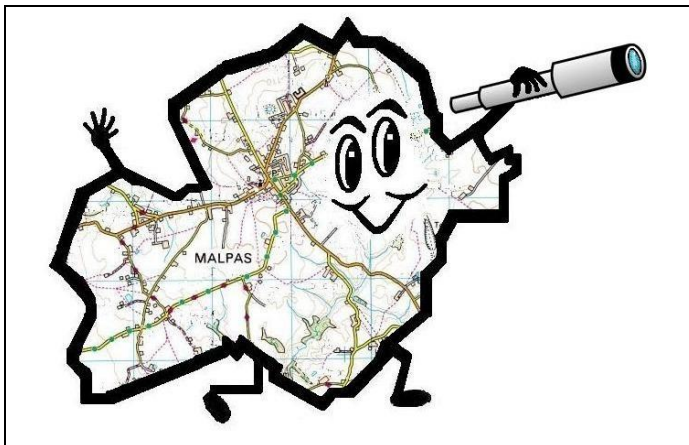


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# Malpas and Overton Neighbourhood Plan

## Consultation Statement



**August 2014**

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## Introduction

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This Consultation Statement is a summary of the community consultation that was undertaken when producing the Malpas and Overton Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

This document shows how the requirements of Regulation 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 have been met during the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In November 2011 after gaining the support of Malpas Parish Council, a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG), consisting of 12 local residents was formed, and tasked with producing a plan.

From the outset the objective was to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that was for the people of Malpas and Overton by the people of Malpas and Overton. For this reason particular emphasis was placed on “Front-loaded” community consultation to engage as wide a range of local people and interested parties as possible, before any specific proposals were formulated. To ensure that the views and priorities of the local community could inform the plan right from the beginning, a sub-committee responsible for all communications was assembled.

The consultation process was designed to ensure that initiatives took place at critical points in the Neighbourhood Plan production process. Decisions needed to be taken that would affect all sections of the community. It was therefore critical that as many people as possible should be engaged in the production process.

An extensive variety of events and communication techniques were employed, including the innovative design of a caricature that represented the NP area (Maxwell). The results were fed back to local people promptly after each consultation exercise.

Despite many early meetings being held in Steering Group members’ houses, it became clear that external finance would be required to produce the NP, so a government grant for £7K was applied for and received.

However, the monetary cost of producing the NP has far surpassed this figure. This is due to the engagement of IBI Taylor Young Planning Consultants, and major expenditure on community engagement activities, which were seen as essential to maximise the input by local residents and to judge the village mood as the work progressed.

In 2013 a community fundraising appeal was made and this brought in over £9,100,

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which made a huge contribution to the fund and enabled the NPSG to complete its work and ensure that we had the support of our planning consultancy during the whole production process.

At the start the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group undertook a branding exercise and created the “Maxwell” caricature, which would act as a mascot for the NP.

Maxwell was created from the outline of Malpas Parish when drawn on a map. He has appeared on all publications, which has included the Neighbourhood Plan website, the Face Book site, the Parish News (in 16 editions) and on posters.

These publications were used throughout the process to keep people informed of our progress. Every opportunity was given to enable members of the community to seek more information or ask further questions should they wish to do so. In addition to this, regular updates on progress were given at monthly Parish Council Meetings.

Our work was supported and guided throughout by IBI Taylor Young, our Planning Consultants. We liaised with them throughout the production stages of the NP. Their support and guidance proved to be essential. This provided us with an additional and wider perspective form of consultation, and ensured that we were working effectively and that we remained focused upon the essential issues. We would not have achieved a draft NP by early 2014 without the wisdom provided by IBI Taylor Young, specifically, Simon Peake and Jim Fox, our dedicated team.

The consultation initiatives took place at the following stages of the neighbourhood plan production process:-

1. Initial consultation  
April - July 2012
2. Vision and Objectives  
May 2013
3. Intensive 2 day workshop September 2013
4. Transport and Travel Workshop  
November 2013
5. Draft NP community consultation  
Winter/Spring 2013-2014

This Consultation Statement provides a summary of each of the above stages with additional details provided in the appendices.

For the full list of all those who contributed to the consultation process, please see Appendices 1, 2 and 3.



## 1. Initial Consultation



### Objective

This was the first public consultation event on the Neighbourhood Plan for Malpas and Overton. The aim was to introduce the idea of a neighbourhood plan to the residents and to identify their issues, concerns and hopes and aspirations for the future. It was decided by the Steering Group that the feedback would be used to draft a vision and objectives document.

### Who was consulted?

The official consultation period was from 23rd April until 14th May 2012. Malpas has been designated as a key service centre by Cheshire West and Chester Council, (CWaC) because of its role in providing services and facilities to the surrounding villages and hamlets. The aim of this initial consultation was therefore to engage as many people as possible and not

just those who live in Malpas and Overton Villages.

### How were they consulted?

A Face Book page was created to raise awareness and the Steering Group visited over 25 local clubs and societies during May and June 2012. (See Appendix 4 for the list of societies visited). A questionnaire/leaflet was distributed to every house within the neighbourhood plan area (Appendix 5). It was then decided to extend the consultation period to include the Malpas 2012 Queens Diamond Jubilee Celebration Event on Monday 4th June. This took the form of a stall at the Fete to allow as many people as possible to express their views on this important matter. On the day 50 people visited the stall and became engaged in the process.

### The consultation results

In all there were 91 written responses to this consultation. The overall conclusions from the consultation process are summarised below. The list indicates the most popular responses first and the least popular at the bottom. The list only shows the most significant responses. For a complete list of all the responses see Appendix 6.

1. The main things people liked about living in Malpas
  - Plenty of services and amenities
  - Friendly place to live
  - Good community spirit

- Like the village as it is
- The rural aspect of the area with good walking opportunities
- Peaceful
- Good choice of clubs and societies

- No big housing estates
- More traffic control
- More small businesses
- More open green spaces
- Gastro Pub

2. The Main things people didn't like about living in Malpas

- Traffic congestion
- Inconsiderate parking
- Idea of more housing
- Speeding traffic
- Empty shops/buildings
- Lack of children's play areas

3. The main things that they thought were lacking in Malpas

- Lack of car parks and car parking spaces
- Family friendly gastro pub
- Needs better children's play areas
- More facilities for young people
- More yellow lines to stop inconsiderate parking
- Heritage trail
- Benches at the Recreation Ground

4. How the people of Malpas and Overton would like to see the village evolve

- People would like slow managed evolution as has historically happened in the past.
- More car parking

**How the issues and concerns were responded to**

The results were published on the Malpas Neighbourhood Plan web site. ([www.malpasplan.co.uk](http://www.malpasplan.co.uk)) On 13th October 2012 an open exhibition was held in the Jubilee Hall, Malpas, displaying the results of the IBI Taylor Young Character Study of ten areas of Malpas. 60 local people attended the event. At the exhibition, people's views were canvassed in a formal manner, to assess the village mood. This event generated a lot of local concern and proved to have a significant impact on the design of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As a result of all these consultations a draft vision and objectives document was produced.

**2. Second Consultation -**



## Vision and Objectives stage

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### **Objective**

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group led a Vision and Objectives consultation exercise with the local community in May 2013. This exercise was aimed at identifying the issues that local people considered most important and to seek their views on potential policies and aspirations. This was the second public consultation event on the Neighbourhood Plan for Malpas and Overton. The dates were 11th, 12th, and 15<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Who was consulted and how?**

The aim was to engage as many people as possible who live in Malpas and Overton Villages, so a questionnaire booklet covering the draft Vision and Objectives was delivered to each of the 815 homes in the Parishes. (See Appendix 7) Questions were asked on 35 proposals, structured around seven themes. These were later re-aligned to six themes as documented in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

### **The consultation results**

In total, 152 people responded to the consultation and returned completed questionnaires. The overall conclusions from the consultation process are summarised below. A full detailed breakdown of results to the various questions can be found in Appendix 8.

It is important to note that there were a small number of comments in opposition to the proposals made in the Vision and Objectives document. A small minority was opposed to any growth in housing at all. An even smaller number of individuals favoured eliminating restrictions of any sort, encouraging developers to build very large estates in Malpas with no limits on building numbers.

The majority of people who responded supported the concepts of:

### **Homes for all**

- Each new residential development should be restricted to a maximum number of dwellings.
- Developments should help broaden the choice of available housing options including the provision of housing that local people can afford.
- Developments should seek to address the housing requirement of local residents, and should include bungalow accommodation.
- New affordable housing should reflect a balanced choice in terms of rental and purchase options.

### **Protecting the built environment and Rural Character**

- New residential developments should closely reflect the design of adjacent buildings.
- New residential developments should be built at density levels per

- hectare that retain and reflect the village character.
- New residential developments should protect and enhance the features and aspects of the conservation area, and any listed or historical buildings or other assets.
- Any new individual building should be designed to best reflect the character of the village in terms of style, scale and size.
- Design should take account of the scale and layout of the village and respect local character, reinforcing a strong sense of place.

### **Services and Facilities**

- Malpas as a 'hub' for the local and wider community should be maintained and strengthened through the promotion of the retail outlets and tourist aspects of the area.
- Developers should be required to make a substantial contribution to how facilities and services can be enhanced to accommodate the growth of the population in Malpas and the surrounding Parishes.
- Development plans should take account of the need for sufficient quality educational provision that caters for the whole community from pre-school to adult learner.
- Developments should support or enhance existing health and welfare Services, or provide additional services where there is a need.

- Building development should contribute to the availability of leisure facilities including indoor, outdoor and open spaces.
- New developments should fully meet the impacts created through investment in local infrastructure where necessary including footpaths, parking, sewerage, surface water and drainage.

### **Protecting our Natural Environment**

- New developments should enhance, maintain or create new green space and wildlife corridors in the Parishes.
- Boundary features within any new development should respect local tradition, materials, mixed hedgerows and other indigenous species.
- Routes suitable to be designated as Local Green Space that preserve the rural 'feel' of the area and provide safe travel opportunities for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorised transport should be identified and sign-posted.
- New development should increase opportunities for carbon reduction by the promotion of green industries, green energy sources and sustainable transport choices.
- New developments should incorporate the use of Cheshire native species in hedgerows, trees and other soft landscaping materials.



## Supporting the Local Economy

- Building development should not only focus on the provision of new homes but should also provide new business and retail opportunities.
- The Parish Council should lead on work with CWaC and appropriate infrastructure providers and developers to deliver high speed broadband at the earliest opportunity.
- Development of the built environment should promote growth of the economy through the retention and expansion of retail premises.
- Each new residential development should provide home office working capability.
- Development and /or change of use or extension to existing buildings should allow for the promotion of retail and tourism opportunities.

## Communication and Transport

- New development should demonstrate how it will improve safe and enjoyable travel to all services and community facilities by cyclists and pedestrians.
- Developers should ensure there is off road car parking for all new housing, including car parking for disabled drivers. The suggested minimum is two spaces per dwelling.
- New housing developments should be required to create opportunities for alternative transport and travel

methods to reduce reliance on the motor car.

- Development should assess and address the impact of additional traffic—pedestrians, cyclists, road safety, parking, and congestion — and take steps to minimise the impact.
- New developments should provide link roads and car parking to reduce congestion in the centre of the village.

## Our Place in the Landscape

- New developments should protect the key scenic and distinctive views into and out of the village and minimise the visual impact on the landscape.
- New development should protect and retain the views identified in The Malpas Village Design Statement (2010) produced by Malpas Parish Council.
- Proposals for new homes should be supported within or immediately adjacent to the built up area of the village, particularly the brown-field sites.
- New developments should protect and enhance the character, local distinctiveness, and accessibility of the landscape, including green and open spaces.
- All new building development should use Cheshire native species in hedgerows, trees and other soft landscaping.

## How the issues and concerns were responded to

The results were analysed and used to enable further work by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to formulate initial draft policies. These draft policies then went out to further consultation with the community and stakeholders.



### 3. Intensive Workshop

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#### **Neighbourhood Plan Workshop – September 2013**

Facilitated by: Simon Peake and Jim Fox, IBI Taylor Young, Consultants to the Malpas and Overton NP Steering Group

#### **Objectives of the Workshop**

The Malpas and Overton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group commissioned IBI Taylor Young to facilitate a two day workshop on 16th and 17th September 2013. This was intended as a key stage in developing the overall structure of the NP. The aims of the workshop were

- To accelerate the plan-making process and raise wider awareness of the content
- To build consensus and sense of ownership of those individuals attending (Steering Group members for the most part)
- To identify and agree the basis of policies

## **Who participated or contributed to the Workshop?**

Those who took part included members of the Steering Group (local residents, Parish Councillors, representatives of adjoining neighbourhood forums and parishes) and other key stakeholders such as key officers from Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council. There were 15 delegates on day one and 16 on day two, with two main facilitators and several specialist consultants. Specialists were brought in to assist on specific areas such as Transport, Communications, and Landscape. For a full list of those who participated in the Workshop, please see Appendix 9.

The workshop methodology was to review options based on the consultation feedback received from the proposals in the 7 themes identified in Vision and Objectives document.

This review took the form of exercises and discussions to fully explore each of the options.

The outcome of each exercise was consensus from the attendees on a preferred option for each element. These were the key outputs from the Workshop, which then informed the preparation of the first draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan. Please refer to Appendix 10 for a comprehensive summary of the workshop process.

## **What were the results of the Workshop?**

The participants discussed a wide range of topics, including how to fulfil the agreed vision for the Parishes. In the discussions over two full days, participants explored and analysed issues, aspirations and

parameters covering the 7 themed areas as identified in the Vision and Objectives document.

The outcome informed the drafting of a set of policies covering:

Homes for All

The Built Environment and Rural Character Services and Facilities

Protecting our Natural Environment

Supporting the Local Economy

Communication and Transport

Our Place in the Landscape

These themes were condensed and

renamed into the six themes as

documented in the Draft NP.

The workshop fulfilled its objective, accelerating the plan-making process and establishing consensus and ownership of the Plan by participants. Outcomes were then used to form the basis of policy content and additionally, the Workshops assisted the Steering Group in identifying a series of local priorities and aspirations to contribute to the NP context in the future.

## **Next steps to implement the findings of the workshops**

A number of steps were identified for completion by the Steering Group:

- Completing the drafting of the annotated vision and objectives including identification of reference material
- Drafting the policy sections
- Updating and expanding the Parish Council's Housing Needs Survey
- Reviewing the content of Character Buildings section

- Formulating a ‘wish list’ of community facilities improvements (evidence of need required)
- Reviewing and completing The Evidence Base Document to support all policies
- Continue the action of wider consultation, and the provision of evidence of this, through Consultation Statement
- Collate a list of non-NP but important actions for the future of the Parishes
- Arrange a follow up Transport Workshop

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#### 4. Transport & Access Review Workshop – November 2013

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Facilitated by: Michael Kitching, SK Transport Planning Limited

#### **Objectives of the Workshop**

The Malpas and Overton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group commissioned SK Transport Planning Limited to facilitate a one day workshop on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013. This was key first step in developing a comprehensive village travel plan that was aimed at addressing the poor public transport facilities that existed in Malpas and the surrounding areas.

- To develop draft polices for the Transport and Communication Section of the NP
- To gather baseline data from which to determine actions required to address shortfalls
- To build consensus of issues and establish options for improvements

#### **Who participated or contributed to the Workshop?**

Those who took part included members of the Steering Group (local residents, Parish Councillors, representatives of adjoining

neighbourhood forums and parishes) and other key stakeholders such as key officers from Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council.

There were 12 delegates on the day. Relative areas of interest covered included Walking and Cycle Access, Public Transport Services, On and Off Street Parking, Highway Safety issues, and the rural Highway Network.

The workshop methodology was to undertake a desktop review and correlate the data gathered by the delegates.

A follow on exercise saw delegates walking the village to observe and photograph the “live” situation noting the positive and negative elements of the transport scene. Delegates then returned to their desks to further amend the data already captured.

### **What were the results of the Workshop?**

The output of the workshop was the production of a comprehensive Transport and Access review (see Appendix 11) that informed the policies the Transport and Communication section of the NP.

This data will also form the basis for the completion of an integrated village travel plan as identified in policy TC1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



### **Note**

TC4 as identified in the Transport and Access Review was subsequently removed from the NP on majority consensus of Steering Group members deeming that it would attract and limit development to a particular area of the village.

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## 5 Draft NP Community Consultation

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In December 2013 the final community DRAFT Neighbourhood Plan was completed. The key points and policies of this 80 page document were condensed into an A5 leaflet. The last page of the leaflet was a feedback form (see Appendix 12 for this). The leaflet was distributed to every one of the households in the Malpas and Overton Parishes, and hard copies of the complete draft were placed in strategic locations around the village, such as the Doctor's Surgery and the Bishop Heber Community Library. The draft was made available on the village website ([www.malpasplan.co.uk](http://www.malpasplan.co.uk)) and the availability of the full document was heralded in the Parish News (February 2014). This consultation covered the statutory six week consultation period, from 6th January to 23rd February 2014.

### **Objectives of the initiative**



The objectives of this final community consultation were clear - to ensure that the final version of the NP reflected the views of the majority of the residents of the parishes, from housing and local infrastructure to facilities and services.

### **Who was consulted on the Draft NP?**

The consultation was designed to offer all local residents – and those with an interest in the life of the village, such as people who work in the village or come to Malpas to use its services, to have an opportunity to register comments on the NP.

In addition a number of statutory bodies and individuals were consulted on the Draft NP.

### **How were they consulted?**

The statutory bodies and individuals who made financial contributions to the project were emailed copies of the Draft NP.

There were ‘drop in sessions’ at the Jubilee Hall, on three dates in early 2014 – Friday evening 24th January, 1st February, at the Parish Council Surgery, 15th February at the Farmer’s Market, and at the Malpas Sports Club on 22nd February. The Plan was also discussed at Parish Council meetings.

### **The consultation results**

In all there were 45 responses to the range of consultation initiatives.

### **How the issues and concerns were responded to?**

The feedback comments on the Draft have been analysed and considered by the Steering Group, and amendments made where they were suitable and in keeping

with the established and agreed parameters. (See appendix 13 for the change request log, which included the website responses and listed the changes that were implemented).

### **Next steps required to implement the findings of the consultation**

The revised draft will go forward to CWaC for their consultation period.

Throughout the production process there has been ongoing consultation with CWaC Officers, specifically support from the Spatial Planning Team in the Planning Office of CWaC. Please see Appendix 14 for a running tally of the communication between the NP Steering Group and Officers of CWaC Planning Division.

### **Timing**

Once the Tattenhall NP was passed and became a legal document, and part of the CWaC emerging Local Plan, there appeared to be merit in completing the Malpas and Overton NP as well, without delay.

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**This Consultation Statement and the supporting consultation reports are considered to comply with section 15(2) of part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulation.**

Throughout the Neighbourhood Planning process the Steering Group sought the views of the residents of Malpas and Overton and those whose lives and livelihood bring them to the Parishes. We were pleased by the level of participation, from start to finish, and how community engagement was the cornerstone of the Neighbourhood Plan. The vision which the community crafted is this:

***Malpas will be a thriving, sustainable, small market village that offers a comprehensive range of shops, services and facilities supported by a robust infrastructure and employment opportunities which cater for the needs of all our residents. The special character of Malpas and the surrounding countryside will be protected and celebrated, making the area an attractive place to live, work and to visit.***

Through a continuing community consultation process the Neighbourhood Plan was assembled with the energy and intelligent contributions of local people.

One final and significant point is that, throughout the process of building the Neighbourhood Plan and collecting the views of local people, we have presented

our drafts and work in progress to any land owner, land agent or developer who was considering the option of building new homes in Malpas and Overton. Without exception, their submitted plans did take on board, to a greater or lesser degree, the wishes as expressed in the developing NP. In fact several landowners have made important amendments to their plans in order to satisfy the wishes of local people.

This is evidence that the NP is already having an impact on the community, even prior to the forthcoming referendum.

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