



Issue 5 of 7

## Your Village

## Your Say

6<sup>th</sup> May

In this 5th newsletter leading up to the Community Consultation Day, the focus is on **the Historic and Built Environment**.

### HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') recognises that *"heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource"* which should be conserved *"in a manner appropriate to their significance"* and promotes a desire for new development to make *"a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

#### **You have told us that...**

You value the history of Exbourne, its character, Important Open Spaces and Conservation Area. However, you felt the village appearance and its conservation could be improved.

**Conservation area** status aims to protect the historic environment and studies have shown that people living in conservation areas generally enjoy higher property prices. However, poor management of Exbourne's Conservation Area is allowing its historic environment to be eroded. This includes the impact of unsympathetic work carried out by both local authorities and property owners.

A Conservation Area Management Plan ('CAMP') would guide the conservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, aiming to retain historic character and architectural quality. It would act as a reference for all who make decisions that may impact on the special character of Exbourne (property owners, planners, developers, designers, local authorities and statutory undertakers).

The historic environment is particularly at threat by small-scale development that does not need planning permission, known as "permitted development". Many communities seek to secure better oversight of alterations (to windows, doors, roofs etc.) or extensions by applying an **Article 4 Direction** to their conservation area. This does not forbid development and improvements but just requires a planning application so that they can be done in a sympathetic way.

Conservation area status and application of Article 4 Directions are the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot achieve changes in its own right but we would like your views.

### **What we'd like to know...**

- (1) What are the most important characteristics of Exbourne's historic environment e.g. cob construction, thatch, open spaces, roadside gardens, court walls, hedgerows, street artefacts (granite kerbs, the pump at Holmswell), traditional windows, iron railings and gates, etc.?*
- (2) Would you be in favour of a Conservation Area Management Plan to better conserve and enhance the Conservation Area?*
- (3) Would you be in favour of seeking to make the Conservation Area subject to an Article 4 Direction?*
- (4) Would you like to see the Conservation Area boundary extended or reduced? If so, how?*
- (5) Many buildings in Exbourne are listed by Historic England as being of special heritage interest. Which do you value most? Is there a heritage asset you would like to see listed that isn't at present?*

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The NPPF requires good design and neighbourhood plans should develop policies that aim to ensure developments: *“establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit”; “create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including green & other public space) and support local facilities”; “respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials”; and “are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.*

### Those of you who wanted some development told us that...

You would like new housing to be “well designed”. Opinions included building in a vernacular or “sympathetic” style and the encouragement of low carbon building.

Some indicated a preference for development on infill sites.

There is a desire amongst the community to ensure the character of the village and its heritage is not eroded by future development. The Neighbourhood Plan could incorporate a Village Design Statement to guide developers on appropriate characteristics to build into new properties. The NPPF says such design policies should avoid *“unnecessary prescription or detail”* but simply guide *“the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally”*.

There is an eclectic mix of **building design** in Exbourne - buildings of many periods, which over the last century have been built with a variety of materials. It is difficult to identify a typical Exbourne house and yet too many buildings of one kind or another put close to a vernacular one, or one of particular historic interest, can easily diminish its historic setting and integrity.

Design applies to both the buildings themselves and to the way in which they are distributed. The **pattern of development** is of great significance when identifying the constituents of charm and character of a village. Away from the newer estates, development in Exbourne happened in groups of houses, leaving space between these groups rather than being formally arranged along a street. A great deal of objection to new development results, not only from the design of buildings, but the formal patterns in which they are built.

Current Government policy generally frowns on “garden grabbing” developments. **Infill** is more typically permitted on sites between existing structures where not part of a garden curtilage of a house. It is difficult to prioritise infill development in a Neighbourhood Plan but it can be supported. Infill development can make a small contribution to housing targets but can also result in open spaces that contribute to the village’s character being lost forever.

### **What we’d like to know...**

- (1) Would you be in favour of a Village Design Statement?*
- (2) If yes, should it apply to the Conservation Area, the village, or the whole parish?*
- (3) What are the most important matters to be addressed in a Village Design Statement e.g. layout, density, height, materials, roofs, windows, boundaries, landscaping, conformity with neighbouring buildings, modern design, zero/low carbon construction etc.?*
- (4) Do you believe the Neighbourhood Plan should support the development of infill sites?*

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR FEEDBACK ON 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY.** If you can’t make it, send comments to the Parish Clerk or preferably via the Neighbourhood Plan website at [np.exbournewithjacobstowe.org.uk](http://np.exbournewithjacobstowe.org.uk)