



Bitteswell

Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Summary

8 June 2019

Introduction

Bitteswell Neighbourhood Plan advisory Committee organised a drop-in event on Neighbourhood Planning which was held on 8 June 2019. The event took place between 10:00 am and 12:30 pm at the Village Hall in Bitteswell.

The aim of this event was to help engage the community in 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 through leaflets distributed to each household; posters in local publicly accessible buildings; on the Parish Council website, word of mouth, through details provided on the neighbourhood plan questionnaire and through an A-frame at the event.

In total, 56 people attended the event.



Format of Event

Attendees were welcomed on arrival and asked 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 Parish Council. Copies of explanatory booklets were available in the room for reference and copies of finalised Neighbourhood Plans for other villages were available for people to read as they walked around the displays.

Large scale maps supplied by Harborough District Council were placed on walls around the room

showing areas of flood risk, environmental features and heritage assets.

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:

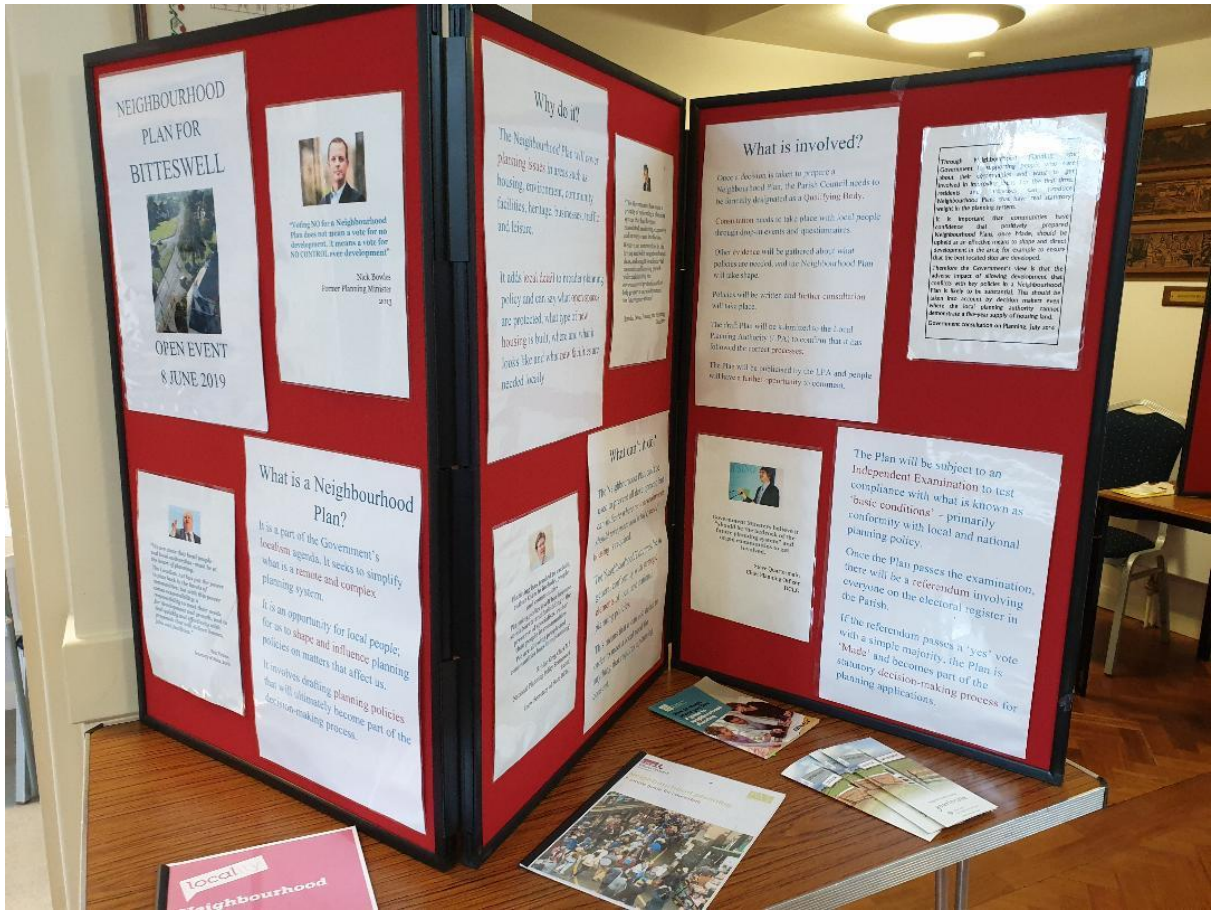
- ✓ Housing – mix, design, location and heritage
- ✓ Environment – existing designations and Local Green Space criteria
- ✓ Transport
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Community Facilities

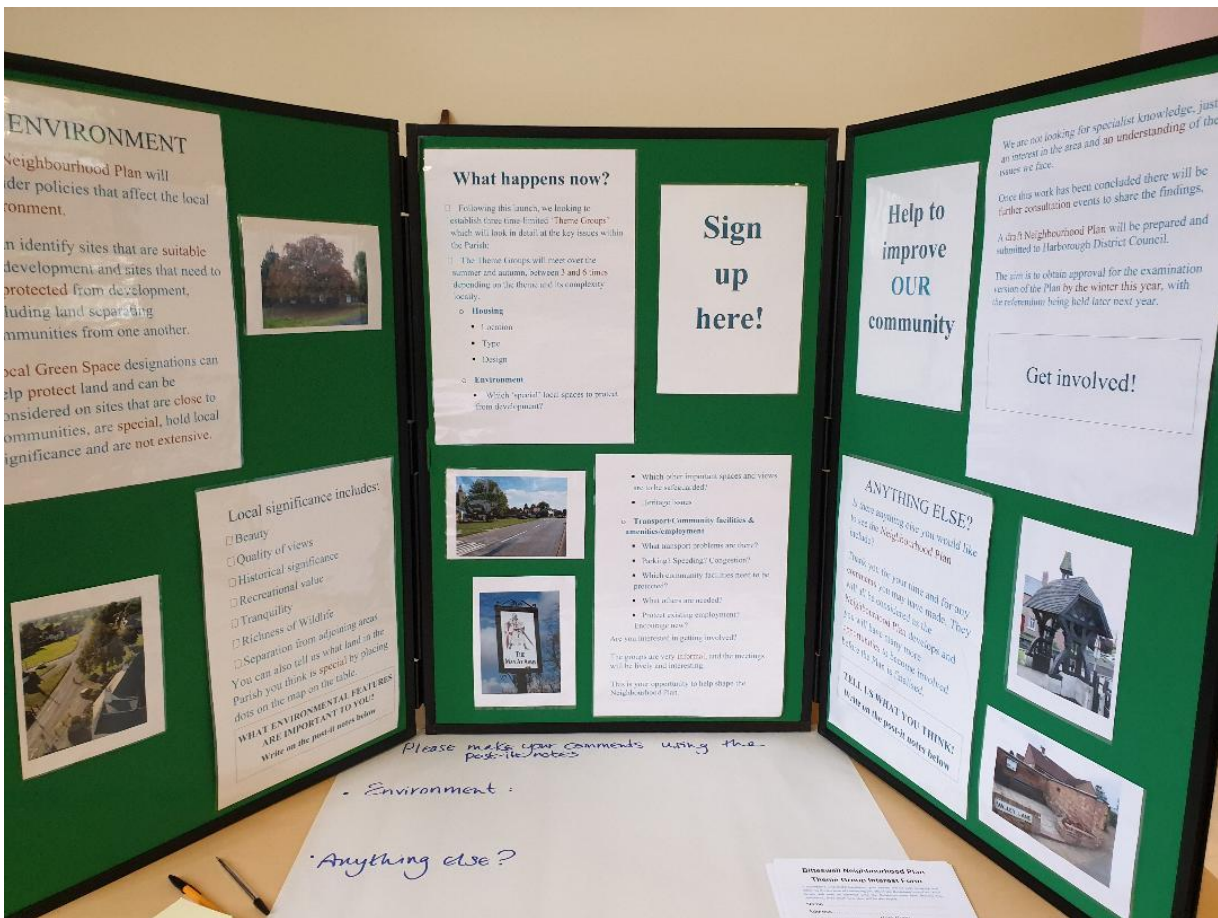
People were invited to read the displays and the information available and to make comment on 'post-it' notes. In addition, people were invited to identify open spaces which are important to them by placing up to 3 green stickers on a map of the parish which they value for views; and up to 3 blue stickers on areas good for recreation. A similar exercise invited people to indicate where they would not welcome new housing, and where residential development would be acceptable.

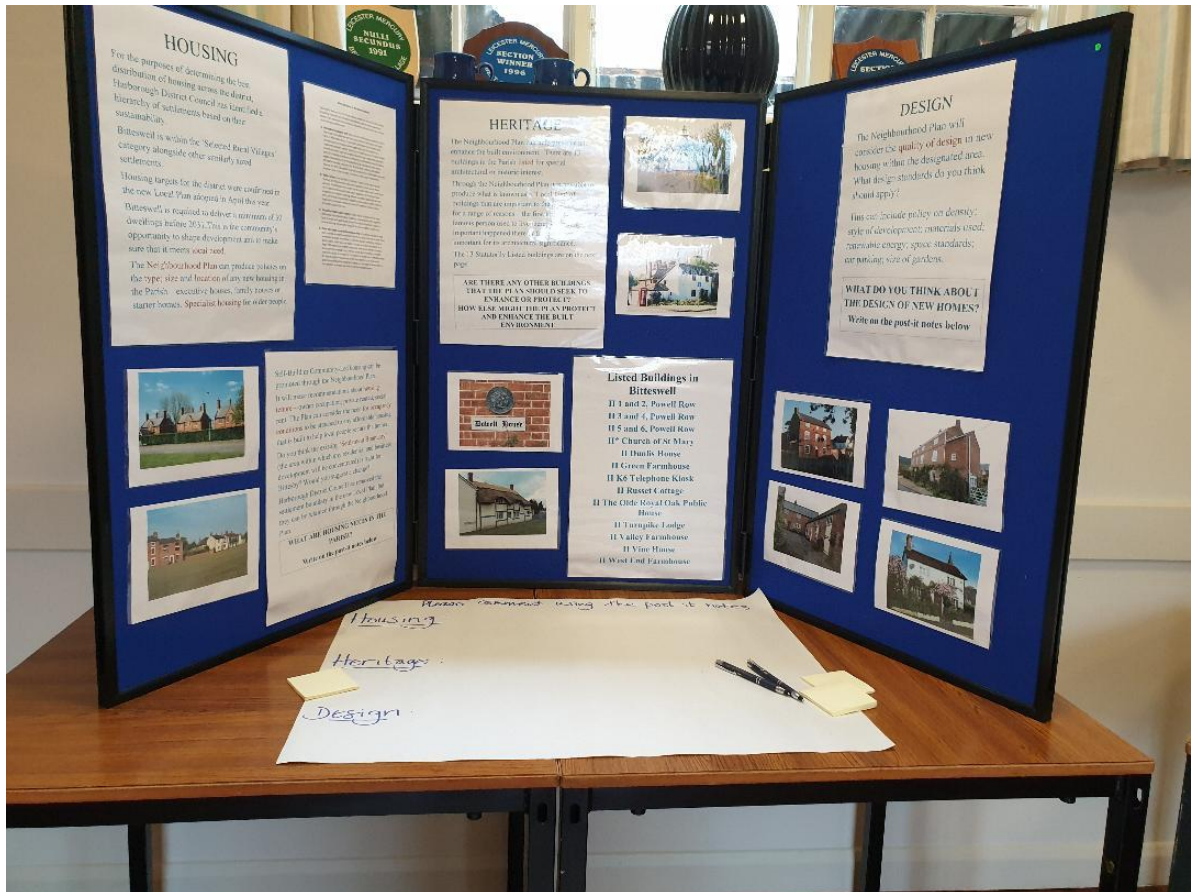
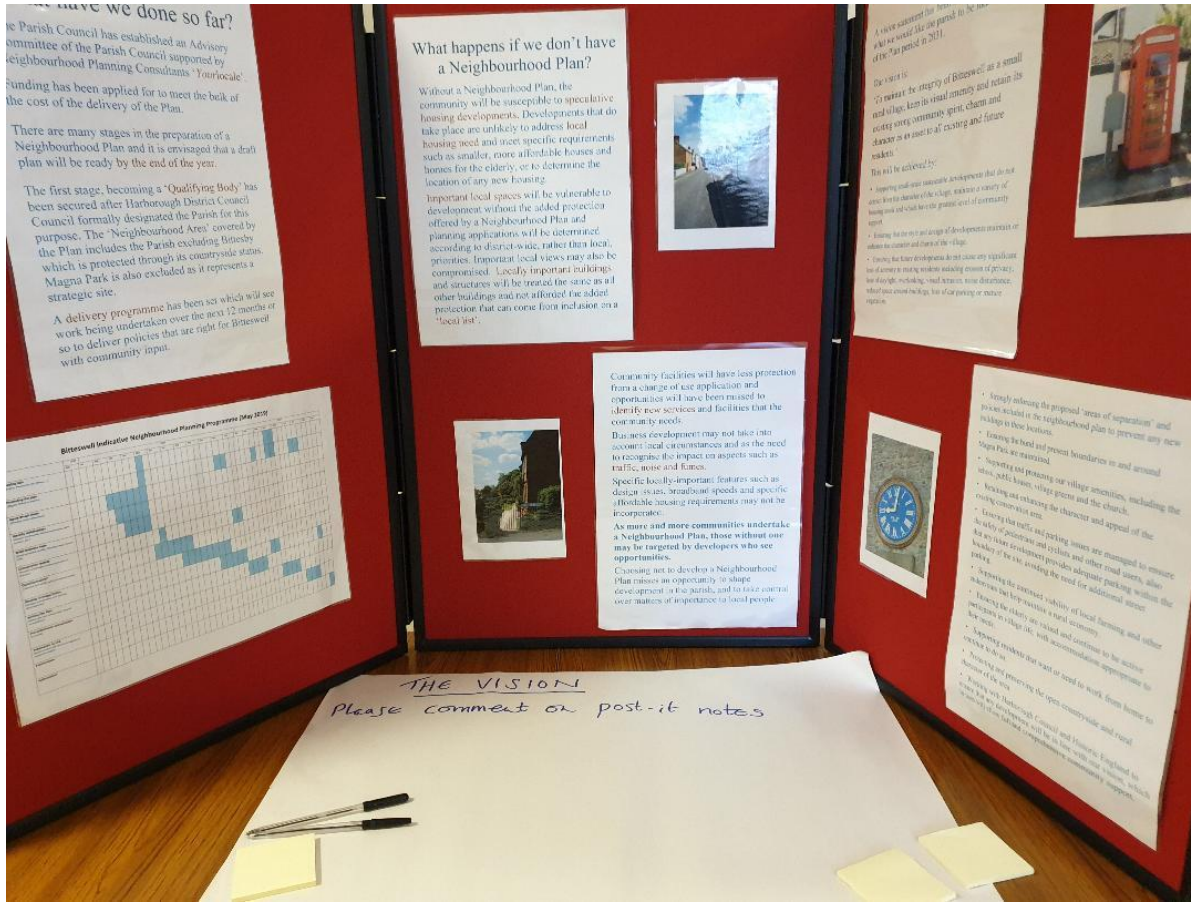
Display Boards

The following pages give a sample of the boards that were on display at the event. The boards posed questions which people were invited to comment on. 11 logo's, created by local school children, were on display and attendees were invited to choose their favourite.









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. These are the comments that were made:

VISION: 10 responses

- Good Vision statement!!
- Good Vision, good work
- I agree that a neighbourhood plan is absolutely essential and I very much approve of the Vision Statement
- Try to stick to your vision statement. Long live community spirit!
- Need to support the Local Plan – so Bitteswell is looked after
- To decide as a village what we want for the village
- Retain character of the village. Driven by Neighbourhood Plan
- Retain unique village character distinct from Lutterworth
- Individual houses with character rather than large development
- Retirement home?

HOUSING: 18 responses

- Future proofed housing to account for young and old. Environmentally sustainable housing for minimum impact on the environment. Provide food growing space – reasonable gardens or community allotments
- Affordable family housing
- Affordable family housing. Energy efficient housing
- Affordable family homes to enable young families to live in the village, and for their children to attend school here and thus keep the village alive
- Small developments. Maximum, say, of 6
- Small developments
- Small developments, 4 or less
- Small intimate developments
- I want the houses to be small because I don't want it to cover the whole of Bitteswell and in different places
- Keeping to small developments. Starter homes and family
- Smaller retirement stocks to release properties for families
- Individual houses designed in sympathy with current properties
- High quality design is important to maintain the village character. Please reject any proposals for “off the peg” house designs
- Ample parking
- Provision for parking – at least 2 cars per household
- Parking must be considered
- Parking!
- Need to ensure energy efficient houses are built to minimise environmental impact

Respondents were asked to place a green dot where new housing development would be acceptable and a red dot where housing was not welcome.



DESIGN: 15 responses

- Maintain the character of the village. 2 others in agreement.
- Keeping to old village style building to fit in and not change identity
- Design that reflects history and heritage but that can also be modern, contemporary and promotes a forward-thinking approach to sustainable buildings
- Design should fit in with existing properties and maintain the existing feel of the village
- Period designs with eco credentials
- Old feeling houses like Alms houses
- Individual houses characterful, eco-friendly too (can be modern)
- Blend in with existing
- There has been no thought in design or character of the new buildings in Bitteswell – let's change this please
- Modern contemporary design mixed in with heritage design aspects
- I want the houses not to take too much space
- Big houses with big gardens
- All new developments should have a properly prepared sustainable drainage proposal. The heavy clay can make this difficult and design standard need to be high

HERITAGE: 3 responses

- Our heritage is very special. We need to keep an eye on future homes

- Get the blue plaques on the walls to record heritage
- Extend conservation areas

ENVIRONMENT: 10 responses

- Middle of village and existing areas should be preserved and not overtaken
- Must keep our village greens!
- Village greens must be protected. 1 other agreed
- Field providing access across to churchyard extension – need to be protected – old pasture
- Footpath out of village needs improving
- Footpaths to sports facilities from Bitteswell to Hall Lane. Community garden allotments. Parking area
- Look after trees. 1 other agreed
- Please ensure sustainable urban drainage proposals are robust

Respondents were asked to place up to three blue dots in areas good for recreation, and up to three green dots in places where there are good views.



ACCESS and HIGHWAYS: 14 responses

- Access to motorways excellent. Easy commute from Rugby to London
- Control of access of HGVs and more speed checks to enforce speed limits
- Speeding an issue – already tricky getting out of Valley Lane and at T junction at end of village to

Lutterworth. Only a matter of time before there's an accident

- Traffic hazard – top of Valley lane
- Speed bumps are in the wrong place. Turn right out of Valley lane you face speeding vehicles coming past the church
- Stop the speeding traffic!
- Speeding cars and lorries in Ashby Lane
- Driving too fast – too many lorries; noisy now
- Traffic speed reductions. Cameras implemented
- 40 mph speed should be moved to 30 mph speed limit as you enter into Bitteswell from Bitteswell Rd/Lutterworth Rd junction
- Would like better lighting for footpath through village towards Lutterworth (stretch from Nook to T junction especially)
- Footpath to football ground, rugby club, tennis courts so young people can walk or cycle to local sporting facilities safely – allows independence and reduces car use
- Public transport/bus service is very limited and leads to increased use of cars. Please improve bus service.
- Unfortunately, people do not use buses

COMMUNITY FACILITIES: 6 responses

- Village shop
- Small village shop
- Village shop; allotments; regular bus service; improved speed humps
- Village shop; allotments or community food growing space; regular bus service
- Reliable bus service!
- Sunday bus service

EMPLOYMENT/BUSINESSES: 4 responses

- Opportunities for small office/business accommodation in the village please. This will result in a more mixed economy/environment
- Good rural broadband; flexible business spaces to provide for established and starter business
- Broadband speeds could be improved
- Making sure local businesses aren't trampled by large trans-national corporations

ANYTHING ELSE?

- Parking area would be handy

Summary of findings:

Vision:

There was strong general support for the Vision.

Housing:

This section drew the most responses, 18, with 3 parishioners specifically calling for affordable housing to be available, and another citing the need to "future-proof housing" to account for young and old. Six respondents

asked for small developments, including a further comment which stated that small retirement stocks would release properties for families. A number of other parishioners felt that in the event of development, housing design should be in keeping with the local vernacular and be environmentally sustainable, with sufficient parking.

Design:

As reflected in the housing section, attention was drawn to the design of any new homes, with 12 of the 15 responses to this section calling for housing design to respect the traditional character and to stay in keeping with the existing parish with support for “eco-friendly” housing.

Heritage:

The 3 responses to this section variously highlighted the need to preserve the village’s heritage, extend the conservation area and use blue plaques to record the heritage of buildings.

Environment:

Four of the 10 comments in the environment section called for the village greens to be protected, along with one other parishioner asking for a specific field/old pasture to be preserved. Two comments asked for the village’s trees to be looked after. Another respondent identified the improvement footpaths to sports facilities, a community garden, allotments and a parking area would bring to the village. One villager asked that “sustainable urban drainage proposals are robust”.

Access and Highways:

This area of the consultation drew a total of 14 comments. In the event of development, 9 parishioners highlighted the need for better traffic safety management measures and drew attention to specific areas of the village that already cause concern: Valley Lane junction; Bitteswell Rd/Lutterworth Rd junction; Ashby Lane. One respondent called for improved lighting for the village footpath towards Lutterworth, and another villager – as also referred to in the Environment section – requested a footpath between the village and the local sports facilities to enable independence for young people and also reduce car usage. One person called for an improved local bus service.

Community Facilities:

This section generated 6 responses, with several responses containing multiple points. Four villagers called for a village shop, and there were 4 comments in support of a regular bus service. A further 2 responses reiterated the call for village allotments/ food growing space.

Employment/Businesses:

One of the 4 respondents to this section, 2 were in support of opportunities for small office/business spaces in the village. The other 2 comments highlighted the need for a good rural broadband, and for improved broadband speeds. There was also a statement referring to ensuring “local businesses aren’t trampled by large trans-national corporations”.

Anything Else?

The sole respondent reiterated a comment made earlier in the Environment section, that a parking area in the village would be beneficial.









