Neighbourhood Plan

Over the past couple of years, Foxton Parish Council has taken the first steps towards producing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan offers the chance for residents and businesses to have their say on future development within the parish and influence how their neighbourhood evolves. Foxton faces many challenges and opportunities over the coming years.

Over the last couple of years we have consulted those living and working in the village, together with key stakeholders, asking how you wish to see the village develop to 2031. The results have helped us prepare a (Pre-Submission) Draft version of the Foxton Neighbourhood Development Plan. A six week pre-submission consultation period on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Foxton will run from Monday 8 February to Monday 21 March 2016.

This leaflet is a summary of the Draft Plan. The full Draft Neighbourhood Plan is available to download from:

www.foxtonndp.weebly.com

A paper copy is available to view at The Shop, North Lane.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. Like other plans, the Foxton Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area and it will be used to decide future planning applications.

“...gives us a chance to say how development should take place. Without it, developers will make those choices for us”

- Julia King

Chairman of the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee

Our vision for 2031:

- An attractive, tranquil place to live, work and visit
- Foxton’s unique character and heritage is conserved
- Local housing needs are met
- Foxton Locks is a thriving tourism resource contributing positively to village life
- Vehicular traffic does not intrude upon village life

Main Street Canal Bridge, Foxton
How much housing development and where?

The Foxton Neighbourhood Plan must support the strategic development needs set out in the Harborough Core Strategy, including policies for housing development.

Harborough District Council is currently preparing a new local plan to replace the Core Strategy and this may require more housing growth. The new Local Plan is likely to cover the period to 2031. Harborough District Council will take our Neighbourhood Plan into account in preparing the new local plan.

In spring 2015, we consulted local people on the appropriate level of housing development for Foxton. The Foxton Neighbourhood Development Planning Committee suggested that approximately 27 houses should be built over the Neighbourhood plan period up to 2031. This level of growth was supported by 81 (59%) respondents.

Of the 27 new homes we are planning for, there are already seven houses in the pipeline as infill sites with planning permission. This means we need to find sites for about 20 more. This will be met by infill development within the Foxton Limits to Development and the allocation of:

- 10-12 new homes at Fisher’s Farm, North Lane
- Around six new homes on land between Middle Street and Vicarage Drive
- Up to three new homes on land at the junction of Vicarage Drive and Hog Lane

Infill Housing

There are concerns that continued ‘garden grabbing’ is having an adverse effect on the character of Foxton by reducing open spaces between buildings, robbing the community of green breathing space, safe places for children to play and havens for wildlife. Our Plan places strict controls on infill development to prevent the unwanted development of gardens.

Housing needs

We want to plan for a mix of housing to meet the needs of people living locally. Using data from the 2011 Census we know that compared to Harborough district, Foxton has a smaller proportion of young householders (under 35) but more households over the age of 55. We also know that local house prices are high compared to Market Harborough, a high proportion of homes are detached and there are high levels of under-occupancy.

We expect all new housing development to take account of the housing needs of older households and the need for smaller, low-cost homes.
Protecting the character of Foxton
We want to conserve the unique character and identity of Foxton. We will do this by safeguarding
the local landscape, protecting the countryside between the village and nearby settlements,
identifying green areas of local importance within Foxton, protecting and enhancing heritage
assets and the natural environment, and through the design of new buildings.

Green Spaces
Important green spaces were identified by local people during consultation on the
Neighbourhood Plan. These spaces consist of recreation areas, allotments, large garden areas
and paddocks. Proposed Local Green Spaces are identified on the policies map.

Heritage
There are 16 buildings in Foxton listed by Historic England for their special architectural or
historic interest. Six of these relate to Foxton Locks and the canal - they include bridges, Lock
Keepers cottages, a milepost and the locks themselves. The inclined plane is a Scheduled
Ancient Monument.
Renewable Energy

Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses.

The landscape in Foxton parish is one of the most sensitive landscapes in Harborough district and is unable to accommodate wind turbines without degradation of the existing landscape. Large-scale solar farms can also have a negative impact on the local landscape. Large-scale renewable energy development is also unsuitable as we do not believe that people will want to visit and spend their money in an area they regard as spoiled by wind or solar farms.

Many microgeneration technologies projects, such as solar photovoltaic and air source heat pumps are often permitted development which means they do not require planning permission providing certain limits and conditions are met.

Foxton Green Zone

The character of the local countryside is under threat. Just one mile to the south-east of Foxton Village there is a proposal to build around 1,500 dwellings at Airfield Farm and adjoining land, Market Harborough. To the west, Foxton Locks is a growing tourist destination.

The countryside between these places is particularly vulnerable and we are keen to ensure that its undeveloped character and beauty is maintained. The Foxton Green Zone aims to check the unrestricted sprawl of Market Harborough and the expansion of tourism development associated with Foxton Locks towards the village of Foxton. It will also safeguard the countryside from encroachment and preserve the setting and special character of Foxton village.

Design Guide

We expect all development to contribute positively to the creation of well-designed buildings and spaces. Through good design we want to maintain and enhance the unique character of Foxton and create places that work well for both occupants and users, and are built to last.

The Foxton Village Design Statement (VDS), first published in 2007, has been updated and is included in our Draft Neighbourhood Plan.
**Foxton Locks**

The Grade II* listed locks are over 200 years old and demonstrate how 19th century canal engineers solved the problem of getting boats up and down a steep hill.

The locks and surrounding area are open and accessible to the public all year round. The site attracts over 300,000 visitors per year, with most arriving by car.

The Harborough Core Strategy promotes Foxton Locks and the Grand Union Canal as a tourism attraction and key strategic Green Infrastructure corridor in line with a Conservation Plan and Heritage Partnership Agreement. The Canal and River Trust plan to enhance Foxton Locks as a ‘honey pot’ tourist site.

Our Neighbourhood Plan makes sure the value of the Foxton Locks Area (as defined on the Policies Map) will be sustained by giving priority to:

- The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets;
- The quiet enjoyment of the Foxton Locks Area for waterside and countryside recreation; and
- Reducing visitor impact on quality of life for Foxton village residents.

**Masterplan**

The Foxton Locks Masterplan was prepared for East Midland Tourism, British Waterways (now the Canal and River Trust), Foxton Inclined Plane Trust, The Inland Waterways Association and Old Union Canals Society in July 2009.

The restoration of Foxton’s inclined plane was a key project at the heart of the Masterplan, but it is now unlikely to be rebuilt as the Foxton Inclined Plane Trust has decided it will be unable to raise the £11 million needed to complete the project.

Some of the Masterplan’s ideas are supported by the local community, but there are concerns that the full package of proposals would have an adverse impact on the heritage value of Foxton Locks, the quiet enjoyment of the canal and surrounding countryside, and quality of life for local residents. The Canal and River Trust has indicated that the Masterplan will be replaced by a new Visitor Management Strategy.
Let us know what you think

This is just a summary of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. A full copy of the Pre-Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is available to download, along with supporting documentation, on the Neighbourhood Plan website:

www.foxtonndp.weebly.com

A ‘drop in’ session concerning the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan will take place:

16:00 to 19:00hrs on Friday 26 February 2016; and
10:00 to 16:00hrs on Saturday 27 February 2016

at the Robert Monk Hall, Middle Street, Foxton, Leicestershire LE16 7RE

The ‘drop in’ session will provide an opportunity to examine the contents of the Plan and to discuss it in more detail with members of the Foxton Neighbourhood Development Planning Committee.

Representations on the contents of the draft Neighbourhood Plan must be submitted to Foxton Parish Council no later than:

17:00hrs on Monday 21 March 2016

If you would like to comment on any aspect of the Draft Plan please write to us or complete and return a copy of the Pre-Submission Representation Form. The form will be available at the ‘drop in’ session or can be downloaded from the website. Comments may be made:

Via e-mail to: horse.rider001@btinternet.com

By post to:

Angela Hall
Clerk to Foxton Parish Council
1 Sawbrook
Fleckney
Leicester
LE8 8TR

Please note that your submitted comments will be used in the plan process for the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. Your response cannot be treated as confidential as it is likely to be available for public inspection.