Introduction

Misterton with Walcote Parish Council through the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee organised a drop-in event on Neighbourhood Planning on 25 November 2017. The event took place between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm at the Village Hall in Walcote.

The aim of this event was to help engage the community in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and to seek comments on the emerging topics – including Local Green Space and environment; community facilities and amenities; housing and design; transport and employment.

The drop-in event was promoted in a variety of ways:
✓ Press - advertised in the Five Villages newsletter as well as the Swift Flash
✓ Posters – placed on parish and community noticeboards
✓ Questionnaire – the date of the Open Event was referenced in the Questionnaire
✓ Social Media – Facebook page
✓ A sandwich board was in place outside the venue on the day.

A total of 26 people attended the event.
Format of Event

Members of the Advisory Committee welcomed attendees on arrival and asked them to complete a contact sheet to record attendance. The arrangements for the day were explained.

The first displays introduced neighbourhood planning and described the process that is being followed by the Advisory Committee on behalf of the Misterton with Walcote Parish Council. Copies of explanatory booklets were available on the display stands.

Copies of finalised Neighbourhood Plans were available for people to read as they walked around the displays and enjoyed the refreshments that were available.

Consultation on key issues

A series of display boards were spread across the room, each of which focused on a different topic related to planning and development, including:

- Vision for the Plan lifetime
- Housing – mix, design, location and heritage
- Environment – existing designations and Local Green Space criteria
- Transport, Employment and Community Facilities Displays

People were invited to read the displays and the information available and to make comment on ‘post-it’ notes.

In addition, people were invited to identify open spaces which are important to them by placing up to 3 green stickers on a map of the parish which they value for views; and up to 3 blue stickers on areas good for recreation.

A further map of the parish offered people the chance to identify sites where housing development is not welcomed, and sites where residential development would be acceptable.

People were also encouraged to identify land ownership in the Parish.

Information about the community questionnaire was available to participants.

Display Boards

The following pages give a flavour of the boards that were on display at the event:
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR MISTERTON AND WALCOTE
OPEN EVENT 25 November 2017

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?
Part of the Government’s localism agenda
Self-determination, tailored to local needs
A statutory plan, legally binding
Involves elected local people in the decision-making process

What is involved?
This involves people, groups and organisations in the community
Full time involvement of local people

What can’t it do?
The Neighbourhood Plan can’t
Lead to a new development
Regulate highways
Influence national policy

Why do it?
The Neighbourhood Plan gives communities
Power to protect and enhance what makes our area special

The Neighbourhood Plan will:

- Establish a vision for Misterton and Walcote
- Help the Parish Council to manage growth
- Ensure that development contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the area
- Protect and enhance the natural environment and the character and appearance of Misterton and Walcote
- Ensure that new developments and improvements are environmentally sustainable
- Use the Planning Matters Guide to support the Neighbourhood Plan
- Use the Independent Examiner to ensure compliance with what is known as best practice - primarily conformity with local and national planning policy
- Once the Plan passes the examination there will be a referendum involving all residents in the parish to ratify it
- If the referendum passes the Plan will be made legal and become part of the planning system for Misterton and Walcote

The Plan and the parishes are subject to an Independent Examiner to test compliance with what is known as best practice - primarily conformity with local and national planning policy

FINISH
Having read the displays, attendees were asked to comment on each topic using post-it notes and to place them on flip-chart paper alongside each display.

A large map of the Parish was available, and people were invited to place up to 3 blue dots on areas of recreation and up to 3 green dots in places enjoying good views. A further map was available for people to indicate where they would prefer housing development to be located.

These are the comments that were made:

**Do you support the vision?**

- Yes, I support the vision, it would be nice if development could be kept within the present village boundaries.
- Yes, better to be able to express our views than not have any reasonable way of ensuring local vision.
- Yes – we need to influence how the village develops and how traffic is managed.
- Speed control on the A4306 is a necessity – especially HGV’s. When the A14 is closed (often) the road becomes extra busy and harder for pedestrians to cross.
- I support the vision of village development. I would prefer all new building to be within the village boundaries.
- Yes. Traffic is a concern especially with the developments proposed for Lutterworth east etc. Future building within the current settlement boundaries would be for the best if at all possible.
- Yes, I support this vision, but would greater employment opportunities benefit local people? Concerns about additional traffic.
- Yes we support this vision but the traffic would need to be effectively managed.
- I support the vision. I believe the village can afford to grow as long as it is done sympathetically.
- Yes I support the vision – but ensure people are considered! Public transport, parking in our streets, amenities to support more residents.
- Yes, I support this vision but how will the traffic be managed?

**Housing**

- We need housing for rent. Even affordable housing can be too expensive for young people.
- It is hard for local people to get on the housing ladder
- We need affordable homes for young people with village links. No more costly 5 bedroom houses please.
- Affordable housing is a must. We can’t drive out our young people because they can’t afford to live in their home area.
- We need affordable housing for the young people of the village, and/or rental, shared ownership etc. No more large homes.
- Affordable homes with gardens if they are built on green spaces and garage.
Those in attendance were invited to place a green dot in a location where new residential development would be acceptable and a red dot where new housing was not considered suitable. This was the outcome.

**Design**

- House designs should be in keeping with the surrounding area – and make sure there is suitable off-road parking.
- New homes to have dedicated parking areas appropriate to adult occupants (inc adult children living at home) without the need for parking on the narrow lanes and roads of our village. Garages tend to be used for junk, not cars.
- Eco-designs that set a standard for other counties to follow.
- House designs should be in keeping with the surroundings and have adequate car parking.
- House design should fit in with current housing stock. Eco-design should be incorporated and adequate car parking.
- Big spend on renewable energy needed. This can be done in housing at design stage.
- Adequate car parking off road for projected number of residents in each new house.
Environment

- Keep bridleways clear. Farmers allow to become overgrown/block access.
- Need to protect sites of special interest – the variety of wildlife is one of the areas attractions.
- Bigger cycle path to Lutterworth.

Those in attendance were invited to place up to three blue dots in a location with good views and up to three green dots in a location which is good for recreation. The following map shows the results.

Highways

- An enforceable speed limit through the village.
- Enforcement of 30mph limit.
- Worst offending lorries are those going to Bruntingthorpe car auctions.
- If any further development is proposed within the village then public transport would need to be improved.
• Concerns over the amount of car transporters from Bruntingthorpe passing through village – speed restrictions need enforcing
• Weight restrict heavy lorries particularly if they speed.
• Traffic calming measures in the village.
• Speed limit needs enforcing.
• Enforce speed limits.
• When the A14 is closed or congested – HGV traffic increases on the A4304. The 30mph limit is often ignored, especially at night. During day time – traffic makes it hard to safely cross the road. For the less mobile this is a real problem.

Heritage

• The landscape is heritage!
• Maintain and conserve the older buildings to keep the heritage. Agree the landscape is our heritage – preserve natural habitats.
• Older buildings in the village should be protected where possible.
• The overall look and feel of the village is just as important as individual buildings.
• We have very limited built heritage remaining so should protect it.

Employment

• Will more employment benefit local people? What kind of business would be appropriate?

Community facilities

• The look/appearance of the garage is very over-bearing for a small village – unattractive.
• Support the black horse – your local community owned pub.
• Cycle connection needed to get into Lutterworth and Magna Park and DIRFT.
• Transport links need to be improved. Bus more frequent, safe cycle paths.
• Support the black horse.
• Local people support events, clubs, activities that take place at the village hall.
• Develop garage into a nicer local store that looks like a nice village building.
• Good farm shop needed in locality.
• Support for the Black Horse and the Memorial Hall. A good farm shop. Maybe gas pipeline into village.

Developer contributions

• Preserve green space between Walcote and proposed Lutterworth east.
• A green belt needs to be retained between Walcote and the proposed east Lutterworth development.
• Misterton Country Park.
• Contributions to offset disruption and development such as replanting felled trees etc.
Summary

A range of opinion was expressed in the comments made by the parishioners attending the consultation.

All respondents supported the Vision with parishioners generally in favour of new development on a limited scale, providing the parish’s infrastructure is increased in line with building levels and is sensitively designed to be in keeping with the character of the settlements. Renewable energy and eco-design were also features asked to be taken into consideration.

Comments reflected an overwhelming call for affordable housing for young people and generally more housing for rent. Respondents also stated the necessity, in the event of housing development, for an increase in capacity for the delivery of social, leisure, community and public transport services, along with the protection of existing open green space, for example between Walcote and the proposed Lutterworth East development; preservation of well-used buildings and resources such as the Black Horse pub, the Memorial Hall and Misterton Country Park, as well as the alleviation of traffic congestion and road safety issues. A number of comments highlighted traffic generated by the Bruntingthorpe airfield car auction site as a case in point in terms of existing traffic congestion for the area, along with further increased HGV traffic on the A4304 whenever traffic is diverted from the A14.