of preserving, regenerating or enhancing the distinctive features and character of the village.

Bramford lies close to Ipswich, with easy access to the A14 trunk road that links the port of Felixstowe to Cambridge and the Midlands. Bramford is comparatively well provided with services all of which makes it attractive to prospective developers.

The size, appearance and density of any new development in Bramford will affect the character and appearance of the village, and could change the interaction between shapes and spaces, enclosure and openness, scale, settlement patterns, and views into and out of the village, and could affect local distinctiveness.

Bramford's special landscape and heritage, the built environment and the housing, all affect the appearance of the village. This document contains recommendations for design standards, which aim to ensure that any new development would be carried out in such a way as to achieve harmony of buildings, settlement and landscape.

As well as the threat from residential development, there may also be commercial, agricultural or industrial development in the village. Even small incremental changes by householders can affect the street scene.

Any change can be for better or for worse, and is difficult if not impossible to reverse.

What we do now has to be either endured or enjoyed by future generations,

and so this Design Statement is relevant to

- ◆ every householder and property owner in the parish
- ◆ the Local Planning Authority and its officers
- ◆ the providers of local services and facilities
- ◆ developers, builders, architects, engineers, designers
- ◆ the Parish Council and other local community groups.

The two guiding principles of all the "Recommendations" in this Village Design Statement are that: -

1. the landscape, settlement and buildings in Bramford should be in harmony and typical of a Suffolk village in our century;
2. Bramford should not come to look like a suburb of Ipswich.

The village is in three distinct parts, each with its own character: -

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Bramford village core | the oldest part, concealing newer residential developments; |
| The Paper Mill Lane Area | mixed residential, agricultural and industrial; |
| Bramford Tye | a rural hamlet. |

LANDSCAPE AND VIEWS INTO AND OUT OF THE VILLAGE

Landscape is often valued for its beauty, but even when it is not especially beautiful, it is important as a pleasant environment, and valuable as a habitat for wildlife. Bramford's rural landscape sets it apart as a village, separate and distinct from the nearby town of Ipswich. The rural landscape in Bramford provides people with a sense of identity, well-being, release and inspiration.

1. The geography of the parish is dominated by the broad river valley including the flood plain and the watermeadows of the River Gipping. Arable land rises to the west and east extremities.
2. Local Nature Reserves and Special Landscape Areas along the floodplain of the river valley provide a sense of openness and unspoilt nature along a wide stretch of land north to south within the village. They also form a habitat for protected species of flora and fauna.
3. Recycling of the landscape has created a water park from reclaimed gravel pits, resulting in an artificially landscaped northerly approach at the outskirts of Bramford. Loraine Way, the B1113, obscures the view into the village from the north.
4. From high ground on the east, there are views over the settlement, the river valley, and the fields beyond. These are also glimpsed fleetingly from the A14, travelling south.
5. From the river bridge, the visual dominance of the river, the Church and the historic buildings can be appreciated.
6. The west of the main built-up area is fenced or hedged with no view into the village, although the higher ground further west provides a panorama of the village, dominated by the Church, with the southern edge of the village partly concealed by mature native hedging. Ancient woodlands to the far west make a significant contribution to the appearance and character of the landscape outside the built-up area, and also contribute to the rural ambience and tranquil setting of Bramford Tye.
7. The south of the village has a close relationship to open countryside. Significant views into the village of Bramford can be enjoyed from a well-used public footpath which crosses the south field diagonally.
8. Open fields separate Bramford from villages to the north, west and south. The closest village is Sroughton, half a mile to the south.
9. The Countryside Stewardship Area to the south of the village allows enjoyment of the watermeadows, hedges, and church spire, and the wide open view into the village.
10. Visually Important Open Spaces of varying sizes and uneven spacing provide a sense of space within the village, and give variation and relief to the built-up areas.

The village ambience of Bramford derives from the views into and out of the village, the sense of enclosure by trees and native hedgerows within and surrounding the village, the rural setting, the open southerly approach, the river flowing through the village, the designated Visually Important Open Spaces, the County Wildlife Site, the Special Landscape Area, the Local Nature Reserve, and the ancient woodlands and the network of footpaths which are hundreds of years old.

ECOLOGY

The Parish of Bramford consists of a range of ecologically important habitats. The northern meadows are a designated Local Nature Reserve, and several sections of the River Gipping are of considerable conservation value. The river valley is a Special Landscape Area with hedgerows, dykes and associated flora and fauna. Regionally important County Wildlife Sites and habitats include the ancient woods, river, grazing marsh, meadows, and the churchyard. Protected species such as bats and great crested newts are found in Bramford, as well as water voles, otters, damselflies, stag beetles, slow worms, and skylarks, and there is a concentration and wide variety of wild bird life in the hedgerows and meadows in the south of the village

HERITAGE AND HISTORY OF LAND USE

Bramford is rich in archaeological sites, with remains from the Bronze Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval eras. A settlement grew up in Bramford in prehistoric times because of its location in the river valley, but it was the Romans who influenced the size and shaping of the village by constructing the Roman road (now the B1113) which sandwiches the main part of the village between the road and the river.

The village was wealthy in Tudor times, and locally grown timber gave rise to the construction of the timber frame houses at the core of the ancient village centre remaining today. Clay was extracted locally to produce bricks and tiles, and lime was produced in Bramford for use in rendering and mortar. Flint was found on the chalk to the west of the village, and was used in construction of the Church and some other buildings in the village. Building materials used historically in Bramford were available from the land. The use of local materials produces a building that sits well in the landscape.

In the last years of the twentieth century, the imposition of an industrial/office building overlooking Bramford from high land within Ipswich focussed concern on how the use of land could threaten the character and appearance of the village.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built-up area of Bramford is mainly concentrated in the south east corner of the parish, and is a compact settlement which developed from the linear plan of The Street, and spread sideways with 20th century development. It is still constrained by the B1113 on the west and the River Gipping on the east. On the west bank of the river, the old core of the village runs north to south. Bramford also includes the smaller settlement in the Paper Mill Lane area on the east bank of the river, and the hamlet of Bramford Tye on the rising land to the west

In the centre of the village, at the junction of The Street and Gippingstone Road, there is a poor quality open space which offers significant opportunities for upgrading.

On high land to the west of the village, there is large electricity substation with pylons and overhead cables which dominate the skyline and continue down the river valley.

Most of the agricultural buildings and scattered farms are located to the west of the main settlement, across the B1113 bypass. Most of the industry is to the north east near the A14, including a fairly well concealed landfill site. There are two Listed former factories.

EXISTING HOUSING

Bramford is notable for its mix of houses of different sizes, ages and values, on varying plot sizes, catering for a range of family sizes, ages and incomes.

The village has 1050 houses, most of which were built in the second half of the twentieth century, when the village expanded rapidly. The essential character of the village is defined by the late Medieval and Victorian houses in the village core. Twelve of the 23 medieval houses remain around The Street and the Church, and there are 29 Listed houses in Bramford.

The Street is a linear development, with most of the houses fronting the pavement. Roof pitches are generally steep, but varied, as the frontages include Victorian terraced houses, medieval one-and-a-half storey buildings with dormer windows, and a three-storey public house from about 1800. There are jettied frontages, large tall chimneys, and only a few gables facing The Street. Rendered walls are painted in soft pale or earth colours. Black plinths and matchboarded doors are unifying features of the medieval and Victorian houses. Most of the older houses abut each other on The Street.

Most of the older houses, including those on Church Green and Mill Lane, rely on their beautiful proportions, their orientation and spacing to provide a harmonious visual effect, rather than relying on ornamental features. Because of their proportions, these houses have a vertical emphasis that draws the eye upwards to appreciate the steep roofs, the roof shapes, and the chimneys.

The Victorian terraced houses established uniformity and a modest scale with narrow frontages.

By contrast, the estates built between the 1960s and 1980s have filled the shape of the land allocations available to them, producing a compartmentalised effect. The bungalows have a horizontal emphasis in the rooflines, proportions, and glazing, which draws the eye along rather than upwards.

There are also several larger individual properties standing in larger grounds, some with more formal architecture, which give relief to the generally compact layout of the village.

The newest development at Gippingstone Road avoids rigid layouts and car domination, and shows an appreciation of the visual importance of spaces between buildings, orientation, scale, compatibility with surroundings, and key design elements appropriate to Bramford. Unfortunately, this effect has not been achieved with the Housing Association properties on the same site, which lack a "sense of place".

Two of the mid-to late 20th century developments incorporate central greens that provide punctuation and contrast to the housing, as well as a reference to the countryside beyond the village boundaries.

The Paper Mill Lane area consists of groups of Victorian terraced houses and a piecemeal development of houses of varying sizes on land rising to the east.

Housing at Bramford Tye consists mainly of barns and farms, with a few large individual houses.

Away from the built-up area, there are Listed farms, scattered houses and agricultural dwellings.

THE VILLAGE ROADS

The village is bypassed by the B1113 on the west. The approach from the north west is via winding, hedge-lined roads. The approach from the north east is via a relatively narrow road with a bottleneck on Paper Mill Lane, leading to a straight stretch of road, its width constrained by parked cars. From Ipswich on the east, the approach road passes below the stark concrete bridge carrying the A14 and under a canopy of trees, then meets the access from Paper Mill Lane and sweeps round under the hard angular form of the railway bridge before revealing views of the river, the Church, and the old village houses. Approaching Bramford from the bypass on the south, there is a contrasting and distinctive, long open view towards the village, and this openness gives the southern approach a distinctively pastoral appearance.

The traffic flow in the village is restricted by limited access to the bypass to the west. The residential roads feed into the main Street.

ANTICIPATED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE VILLAGE

Bramford contains many beautiful and historic buildings as well as some very pleasant street scenes, some incorporating riverside views. However, because of the urban nature of the pavings and street lighting and parking arrangements, the eye is not drawn to these characteristics of the village, and the unsympathetic urban style of the street furniture positively detracts from the village setting. We have a duty to future generations to ensure that the character of the village is not lost.

If the special characteristics were emphasised by environmental improvements, this would reveal the best parts of the village. These improvements would include traffic management, parking arrangements, landscaping, upgrading of buildings, better design and siting of signs and lighting, the choice of appropriate road surfacing materials, the use of well designed street furniture and the removal of overhead cables.

Conservation Area status is anticipated for parts of The Street and Ship Lane, Mill Lane, and Church Green and Vicarage Lane. This status should bring environmental improvements including better street lighting and higher quality pavings in The Street. A meeting or resting area for villagers could be formed by installing seats and improving pavings in the two large tarmac areas on The Street, near the Co-op and the fish shop. On page 33, there is an impression of how the area could be improved.

The anticipated Conservation Area includes Church Green and Mill Lane and part of Ship Lane. The countryside area within the village could also be made into a more attractive feature, enhancing the village identity. The approach to the riverside area, with its picnic site and walks, could be improved by refurbishing the bridge wall and installing improved balustrading and pleasant street lighting at the bridge, repainting tubular metal fencing near the railway bridge, and repairing broken timber fencing.

TRADITIONAL VILLAGE FEATURES IN BRAMFORD

Certain individual buildings and groups of buildings in Bramford have a "village feel". The building features which form the village architecture can be preserved if owners come to appreciate their visual value, which could be enhanced by expenditure on environmental improvements. The relevance of the features to the distinctiveness of Bramford can be enhanced if they are selectively replicated in new developments in order to provide a more cohesive village style and avoid urban sprawl, creeping suburbanisation, or anonymous styles that do not distinguish Bramford as a Suffolk village.

Bramford shows traditional Suffolk village features and also some special distinctive features of its own.

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

If Bramford has to accept new housing, this will inevitably have an impact on the character and appearance of the village. Declared Government policies indicate that suitable brownfield sites will be considered first for housing, then empty homes and conversions, then new sites within the Settlement Boundary, then new sites outside the Settlement Boundary. Bramford's infrastructure is limited, and any large development in Bramford would require infrastructure improvements.

The trend is for smaller dwellings to suit smaller households, but provision for parking will affect the layout and appearance of developments. Open spaces may help to balance the effect.

Affordable Housing dispersed within mixed developments would produce variety rather than uniformity.

Density in villages will be varied according to the location in the village, and this will affect how the development sits in the landscape

Major housing or leisure developments outside Bramford, and the earthworks at the Bramford Water Park, may exacerbate the risk of flooding in Bramford, with an impact on the landscape of Bramford.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LANDSCAPE

Every proposal that requires Planning Permission must seek to ensure that the essential character of the landscape of Bramford is retained and that any development should enhance the village for future generations.

To preserve visual amenity, the landscape and the distinctiveness and separation of Bramford, future development should respect and not compromise: -

- ◆ the views into and out of the village (see plan on page 20)
- ◆ the sense of enclosure that derives from the trees and hedgerows within and surrounding the village
- ◆ the rural setting - particularly where this is designated Visually Important Open Space or a Special Landscape Area
- ◆ the soft boundary between the settlement and existing agricultural land.

Development proposals should aim to enhance their setting through: -

- ◆ the use of native species in appropriate planting schemes
- ◆ the incorporation of suitable boundary treatments such as native hedging
- ◆ improvements to the local ecology (see page 22 and below).

To improve the local ecology, individual landowners and developers are encouraged to seek advice from MSDC on how to attract wildlife onto land and how to protect existing habitats and species. This can be achieved by creating ponds, grassland and woodland connected by mature hedges and ditches and native trees. The Suffolk Biological Records Centre should also be consulted, as it holds information on protected species in Bramford.

The rural ambience and character of Bramford Tye should be protected from intrusive development

NEW DWELLINGS

To redress the balance in favour of good design in the village: -

- ◆ designers should give careful consideration to the "Suffolk Design Guide For Residential Areas", where detailed guidance on design is graphically illustrated and explained
- ◆ developers may be required to produce a Design Statement showing how they have complied with the requirements of the Suffolk Design Guide.

To promote the village identity and avoid Bramford coming to look like a suburb of Ipswich: -

- ◆ there should not be reliance on standard house types or materials that do not reflect the traditional buildings of Mid Suffolk.

To produce buildings which enhance the village: -

- ◆ developers should use high quality imaginative and sympathetic designs, respecting and reproducing the proportions of traditional village architecture
- ◆ developers should not rely on pastiche or the incorporation or addition of inappropriate architectural features in an attempt to achieve character or individuality.

To achieve harmony with the traditional buildings in the village: -

- ◆ designers should reproduce the proportions, the variations in building shapes (simple rectangular forms extended by side or rear wings), the varying roof formations, pitches and heights, and the typical building details to be observed in the traditional village architecture of Bramford.

To achieve the aim of Bramford looking like a typical Suffolk village: -

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

- ◆ external facing and roofing materials should be of a high quality and respect the vernacular types of materials that prevail within the village. Large chimneys, clay tiles (plain or pantiles) with steep roof pitches, and colourwashed rendered walls in colours traditional to Mid Suffolk are typical features of the village architecture, as are black painted plinths
- ◆ these traditional features produce a visual effect which is preferable to the hard, angular effect and brighter colour of massed brickwork.

To achieve a "sense of place", with the landscape, settlement and buildings in harmony: -

- ◆ house designs should be based on an understanding of each site in Bramford and its surroundings
- ◆ new buildings should be envisaged as part of the village scene and not as shapes drawn on an extract of a map.

To make effective use of space and to assimilate new buildings in the village: -

- ◆ the relationships between buildings and the use of spaces between the buildings are to be carefully considered
- ◆ designs should incorporate an ever changing pattern of small and large spaces, enclosure and openness, colours and textures of materials, play of light and shade, extent of planting, and size and spacing of buildings, which will produce character and ambience.

To avoid problems of unneighbourly, dominant, subservient and inharmonious design: -

- ◆ the scale of new buildings should be judged against existing buildings and the space around them
- ◆ designs should complement the surrounding buildings.

To balance the density of developments: -

- ◆ proposals for predominantly small dwellings should incorporate compensatory open space such as landscaped squares or greens.

To avoid a regimented urban appearance: -

- ◆ parking arrangements should be unobtrusive, and layouts of developments should not be car-dominated. Well designed garages should be used to provide relief to two storey massing and to the roofscape, but should not overshadow the house
- ◆ car parking facilities on new developments must be adequate for modern needs.

To enhance the village identity and improve driver behaviour and pedestrian safety: -

- ◆ the design and selection of materials for any new External Works should avoid using pavings, road signs, lamp standards or planting schemes more suitable for an urban location.

To protect visual amenities of the village and residential amenity: -

- ◆ private security lighting and street lighting for new developments, or for newly designated Conservation Areas, should be of an appropriate style for a village, avoiding light pollution.

To preserve Bramford's environment and visual amenity: -

- ◆ new developments must give high priority to landscape design, incorporating wherever possible the use of native species of trees and other planting
- ◆ landscaping of rear boundaries facing the countryside is especially important as it is necessary to ensure that existing and new development sits well in its landscape setting
- ◆ mature hedging is preferable to fencing in proximity to open countryside, as hedging maintains the sense of the village merging into farmland
- ◆ landscaping schemes must be fully implemented before the site is handed over.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

To preserve visual and residential amenity, and promote sustainability: -

- ◆ Affordable Housing developments must be subject to exactly the same requirements for design and landscaping as will apply to private housing developments.

To preserve and promote interest in the village heritage: -

- ◆ the character of the Listed buildings and their settings in the village should be protected particularly from insensitive new development, in accordance with the policies of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan.

To preserve the archaeological heritage of Bramford: -

- ◆ all reasonable efforts should be made to retain its many archaeological sites for future generations. Information is held by the County Archaeological Unit, to whom all enquiries should be addressed, as the location of the sites is constantly reviewed and updated by them. The desirability of preserving sites will be a material consideration for MSDC in deciding whether to grant Planning Permission. Development on archaeological sites is very likely to entail delays and additional costs, which are to be borne entirely by the developer. Developers may be required at their own cost to preserve archaeological remains on site or excavate and record them in accordance with a legally binding agreement.

EXISTING DOMESTIC BUILDINGS: ALTERATIONS, EXTENSIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The publication "Planning - a guide for householders" is available from Mid Suffolk District Council. Householders and builders are advised to refer to the document when considering future maintenance, alteration and extension works. The Council can advise on Planning, Listed buildings, buildings in Conservation Areas, Tree Preservation Orders, wildlife protection and Building Regulations.

Doors and windows: they form the "face" of a building, and can make a house look pleasant and well-balanced or odd and ugly. A certain proportion of the window area must be openable in relation to the floor area of the room. The most pleasing proportions for windows are achieved by dividing window panes into equal sizes. Window styles should not be mixed on one elevation of a house. The appearance and style of replacement doors should be in keeping with the proportions, age and architectural style of the house, and in keeping with the immediate neighbourhood.

Porches: the addition of a porch can enhance or ruin the look of a property. Flat roofs can give criminals access to upper windows. A simple gabled or lean-to roof supported on shaped brackets can look satisfactory, but fully enclosed porches need particular care so that they do not become over-obtrusive or out of scale with other elements of the façade.

Extensions: these should be in keeping with the size, design and materials of the existing dwelling, and in scale with nearby properties. Flat roofs are unattractive and require frequent renewal of roof coverings. Extensions should be subservient and respect the proportions of the original property, particularly in terms of their size, siting and outline.

Conservatories: the style and proportions should respect the style and proportions of the house, and consideration should be given to the amount of garden space that will be lost.

Front boundaries: the treatment of front boundaries depends on the type of property. There may be covenants prohibiting front boundary walls, fences and hedges on open plan estates. Trees can overshadow bungalows and small front gardens. In the longer-established parts of Bramford, brick boundary walls are a common feature, and are attractive if maintained. Native species hedges provide a softer effect than walls, and they can enhance the village identity and are very valuable in encouraging wildlife, but require maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

Rear and side boundaries: there is a height limit generally in force for fences and walls. Native species hedges are preferable to conifers, which can soon grow out of control, look oppressive and alien in our landscape, cast long shadows, and annoy the neighbours.

Parking, drives and hardstandings: the village estates were laid out in anticipation of relatively few cars per household, and now appear car-dominated. Vehicles are now parked on driveways, roads, footpaths, and on front gardens and grass verges. If gardens are to be paved to allow for additional parking, it is advantageous to use gravel, brick or block pavements, granite setts or a combination, as they allow rainwater to seep into the ground, reducing surface water flooding. They also allow for easy repair and varied arrangements and designs. These advantages do not apply to imprinted in-situ concrete paving or tarmac.

To retain and enhance the traditional architecture: existing buildings should be maintained as far as is practicable using original or sympathetic materials. However, PVCu is an acceptable alternative material to wood for replacement windows for buildings which are neither Listed nor in a Conservation Area

Brickwork: any repointing should be carried out with an appropriate profile, texture and mortar. This is particularly important for the Victorian terraced houses. Black painted plinths are a strong feature in the traditional domestic architecture of Bramford. Cladding is to be avoided.

Paint colours: should be muted rather than bright on the rendered walls and woodwork of Listed buildings and buildings in a Conservation Area.

COMMERCIAL, AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

In the interests of economic health of the village: -

- ◆ small scale enterprises (of a commercial, agricultural/horticultural or light industrial nature) may be welcomed if in a suitable location and provided that they do not detract from the rural appearance and character of their surroundings.
- ◆ Redundant agricultural buildings in a sound condition provide scope to locate businesses within the village.
- ◆ Conversion to business uses which do not adversely affect visual amenity, may be supported.
- ◆ Working from home is favoured as a sustainable form of employment, but the additional space required may impact on house design.
- ◆ If new commercial, agricultural or industrial buildings are constructed, or existing buildings are converted to these uses, then in the interests of visual amenity, the following considerations are paramount: scale, proportion, colour, construction materials, fencing, landscaping, and the provision of adequate space around buildings.

In the interests of residential amenity: -

- ◆ open storage and light pollution are to be avoided.

OUR VISION OF WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE VILLAGE

The following views were expressed by the residents of Bramford in the Public Meeting relating to the Parish Plan in March 2003.

These positive comments relate to the present:

The countryside is easily accessible, and the footpaths, river walks and recreation areas are appreciated by many.

The wide variety of recreation facilities, which are free of charge, allow people to appreciate the traditional features of the countryside.

Bramford is self-contained, safe, friendly and unspoilt.

Properties are generally well maintained.

The industrial areas are mainly out of sight.

There is a lot of history in the village .

The village is viable as it can house a variety of family sizes on range of incomes.

Bramford is a village on the edge of countryside but has convenient access to town.

Good design features include wide verges and building around a central green.

These negative comments relate to the present:

The village is becoming compartmentalised into different estates.

There is no real village style in the housing because of the volume of 20th century construction.

There is suburban uniformity, particularly with gardens, renovations and new housing.

There are ugly extensions and inappropriate alterations to some houses.

There is a general lack of landscaping of public areas.

There are some neglected areas of public space.

Street lighting is urban and outdated.

Bypass Nurseries has been an eyesore for years.

Planning in Ipswich has a total disregard for its effect on Bramford.

These are suggestions from the residents:

Better promotion and management of the countryside areas would lead to better appreciation of these facilities and features.

Clarify the village identity.

Protect the village boundaries.

Install wicket fences with Bramford signs at entry to the village as at Sroughton.

The village streets should be humanised with trees and traffic calming.

The area around the fish shop and the Co-op should be improved.

There should be trees, shrubs and a seat in the centre, with the aim of giving a central focus to The Street.

Varied paving schemes would break up monotony on The Street and could calm traffic.

Repaint or renew the railings at the bridge and railway bridge.

Overhead cables should be diverted underground.

Appreciation of the village heritage could be improved.

Too much new development would make Bramford seem like an extension of Ipswich.

We are in danger of losing village identity and should resist at all costs becoming part of Ipswich.

Bramford residents are united in wanting to retain and enhance the village identity. They also enjoy the advantages of the open countryside and the proximity to Ipswich.

THE DOCUMENTS THAT FRAMED THE CONTENTS OF THE BRAMFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

Central Government:

Sustainable Communities: Delivering through Planning
Sustainable Communities: Building for the future

East of England Local Government Conference:

Consultation on options leading to Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England

Mid Suffolk District Council:

Local Plan
Issues Report
Housing Strategy 2002/3 and the future
Empty Homes Strategy 2002-2005
Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: Affordable Homes
Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas

Countryside Agency:

Design in the Countryside Experiments
Design Initiatives in the Countryside
Towards Tomorrow's Countryside
Living in the Countryside
Rural Development and Statutory Planning
Planning Tomorrow's Countryside
Landscape Character Assessment