

BAWDESWELL PARISH COUNCIL ON THE LATEST BRECKLAND DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN –
OCTOBER 2025

Bawdeswell Parish Council thanks Breckland District Council for sight of its latest iteration of the Draft Local Plan (October 2025).

While it was rewarding to hear that Breckland had listened to reason in re-categorizing Bawdeswell as a Primary Village, rather than a Local Service Centre, it would appear that less emphasis continues to be placed on the desperate need for improved and new infrastructure within the village if it is to support any new housing development!

Moreover, while the reduction in status from an LSC to Primary Village was expected to result in a lower housing development target than in the last iteration of the draft Plan (65 houses), in fact the Bawdeswell target has over-doubled to a 140 target for housing development, equating to a 34% increase in housing numbers without any clear emphasis on the infrastructure necessary to support such development.

If one compares the Bawdeswell target of 140 houses with other primary villages in the area, both in terms of target size and geography, the closest is North Elmham with a target of 100 new dwellings. However, comparing infrastructure within the 2 villages: North Elmham has medical facilities, transport to its local town, 2 public houses, shops, a post office, a school and village hall, plus more employment opportunities than Bawdeswell, which has a 'full' school, village hall, one shop, no medical facilities or public transport to get to them, no public house and a part-time post office! Accordingly, on the basis of size and available infrastructure, the Bawdeswell housing target should be much less than North Elmham.

The fact that Bawdeswell has a potential development site outside of the village and capable of hosting 140 dwellings, does not mean that this space should be filled with houses without recourse to the infrastructure needed to sustain such a development (or indeed the current village!). Moreover, the Plan ignores the 'ribboning' effect of such a development, which would lead to the 'effective merging of Bawdeswell with the smaller village of Foxley.

Looking more positively at the Breckland proposal for Bawdeswell, a local developer (Abel Homes) has, in conjunction with the owner of the land in question, come up with a sensible development of about 45 dwellings on the southern side of the land in question, and as part of a S106 agreement is planning to build play areas within the site and a car park for the adjacent school, which along with other traffic calming measures would serve the village well.

The Parish Council were surprised to note that the site at the end of The Street was not put forward as a site for consideration as it offered affordable housing and equally important infrastructure and would have been a sensible alternative.

This, along with more firm proposals to improve sustainable infrastructure would be an acceptable and sensible development target for the Primary Village of Bawdeswell.