

Consultation on Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

I am writing to formally express my profound disappointment and significant concerns regarding the current draft of the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan. While a Neighbourhood Plan should serve as a protective shield for a community's unique identity, this document, in its current form, is fundamentally flawed. It fails to accurately represent the rural character, heritage assets, and infrastructure realities of our village. By omitting critical geographical data, ignoring clear community mandates, and failing to address the cumulative impact of recent large-scale developments, the Plan—as written—is not only misleading but potentially damaging to the long-term future and sustainability of Barrowby Parish. It does not reflect the village I recognise, nor does it address the very real constraints we face daily.

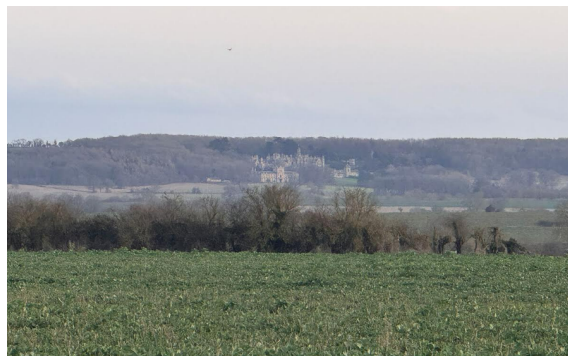
Failure to Recognise Cross-Village Visual Heritage

My primary disappointment with the Neighbourhood Plan is that while the **Harlaxton-Denton Bowl** is given special attention, its specific relationship to Barrowby has been entirely overlooked.

The western side of Barrowby sits directly within this bowl, offering iconic views of Harlaxton Manor and Harlaxton Village. These views are best experienced from the **Gingerbread Way**, a heritage footpath identified in the community questionnaire as a facility of 'utmost importance.'

Furthermore, the document fails to recognize the 'twin spire' relationship between our villages. The ability to see one church spire from the next is a defining heritage feature of Lincolnshire. This visual link, where Harlaxton views Barrowby and vice-versa, is not just a geographical fact; it is a vital part of the resident experience that has been omitted from the 'Views' section.

While this landscape is mentioned in paragraph 2.21, it is inexplicably missing from the policy protections. **I strongly request that the views of Harlaxton Village and Manor—visible from public footpaths and the sports fields and views from the footpaths back to Barrowby showing the church—be formally included (photographs from both directions taken from the public footpaths are shown below).** Without acknowledging this relationship, the Plan fails to accurately represent the character and heritage of Barrowby as we know it.

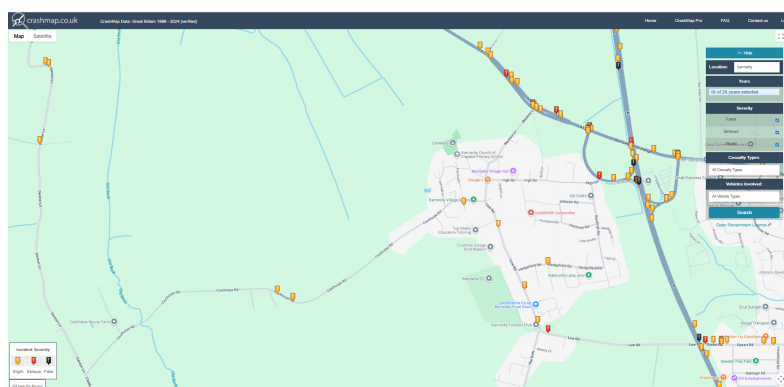


Infrastructure Constraints and Transport Realities

The Neighbourhood Plan fails to acknowledge that Barrowby's historic character creates specific, modern-day design challenges. Our heritage layout results in narrow footways along all main roads, which directly impacts pedestrian safety. Furthermore, the Plan overlooks the practical realities of living in heritage properties; a lack of off-street parking makes on-street parking a necessity, creating significant 'pinch points' that are difficult for through-traffic to navigate. These constraints must be formally recognised to ensure future planning is realistic and preserves the village's functional character.

Beyond the village core, the Plan is notably silent on the impact of the A52 and A1. These major routes traverse the parish, acting as both a physical barrier to Grantham and a preventative measure against urban spread. However, they also present significant dangers. The A52 is considered so hazardous that local children receive free bus passes to school specifically to discourage them from attempting to cross it. This section of the Plan should be reinforced with crash data from the last 10 years to accurately reflect the risks faced by drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians alike (I have included a screen shot taken from crashmap.com below).

To address these omissions, I have included a detailed analysis of Barrowby's road and footpath infrastructure, completed as part of a recent planning application. I am prepared to reconfigure this data so it can be included as a formal appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. This will ensure that our village's genuine constraints are documented with evidence, rather than being glossed over as they are in the current draft.



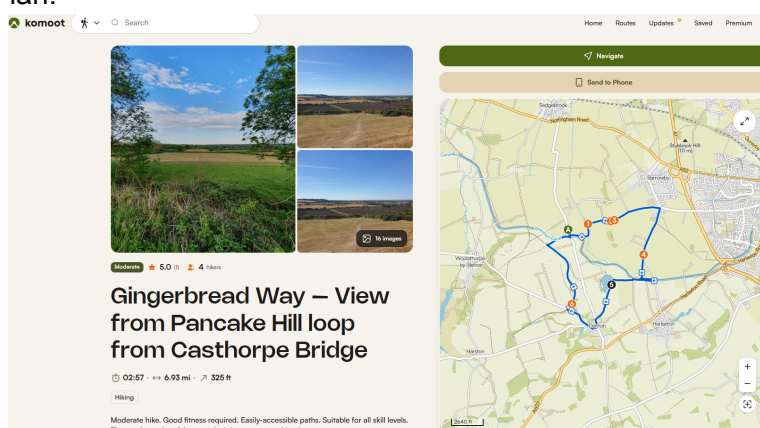
Barrowby remains heavily reliant on car use due to a lack of local facilities, a fact mirrored in paragraph 2.42 of the Neighbourhood Plan, which notes that most residents commute to work. When combined with the dramatic cumulative increase in housing across the area, this has led to a record volume of traffic and car ownership within the village. This fact is overlooked by the plan. I have included an appendix from an official report included in a recent planning application objection which clearly outlines the lack of facilities in the village and the distance that is required to locate them.

Significant Omissions in Countryside Access and Heritage

Barrowby boasts an extensive network of footpaths, yet the most significant—the **Gingerbread Way**—is inexplicably omitted from the Neighbourhood Plan. Given that it is clearly signposted from the A52, this is a major oversight.



Community feedback confirms that residents view access to the countryside via these footpaths as their most valued local asset. To overlook our most important heritage trail is a significant gap in the document. I have included evidence from a leading walking website that highlights the high value placed on the Gingerbread Way, and I strongly urge its formal inclusion in the Plan.



Definition and Mapping of Rural Character

I am concerned that the village's rural character has not been sufficiently defined or supported by mapping. While the mission statement identifies Barrowby as a rural village, it lacks the evidence to explain why.

Barrowby's rural identity is defined by its immediate proximity to the countryside and the network of footpaths that provide access to it. Most homes are situated near active agricultural land or paddocks, and the regular presence of tractors and horses—supported by local farms and livery yards—is central to daily life. I recommend including a map of these farms and yards to properly illustrate and reinforce the village's rural context.

Preservation of Village Identity: The Requirement for a Defined Buffer

A central aspiration for Barrowby is the continued resistance to 'urban creep' and the risk of becoming a suburb of Grantham. To protect our identity, the Plan should formally establish a physical buffer zone, supported by a clear map.

Despite being a critical concern for residents, this issue is currently omitted from the report. I request that the document be updated to include further details on this matter, specifically referencing the local referendum held on this very subject, which clearly demonstrated the community's mandate to remain a distinct and separate village.

Hydrological Significance and Headwater Management

While the report discusses climate change and flood risk, it fails to identify Barrowby's critical role as a headwater. The Barrowby Stream originates here and feeds both the Mow Beck and Old Beck; therefore, drainage and development in our parish have a direct, cascading impact on flooding in the surrounding areas. This hydrological connection must be formally recognised.

Failure to Address Scale of Development and the 2025 Village Poll

The Plan fails to account for the significant scale of development approved within the parish over the last three years, including 1,500 homes at Rectory Farm, 290 on Low Road, and a further 227 on Dysart Road. This cumulative growth makes the omission of the October 2025 Village Poll where 98% of voters asked for the the Parish Council to Oppose all new development in the parish, particularly striking; that vote provided a clear community mandate for the Parish Council to oppose further development. By ignoring both the recent surge in housing and the direct results of the poll, the report fails to reflect the current reality and the expressed will of the residents.

Critique of Ambiguous Planning Terminology and Settlement Boundaries

The term 'land immediately adjacent to the developed footprint' is dangerously ambiguous and lacks the precision required to prevent misinterpretation or manipulation.

Barrowby lacks a defined central core; instead, its limited facilities—a pub and a village shop—are situated at opposite ends of Low Road. Suggesting that proximity to the existing footprint offers inherent benefits is inaccurate. In reality, the opposite is true: further development creates unsustainable pressure on an already strained road network. This exacerbates accessibility issues for the entire village, leading to significant concerns regarding road safety and increased pollution from idling or congested traffic.

This statement is misleading as it establishes a 'rolling' settlement boundary that facilitates encroachment into the countryside. Such an approach directly conflicts with the primary objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to protect the village's rural setting, landscape character, and distinct identity.

I strongly recommend the implementation of a definitive settlement boundary for Barrowby. This would align with the clear consensus of the community, provide long-term planning certainty, and effectively prevent incremental expansion/urban creep.

Conclusion

In summary, the omissions and inaccuracies identified throughout this response demonstrate that the Neighbourhood Plan requires urgent and substantial revision to be fit for purpose. For this document to have any legitimacy, it must reflect the lived reality of Barrowby residents and the strategic environmental challenges of the parish.

I strongly demand that the Plan be updated to include the following as formal appendices:

- **The independent analysis of the road and footpath network** to provide an accurate baseline of our infrastructure constraints.
- **The official report outlining the lack of local facilities** and the resulting distances required for basic services.
- **Comprehensive mapping** of the village's rural assets (farms/yards) and the critical hydrological headwater connections.

Without these essential evidence bases and the inclusion of the community's mandate regarding settlement boundaries and development, this Plan will fail to protect Barrowby from 'urban creep' and will instead facilitate the erosion of our village's distinct identity.