



A+M

ASTBURY+MORETON

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

# Astbury+Moreton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 2022

## Responses

A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan drawn up by a community. It sets out a shared vision and policies to shape future development of the area covered by the Plan. The Astbury and Moreton Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2017 with the intention that it would be valid as part of the planning process until 2030.

A Neighbourhood Plan helps to identify projects that are most important to the community and to make sure that development takes place in a way and at a pace that suits the residents of the plan area.

*Neighbourhood Plans cannot say 'no' to development.*

Since our Neighbourhood Plan came into force in 2017 there have been several important changes to national and local government planning legislation. Because of these changes, our Plan needs to be updated and the Parish Council has formed a Neighbourhood Plan Review Group of local residents to make sure our Plan is as strong as it can be for the future.

## Overview

This consultation was open from 1 October 2022 until 14 November 2022.

## What will happen with the completed consultations?

- We have collated, recorded and analysed your responses (resulting in this report)
- We will draft revised policies to include in the modified Plan
- You will get an opportunity to comment on the draft modified Plan
- The draft modified Plan will be submitted to Cheshire East and other statutory consultees for their comments
- The final version of the modified Plan may be reviewed by an external examiner
- There may be a referendum of local residents who will be asked to vote on the final Plan: a simple majority in favour would mean that the Plan would come into force
- Future planning applications must then conform to Neighbourhood Plan – and the Parish Council must then consider the Plan when deciding planning applications

## Summary

Thirty-six (36) residents submitted responses this consultation: 14 online and 22 on 20 paper forms (two forms each contained responses from two residents).

Overall, those responses overwhelmingly agreed with the proposed vision and each of the proposed aims, though there were a variety of differing opinions expressed in comments (all comments are included below).

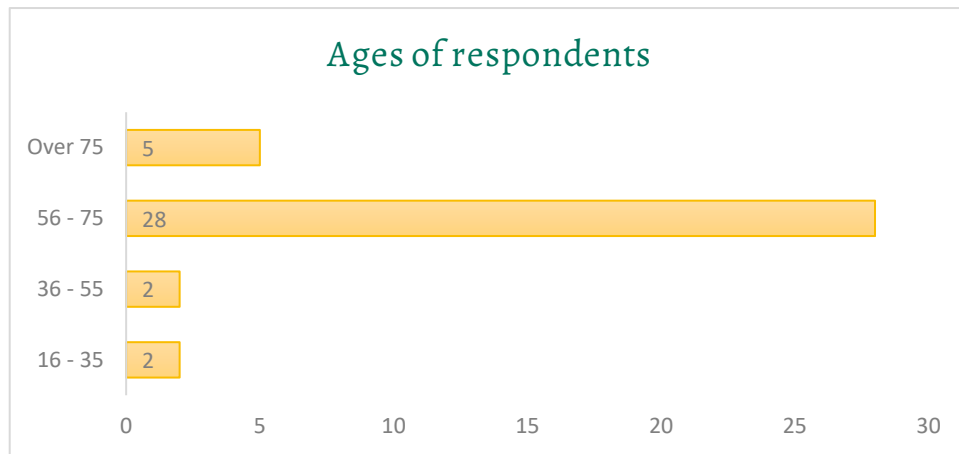
In the comments, the most frequent concern was traffic, including the belief that the Parish Council and Cheshire East Council are not doing enough to combat rising levels of traffic. The traffic in Wallhill Lane was a particular issue, with some respondents believing that the Parish Council was overly concerned with Astbury village at the expense of other settlements in the parish,

A second frequently expressed concern was fly tipping,

# Consultation

## Information about you

Responses were received from **eighteen (18)** distinct postcodes (one response did not include a postcode).



## What you thought then

When our residents were consulted in 2013 the matters listed below were raised by residents. Has anything changed and are there things we need to add to and/or delete from the list?

### What you liked

- Quiet and peaceful
- Good housing
- Good facilities
- Sense of history

### What you were concerned about

- Lack of fast broadband
- Inappropriate parking
- Noise pollution
- Dog fouling
- Litter
- Fly tipping
- Traffic through settlements and along lanes

## Has anything changed that we need to add to or remove from these lists?

There were 23 answers to this question (discounting those that replied “No” or “None”).

Lack of broadband no longer an issue

Wallhill Lane no longer quiet and peaceful! Due to it being an extension of the By-Pass

Dealing with climate change

Quiet and peaceful – removed from List.

Excessive Traffic due to Congleton Link Road, Dangerous to walk along the lanes and excessive pollution and Environmental damage to wildlife & Countryside – Added to list.

Not quiet and peaceful due to volume and speed of traffic on the A34

The extra traffic is making the Parish less quiet and peaceful.

‘Good Housing’ should be removed from concerns. The area is adequately provided for.

Greater intensity of traffic both on lanes and in village/hamlets is eroding environmental quality & safety. Traffic control is now a primary concern. Fly tipping continues to escalate.

Avoidable light spill pollution is becoming problematic in the wider landscape.

Significantly expanding "Horsiculture" and associated development is not being adequately controlled with detriment to the visual landscape.

Increased traffic on rural lanes (Wallhill Lane and Brownlow Heath Lane) since the Link Road opened. This is a major concern.

Concern: Fly Tipping.

A light for the horrible aqueduct on Watery Lane.

Do not give in to clearly opportunistic/sneaky developments on any scale – the principle is the same: 100 houses or just one! Speed limit on A34 too high – this should change at Astbury garden Centre.

Add the following: overhead airspace, frequency of low flying aircraft, military/commercial – deafening at times. Deteriorating roadside verges and potholes, the scale and expansion of quarrying activities and the frequency of road closures to accommodate this

Inappropriate parking on Brownlow Heath Lane; Dog fouling on footpath; Fly tipping Brownlow Heath Lane by quarry gate; HGVs (Ashbrooks) and tractors over 7 tons Wall Hill Lane

Noise and traffic pollution are still the overriding problems.

The Macc relief Road has increased traffic through the village, as it has increased activity at Glebe Farm. I am against enlarging the scope of the small railway on grounds of pollution and even more traffic.

In view of the development 'explosion' on the outer edges of Congleton and in particular the approval of the development of New Road by Great Moreton Hall, I fear the plan area is in danger of losing its unique identity as described in the 'Vision of Astbury and Moreton'. Also, the so-called traffic calming measures that the community asked for during consultations with the Council have been a sore disappointment. The speed of vehicles on the lanes remains a danger to residents.

Broadband still poor. Inappropriate parking for visitors to our area. Support to existing businesses.



Fast broadband now available through FTTP which I have paid for. I would like to see more weight given to the need for residents to encourage and support sustainability in the face of the overwhelming importance of Climate Change.

More pollution with more traffic being to the Village. Large farm vehicles are travelling further to get to new fields.

Broadband OK now.

Just act upon your professional aspiration to put in place 'any ... traffic measures that might be appropriate to mitigate the volume, scale and speed of traffic in rural areas'.

The Macclesfield Relief Road has increased traffic through the village, as have the leisure activities at Glebe Farm. I am definitely against enlarging the small railway there on grounds of increased traffic and environmental pollution.

## A Vision for Astbury and Moreton

*The parishes of Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow are primarily rural in character and the historic settlement of Astbury is bounded by both Green Belt and Open Countryside. The parishes are special places and residents are determined to keep it that way, accepting that change will occur over time. However, any such change should respect and reflect the heritage, the views of the community, the quality of life of residents and the flourishing natural environment of the area.*

*The wider plan area will provide outdoor recreation and open space, rich in wildlife and natural beauty. The current very important green belt and open countryside will be maintained and protected between the neighbourhood plan area and Congleton in order to preserve the unique identity of Astbury and Moreton parishes.*

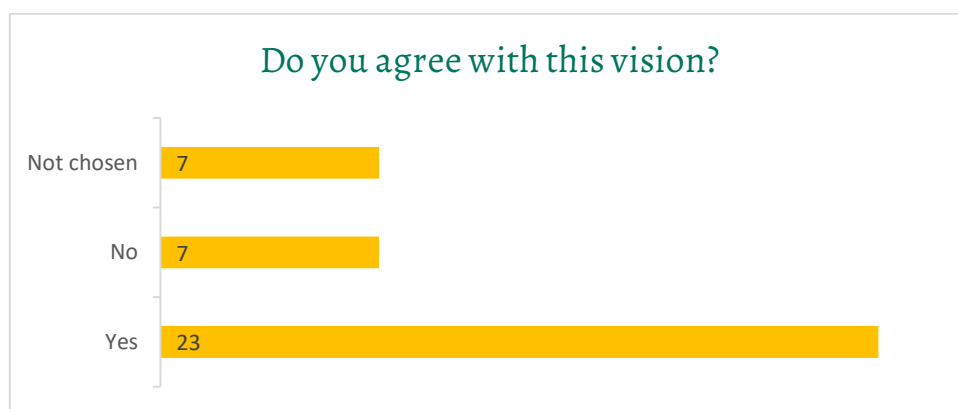
The plan area is a special place and residents wish to retain its key characteristics. Residents not only appreciate the social and environmental qualities of the plan area but consider they have a duty to protect them for future generations who choose to live and work in the area.

In the context of this Vision residents recognise the need for some small scale housing development in the area over the plan period, providing it is carefully controlled, sympathetically designed, is in keeping with the settlements and the environmental sustainability of the plan area is enhanced. To be considered acceptable all new development

must protect the local character of the plan area; respect the important local green gaps, conservation areas and heritage policies; maintain and enhance the form of the existing settlement retaining the important local green spaces as well as preserving existing trees and hedgerows and not encroaching into the open countryside.

Any additional housing should meet the needs of people who already live in the area. Affordability will be important, primarily low-cost market housing for young people as well as catering for the needs of the ageing population. It is equally important to meet the needs of older residents who wish to downsize without leaving the area.

Finally, the Neighbourhood Plan will aim to sustain and promote local businesses as well as a range of community activities and facilities. The retention and improvement of local facilities and services will be important as these add to the strong sense of community and quality of life together with the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and heritage.



## Do you have any further comments on this vision?

There were 15 answers to this question (discounting those that replied “No” or “None”).

Any housing should be small scale and low cost but built to blend in with existing housing styles. Care should be taken to minimise any lighting.

Any conversions to barns should be for low-cost housing as they always go for high end conversions. Young, local people need to be able to buy/rent a property within the parishes!

Having been involved in fighting a planning application for 3 completely incongruous and ugly houses on New Road, we have had to accept that the local plan and the permanence of green belt, count for nothing nor does the strong objections of local people matter. All these things can be steam-rolled with money!



I agree with the final paragraph, but the most detrimental factor is the quality of the heritage and natural environment of the village are the businesses on Glebe farm which have caused damage to the environment (car parks etc), noise pollution to neighbours and increased traffic flow.

But re developing 100/1 “affordable” houses are as bad as a footballer’s house – not on green belt/impact on what we have. And consider the people who live next door. Particular attention to access and roads.

Disagree with emphasis on additional housing without an equal and conditional emphasis on increasing the scale of local facilities. This is not covered by retention and improvement. The best example would be that we are repeatedly unable to get face to face appointments with our doctors when needed. Insufficient dentists, doctors, schools, post office etc.

Agree with housing but not industry.

We have recently moved here and love the quiet surroundings, sense of history, places to visit and good local facilities.

I agree with this revised vision if additional housing needs should also include people who have previously lived in the Parish and can prove still having close links and wish to return to the Parish, e.g. Children who have now grown up but been financially excluded due to lack of affordable housing.

There should be a better balance and understanding to local business needs in order to maintain trading levels and to encourage new businesses to our area. Does the Neighbourhood Plan Committee Members represent the needs and understanding of all age groups of all age groups of residents and visitors.

Any housing should be affordable

Don't think we need anything that is going to bring any extra traffic to Astbury Village.

This is not a Yes or No question!

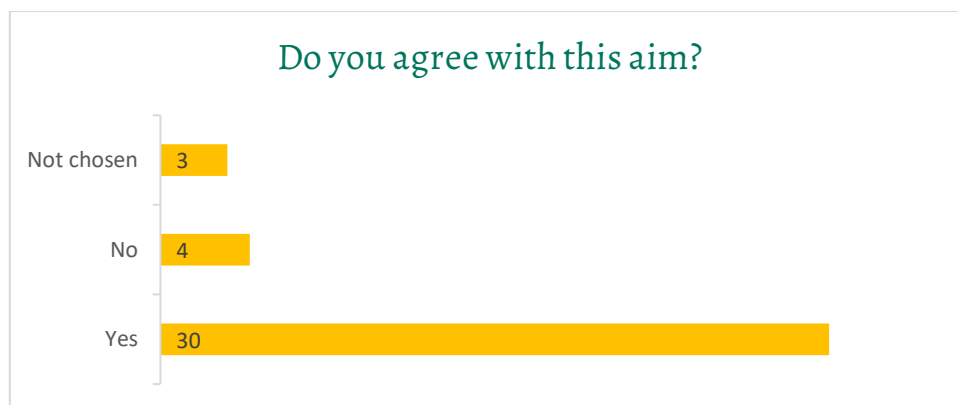
Having fought against a planning application for three expensive, ugly, inappropriate houses on New Road, with the support of the neighbourhood - and lost - we have had to conclude that when large amounts of money are involved, the local plan, green belt, county planning rule, count for nothing.

[The paragraph on additional housing] is particularly important to me.

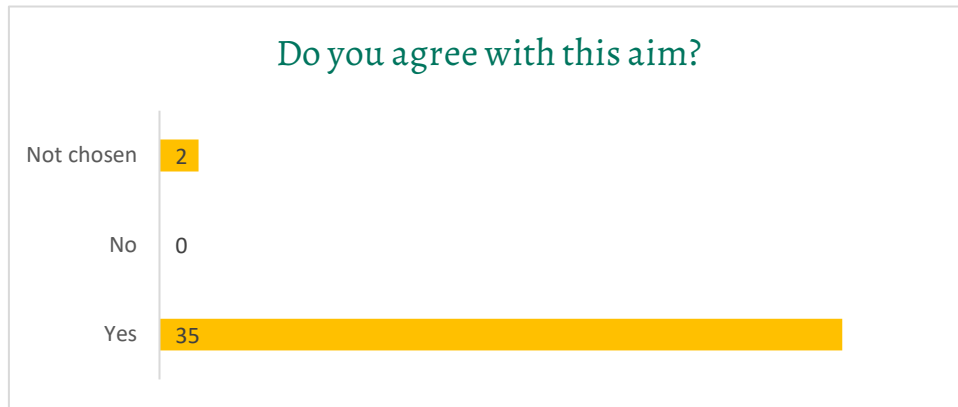
## Aims of the Plan

To help realise this Vision the following aims have been drafted for consultation. These aims will be supported by policies in the modified Neighbourhood Plan.

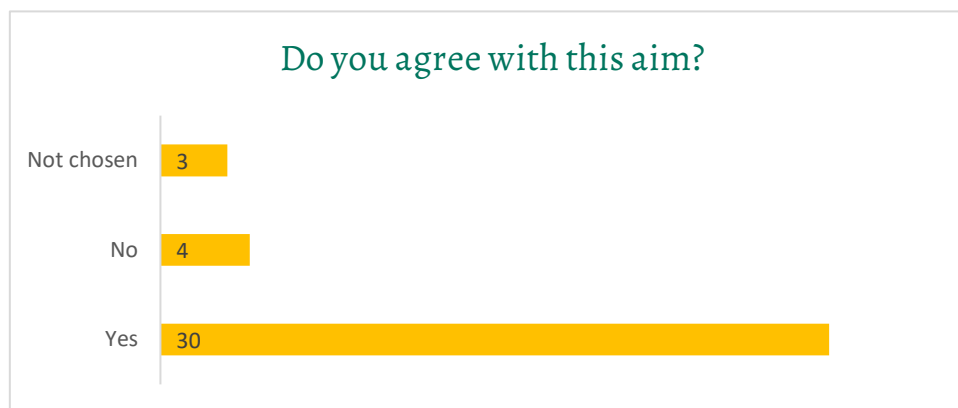
**Aim1:** To promote steps to combat climate change and reduce carbon emissions and support sustainable development across the plan area



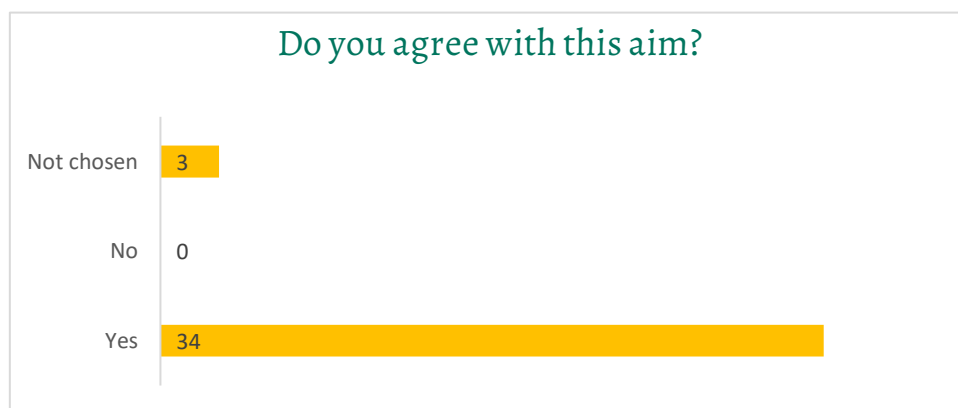
**Aim2:** To preserve the architectural and historic character of the conservation areas, settings and plan



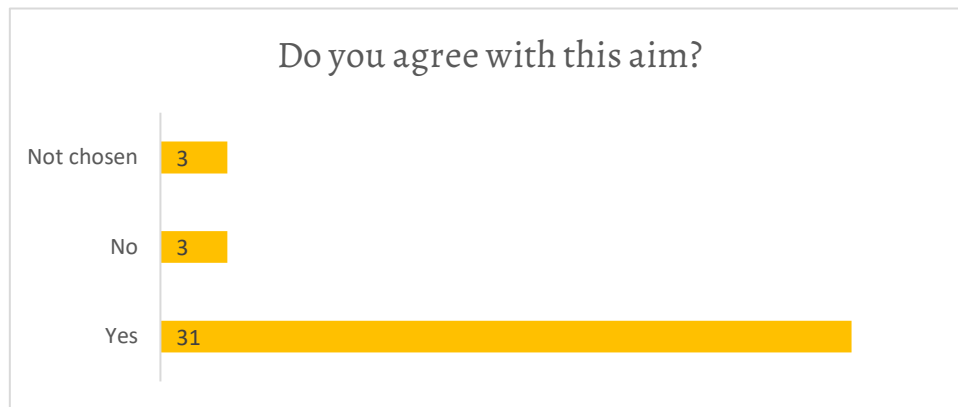
**Aim3:** To ensure that any new housing developments meet the identified needs of the plan area and are in keeping with the character of the area, and do not negatively affect the important local landscape, environment and heritage aspects



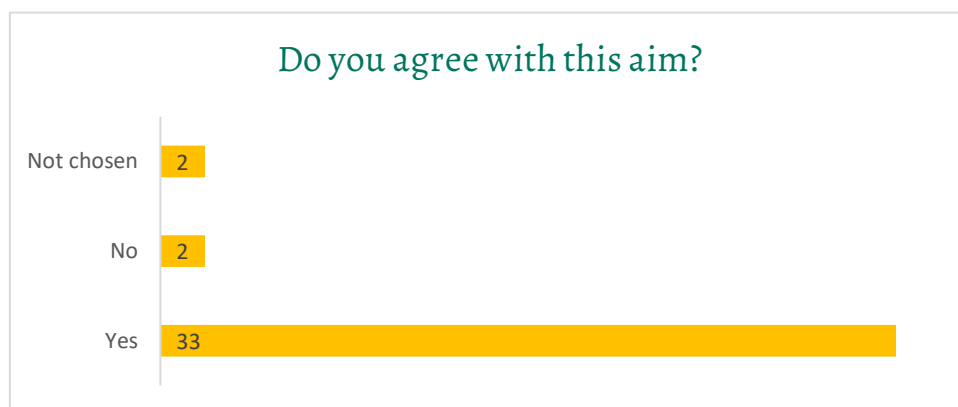
**Aim4:** To protect and enhance the character of the plan area, its landscape and environment



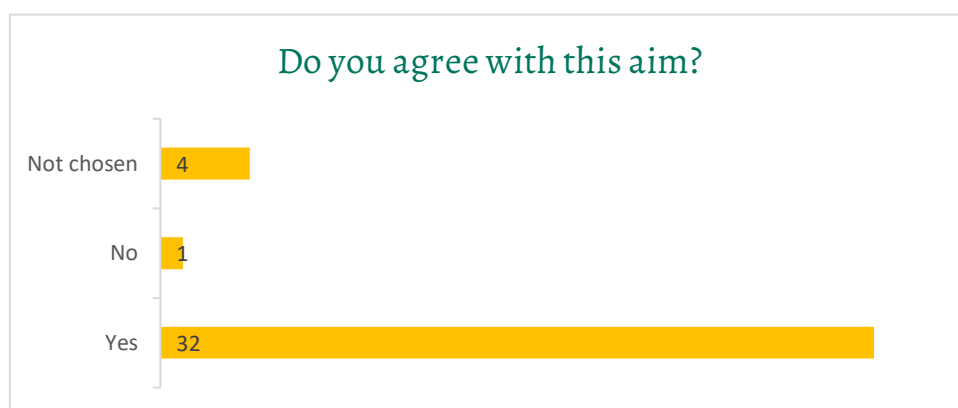
**Aim5:** To strengthen and support small scale business activity and stimulate local employment



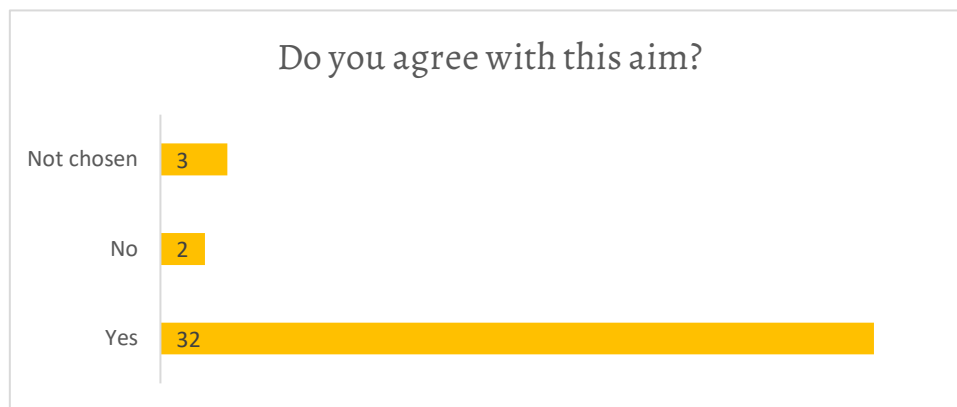
**Aim 6:** To promote and maintain community services and facilities



**Aim 7:** To reduce the harmful impact of traffic through Astbury village and rural lanes including a reduction in air pollution, noise and vibration and improve highway safety and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists



**Aim 8:** To promote local distinctiveness in every element of change and growth



### Do you have any further comments on these aims?

There were 18 answers to this question (discounting those that replied “No” or “None”).

There is a need for more effective planning control to prevent existing NP aims & future policies being undermined. A neighbourhood plan is only valid and relevant if it is adhered to which has not been the case in the past.

Local Parish Councils need to listen to residents living in the parishes and respond with an unbiased response to the concerns of residents.

Aim 7: Has totally not been achieved with sending treble the amount of traffic through rural lanes increasing air pollution, noise and made highway safety a joke for road users, residents, pedestrians & Cyclists.

Reference aim 3, please see overleaf.

Aim1: No-one would want wind turbines that blight the countryside. Wind power is for the birds!

Aim3: Any housing development whatever the scale would be detrimental to the area. Housing should first use brown field sites. Green belt should not be given over for housing.

Aim7: Country lanes and roads in the village should be left untouched, they are part of the charm of the area. To vandalise them with traffic calming measures would be an absolute disaster. LEAVE THE ROADS ALONE!!!

Traffic, traffic, traffic = environment pollution So... Aim No1 not being considered on Wallhill Lane, East Cheshire ignoring our complaints and not being true to their word

It seems a great pity that local plans appear to be toothless, so it is disheartening to complete this one. Planning permission has recently been granted for 3 large new houses on New Road in virgin green belt so that brick walls and some small outbuildings can be restored at Great Moreton Hall. The proposed houses do not comply with any criteria in the current parish plan, being neither affordable or in keeping with the local landscape, yet apparently 'heritage', which the public will probably never see, trumps preservation of the green belt.

I have no objections to suitable small scale business development in the parishes, but Glebe Farm has been totally over the top and has spoilt the village. I am not sure whether the very large car park has had permission for a change of use, but the various activities must generate a lot of traffic.

I have also not enjoyed the hundreds of trips of large tractors and trailers carrying building spoil from development sites in Congleton. This is mostly not topsoil, as it contains large quantities of rubble, bricks and concrete. I hope the current lull continues, as it seems to me that it constitutes unlicensed landfill.

Some traffic continues to travel far too fast on the lanes, but I don't know how this can be prevented. I don't like the way the verges on Oak Lane are being mown along a considerable stretch, this seems to me to damage both the appearance and the ecology of the lane.

We do not need new housing of any description. If people require facilities, they should be prepared to travel to them from Astbury

I'm not sure what Aim 8 means, which is not covered by the other Aims – Numbers 2 and 3, for example – it is vague so I don't know what I am agreeing to, there is no option for 'Don't know', which is what I would have put. With Aim 1, climate change, it is enough to comply with National and Local rules and regulations.

There is such little reference to our local businesses, the employment created not to mention the rates charges. I estimate that there must be in excess of 30 businesses in our Parish and there is only one Yes/no question with reference to these important matters. Younger residents of our Parish should be encouraged/invited to participate in this N.P. along with as many business owners as possible. The broader range of individuals we can have determining the future of our neighbourhood can only be beneficial to all residents, businesses and visitors to our area. Aim 1: Brownlow Heath Lane bus route lost. Aim 7: improve highway safety.

Remember that the parish is more than just Astbury village!

Aim 7 even more important with Childs Lane being used by illegal heavy traffic.

Aims 1 – 4: Residents need to consider how they can reduce the community's carbon footprint and generation of waste. Farmers particularly should reconsider agricultural practices which have a heavy carbon footprint and look at models which are financially viable. This would improve the Heritage to which the Plan frequently refers.

Aim 3 would require more intensive devt. in certain locations. Net zero building principles should be employed where possible/Aim 5 Acceptance of some new development would make this possible.

Aim 6: It would be helpful to have a clearer understanding of what facilities are in the parish/plan area and which we are keen to foster. To my knowledge there are no healthcare resources, which have to be provided elsewhere.

Aim 8: I have disagreed with this as it seems fairly unimportant in the face of challenges facing Astbury and similar parishes over the next 50 years.

Re Aim 7: Please remember that the Village is not the only part of this Parish!

I would wish for support for affordable housing for ex residents wishing to re-engage and live and contribute to the Parish



This is literally a 'tick box' exercise which is both a waste of time and money because the Parish Council do not uphold the stated aims of the existing Parish Plan so what is the point of revising it and having a 'vision'? I refer particularly to Aim 7 and the concern for traffic through settlements and along lanes (though I notice in Aim 7 only Astbury Village is mentioned and not 'settlements' as in the original concerns). The Parish Council had the opportunity to help fulfil their 'aim' after the opening of the Link Road and the exiting increase in traffic on Wallhill Lane etc but chose not to support parishioners in their pursuit of this aim and regardless of their concerns. This has meant that Cheshire East has disregarded the concerns of residents because they do not have the backing of their Parish Council. So what is the point of a Parish Council and this revised 'vision' if they are too short-sighted to implement it?

Re Aim 7: What about Brownlow? Residents have complained for years that the PC are only concerned about Astbury Village. This just confirms it. We aren't 'a country lane' - we are a community like Astbury.

We do not need new housing of any description. If people require facilities, they should be prepared to travel to them from Astbury.

[The paragraph on additional housing] is particularly important to me.

## Finally

Please make any additional comments in the box below:

There were 12 additional comments (discounting those that replied "No" or "None").

If it was where East Cheshire councillors lived, our concerns would be addressed, and they don't.

Agree with 98% of the Vision for Astbury & Moreton but not that they take the "views of the community" into consideration. When Councillors vote on important matters regarding road safety, traffic pollution & environmental damage, the views of the community are not taken into consideration.

The volume of traffic and the speed it travels at past our house on the A34 is a concern. Speed limit should be lowered to 30 and should start before Astbury Garden Centre.

Cheshire East need to look in to Fly Tipping in this area, also Mow Lane suffers after heavy rain fall, the grids are blocked and the road turns into a river; washing debris down to the bottom and then the road is flooded. Inspection of the gulleys is reported to take place once a year; they are reported as blocked / silted up but no effort is made by the council to clear them. The road surface is disgraceful and full of potholes. Instead of Cheshire East's attitude of make do and mend; they would be better off emptying all blocked grids before patching up the potholes.

No police presence visible to deter illegal heavy traffic on Wall Hill Lane.

The neighbourhood plan is potentially a valuable local democratic expression of public aspirations but is only generally respected if it is administered and upheld impartially and consistently by the elected authorities at all levels.

Each generation should endeavour to bequeath to its successors an improved environment, and especially in the case of Astbury & Moreton, a rural landscape /heritage/community, not only for residents but also for the significant number of visitors to these unique parishes.

It's admirable having a plan in place. However, we seem to now live in a society where Local Authorities simply railroad their agenda through, irrespective of the views of local residents.

Please include persons with strong local connections who wish to RETURN to the area and need affordable housing.

The Parish is distinct in character and the NP has guidelines to keep it that way. Why has the totally inappropriate metal bench been allowed outside the cemetery, as opposed to a wooden one?

If Neighbourhood Plans cannot say 'no' to development, who is able and authorised to protect our green spaces and rural communities?

Please find attached examples of possible traffic calming measures on Wallhill Lane. The PC must follow through with their stated aim to put in place effective measures to mitigate the volume of cars on Wallhill Lane.

[Images of traffic calming measures were attached, including altered road surfaces and 20mph speed restriction, 'Farm Vehicle Only ' and 'Local Traffic Only' signs.]

The first question that needs answering is what is the average age of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group; has it included any younger generation?

This questionnaire seems to point to a dated belief that the whole Parish should be totally immersed in the past. Nowhere does it attempt to give a full picture of employment and that most of the workforce has to travel to come into the Parish.

It is true that the Parish does have a rural character, and that it should sustain and promote local business.

“Aim 5: To strengthen and support small scale business activity and stimulate local employment.”

Why is there no reference to present employment? Numbers please.

- Bent Farm Sand Quarry
- Northwest Engineering
- Brownlow Inn
- Beartown Taxis
- Hairdressers
- Concrete Services @ Brownlow
- Tree Surgeon
- Peter Cliffe Agricultural Engineering
- Livery and Riding Lessons (Leanne Riley)
- Agricultural Services (Edward's)
- Automation Systems
- Printing services
- Alcumlow Hall Shops & Events
- Harts Nurseries (Childs Lane)

/Continued

Continued/

All of the above are within Childs Lane, Wallhill Lane, Brownlow Heath and Brook Lane.

On the A34 and Astbury Village and further:

- Astbury Garden Centre
- Astbury Garage
- Suttons Bird Foods
- Egerton Arms
- Glebe Farm Café, Shops, etc.
- Pecks Restaurant
- Car Sales (by Pecks)
- Nursery opposite Astbury Garage
- Wards Bed and Breakfast

Apologies for any that we have missed, but we are sure there are many more in the Parish.

The Parish is not just a residential area:

- The workforce who come in are also part of the community.
- The people who use the Church are not all residents, but they are still part of the community.

“Aims of the Plan”

Where does it say that once you are 18 years of age that you can stand to become a member of the Parish Council and made welcome? We need more encouragement to get the younger members of the Parish to become involved in the future of their community.

“Aim 7: To reduce the harmful impact of traffic...” Well, there's a dream.

It has been suggested that if there was any increase in the volume of traffic on Wallhill Lane, due to the opening of the new by-pass, that it should be closed. That would only increase the traffic volume on the other roads in the Parish and beyond (when it had to be closed for work to be done, traffic increased on Childs Lane, Brownlow Heath Lane, and Smallwood lanes, one being Pitcher Lane) which caused total chaos!

Access to any road in the Parish is vital to all residents, commuters, and emergency services, not forgetting public services! It is the Parish Council's duty to keep them open for all.

In conclusion the Parish Plan as it is in its present form does not need to be rewritten, so let us stop spending the Rate payer's money on tinkering with it.