

# Marchington Neighbourhood Plan

## Landscape Character & Built Environment Assessment

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**Draft Report - September 2015**

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## **1 Introduction & Purpose**

1.1 This Characterisation Study was undertaken by Steering Group (SG) members and local residents. It is considered to be particularly relevant because, in accordance with the principles of Localism and Neighbourhood Planning, it represents a local, community based, input into what might otherwise be an entirely technical process. The work is seen as a critical part of the emerging Marchington Neighbourhood Plan (MNP). The report will be published alongside the MNP as part of the evidence base. The intention is that the study will:

- Provide a general context for the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Provide evidence for more detailed landscape, environment & heritage policies
- Provide a specific means to evaluate potential development sites/locations in and around Marchington village.

1.2 The approach to the study recognised that it does not need to replicate or duplicate other work (see section 3 below) and therefore, the focus was on the following

- A description of the wider landscape setting of the village and surroundings.
- The physical form of (all) the village and its relationship to the adjoining countryside.
- The relationship of the former military areas (Ind. Estate, Barracks & Forestside) to the village and the adjoining countryside and hamlets such as Birch Cross.
- The “value” of open land within and surrounding the village in terms of; landscape, views, the setting of the village, public benefits, bio-diversity and historic character.

1.3 The concentration on the village and surroundings looked at matters not included in the Conservation Area Appraisal and gives a specific community perspective. This approach will not exclude The Woodlands and the other rural parts of the Parish from consideration by wider NP policies because this is already well documented in NE, SCC & ESBC studies. In addition, there are not the same development pressures in those locations.

## **2 Methodology**

2.1 The approach adopted is based on a proven method of community based assessment which has been used successfully in other Neighbourhood Plans. The Planning Aid England (PAE) approach to townscape analysis was developed specifically for Neighbourhood Plans and it breaks character down into the following elements:

1 Layout, 2 Topography, 3 Spaces, 4 Roads/Streets/Routes, 5 Green, Natural Features & Ecology, 6 Landmarks, 7 Buildings & details, 8 Streetscape features, 9 Land uses & 10 Views

2.2 Following discussions with and advice from Planning Aid England (PAE) and Heritage Landscape officers from SCC and ESBC, a land character assessment of Marchington Village including Forestside, was carried out in March 2015 by teams of individual local residents. The NP Steering Group initially analysed the setting, topography, age and character of the village and divided it up into nine defined areas. Area 1, the “Former Military Zone”, was subdivided into three elements of individual character i.e. Forestside, Barracks Block and Industrial Estate.

2.3 The areas are listed below and shown on a map.

1a Forestside & sports field ]

1b Barracks Block ] "Former Military Zone"

1c Industrial Estate ]

2 Land between Silver lane and Jacks Lane

3 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and B5017

4 Silver Lane and Church Close

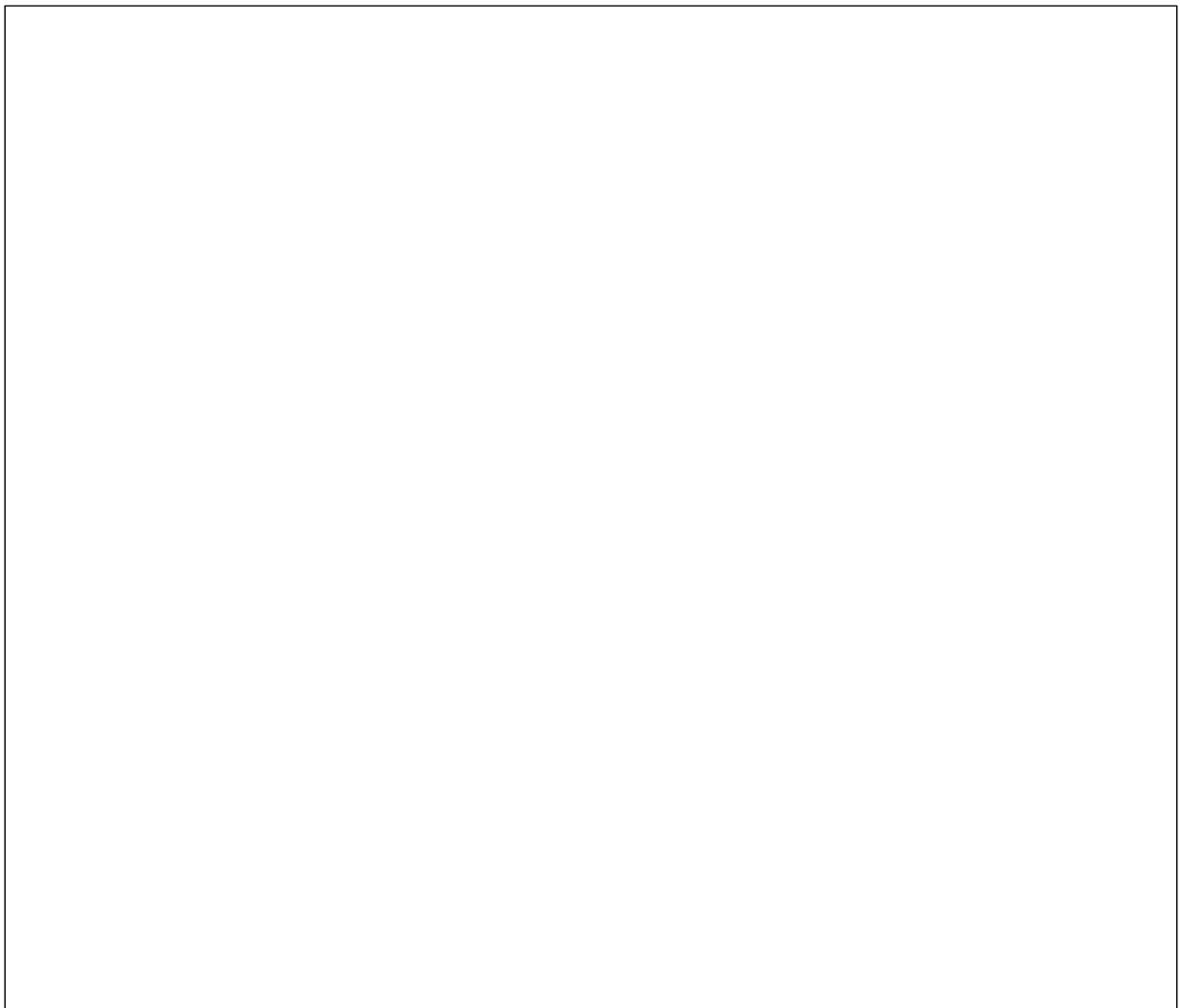
5 Church Lane

6 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and Woodland Views

7 Moisty Lane and Windmill Drive

8 Bag Lane, High Street, The Square and Hall Road

9 Allens Lane and Allens Close



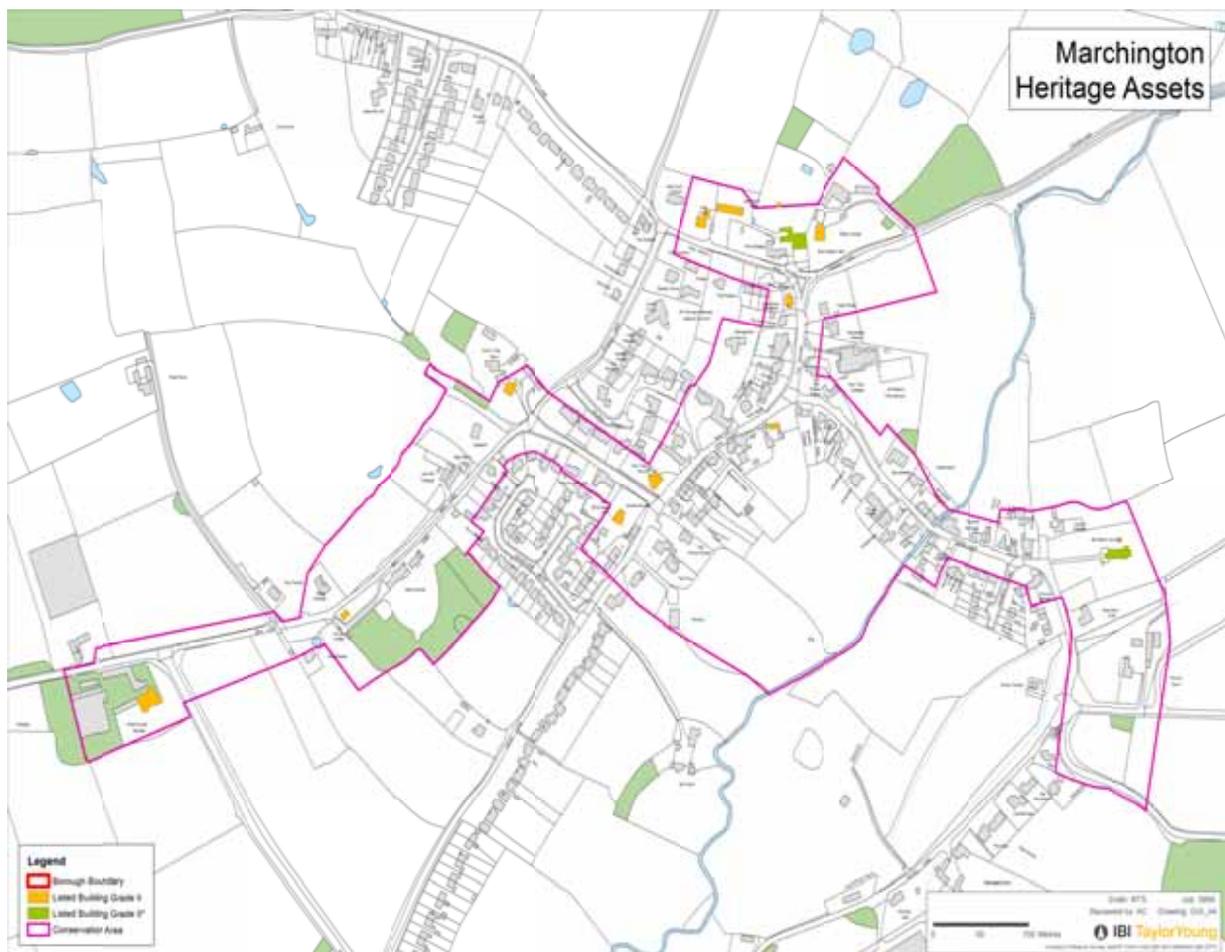
### 3 Related Studies

3.1 There are three related pieces of work which have helped to inform and provide data for this assessment, these are;

- Marchington Conservation Area Appraisal (ESBC 2015)
- Marchington Historic Environment Assessment (SCC 2013 – updated 2015)
- Natural England - National Character Areas Profiles (NCA No. 68 Needwood & South Derbyshire Claylands),

#### Marchington Conservation Area Appraisal (ESBC 2015)

3.2 This was undertaken by IBI Taylor Young for ESBC and a draft version was published for consultation in January 2015. It provides an assessment of the Marchington Conservation Area. It analyses the historical context, built form, setting and spatial characteristics to demonstrate the special interest as a conservation area and to ensure its accordance with the current policy framework. The appraisal identifies key positive and negative impacts, erosion of character, potential threats and considers the appropriateness of the boundary. It makes recommendations for future actions by the Council to preserve and enhance the areas significance as a conservation area. The map below, taken from the appraisal, show the Conservation Area and statutory heritage features.



3.3 The summary (in *italics* below) of the key elements of the character of the Conservation Area includes several points which are particular relevant to the characterisation study.

*The general features that provide Marchington with its locally distinctive character and the special interest can be summarised as follows:*

- *Low, sunken lanes with high hedging and overhanging tree cover.*
- *A wealth of statutory listed buildings and high quality buildings of local relevance, given the village size.*
- *Tightly enclosed streets, including dwellings set at the back of the pavement, and orientation of dwellings to place gable at pavement edge.*
- *Plentiful landscaping across the village, creating soft rural character.*
- *Distinct topography rising and falling around the village and its gateways.*

3.4 In terms of specific areas of the village, which include or are close to the sites being considered, the following points are also relevant

*4.5 The village setting is predominantly rural, surrounded by fields. Outside of the series of historic streets, the topography is variable, whereby there is a mix of levels across the area, and there are no distinct overriding patterns.*

*5.7 Outside of the conservation area are acres of land that were commandeered during WWII to erect a Military Station. This eventually became a Prisoner of War Camp for German and Italian soldiers. Following the repatriation the Nissen huts were demolished. Later the Royal Army Ordnance Corp Marchington, was built around 1957 and dealt with the supply and maintenance of weaponry and munitions and various other military equipment. It was also a Central Vehicle Depot during this time until the barracks closed in 1970, and the Territorial Army took over until finally closing the site in the early 1980s.*

*6.8 Between the pub and the next row of cottages that includes Brookside House, lies a Brook that runs to the River Dove to the North. This is an interesting feature within the townscape, with a parapet of sandstone slabs. At the brook, this marks the point where the conservation extends south to incorporate the field and Cricket Club that lies to the south of Church Lane, and east of High Street.*

*6.16 Green Lane to the east is a single track lane, sunken within high hedges and vegetation forming a tunnel like entrance to the village. The landscape opens out to the east over fields and the varied topography is visible.*

*6.21 Thorn Tree Farm sits at the junction with Allens Lane that connects north to hall Road, however this is outside of the conservation area. Bag Lane swings sharply east to connect onto the High Street.*

*6.22 Before the turn, near the corner of Allen's Lane, is a small shaded dingle, running along the side of the farm, forming a solitary space away from the street.*

*6.29 Holly Bank is visible within the street scene, a double fronted, two and a half storey red brick built dwelling. This forms a bookend to the north end of High Street with Bagshaw, a Grade II listed, two storey, timber framed property, dating from 17th century.*

3.5 On the townscape analysis map (p20), the junction of Woodland View and Jacks Lane is identified as a “Weak Gateway” to the Conservation Area and at the Lodge on Bag lane a “Strong Gateway” is identified. “Key views/vistas” are identified at the junctions with High Street and Bag Lane.

#### *Landscape Character & Public Realm*

*7.1 Landscape character is an important element in the setting of the conservation area. The village is set within a very rural context, and the conservation area is at times contained within the wider built areas of the village, and elsewhere extends beyond the built edge.....*

*7.3 A key character of the village is that of the lanes, these are characterised by high hedges and sunken lanes, creating tight spaces enclosed by vegetation and this helps capture the rural character. In places the lanes become like tunnels where the trees overhang above creating a distinctive gateway to the village.*

*7.4 A small brook runs through the village... and crosses under Church Lane. The corridor is marked with vegetation and a public footpath runs south from Church along the east side of the brook; this footpath connects into a network of paths that intersect in the open green fields located, south of Church Lane and west of Jacks Lane. A number of public footpaths connect onto Jacks Lane, including along on the periphery of the cricket ground, and further paths connect from Church Lane and Bag Lane within the conservation area, and wider afield connect south from Silver Lane and Stubby Lane....*

*7.6 Throughout the village, trees and hedges feature strongly and form part of the village's distinctive character. The overall tight enclosure of the streets and the plentiful planting means that long views of the surrounding countryside are limited from within the conservation area, and are generally only possible at the eastern and western gateways along Green Lane and Bag Lane respectively.*

#### *Capacity to Accommodate Change*

*9.1 Within the core of the conservation area there are minimal opportunities for significant change, given the limited sites available for development....*

*9.2 The areas of greatest change are most likely to be smaller interventions, for example, alteration and extension of existing buildings, and changes to boundary treatment.*

*9.3 The rural character of the village should be retained, and it is considered that the large grounds in which a number of the grander houses sit should be protected and not intensified through infill. The areas around the village gateways should also be protected to ensure the rural nature of the setting is not compromised.*

#### *Design Guidance*

*11.5 Should new development be forthcoming in the village or areas adjoining the Conservation Area, the design should be specific to Marchington and should enhance the character of the area, as such standard 'off the peg' house designs will not be acceptable.*

3.6 In commenting on the Draft, the Parish Council welcomed the timing of the appraisal and considered that it will provide a useful input into the preparation of the NP and the linked sites assessment and landscape characterisation work. Much of the content of the CAA is supported by the PC who noted that it is thorough in the consideration of the built environment within and adjoining the CA, but that in relation to landscape, even though

there are references to the setting, further analysis of the importance of the open land and countryside around the village should be undertaken. It was felt that this should include; the presence of heritage landscape feature such as ridge and furrow, veteran trees, historic field boundaries & hedgerows and key views. The recently updated SCC Historic Environment Character Assessment - Village Summaries was seen as a useful reference point. In addition, it was stated that the CAA could include more consideration, including survey material, of non-statutory local heritage features.

### **Marchington Historic Environment Assessment (SCC 2013 – updated 2015)**

3.7 This piece of work states that landscape of East Staffordshire is defined by its historic character..... The project areas for the Historic Environment Assessment (hereafter HEA) are based around the hinterlands of the two main historic towns.... five settlements are identified as 'Category 1 Strategic Villages' **and five settlements identified as 'Category 2 Local Service Villages, including Marchington...** The HEA aims to assess the potential for the historic environment to absorb new development and housing in particular. The main focus is on Category 1 settlements but overviews and recommendations are also provided for the five Category 2 villages. For Marchington, the wider setting in Needwood Forest and on the edge of the Dove Valley are important. The document includes the following points which are relevant to this character assessment work.

*The earliest references to Marchington occurs in a grant of land made in 951 AD and in Domesday Book (1086). It is recorded as a large settlement, by Staffordshire's, standards with 27 households based on a mixed economy of arable, meadow and woodland resources.*

*Like Denstone and Draycott, Marchington also retains the character of a dispersed settlement. By the late 18th century it existed along several lanes: Church Lane, The Square, High Street and much of Bag Lane, which is largely covered by the Conservation Area.*

*A number of farmsteads, testament to Marchington's rural economy, are still legible within the settlement plan. This includes Thorn Tree Farm, which incorporates a Grade II Listed farmhouse, of mid 18th century date standing on Bag Lane.*

*To date no archaeological work has been carried out in Marchington which could assist with an understanding of its historical development. The late 19th century Ordnance Survey plan (plate 3) reveals that orchards once existed within small enclosures in and around the areas of historic settlement....Paddocks were also a feature of the landscape lying between the areas of settlement, but these have mostly disappeared for housing development during the 20th century. Modern housing has also extended, as ribbon development, along Church Lane, Allens Lane, the south side of Moisty Lane and the east side of Jacks Lane.*

*With reference to the surrounding countryside, open fields are mentioned in medieval documents.... The remains of the open fields are fossilised within the landscape in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, which survive across large areas in and around Marchington. This field pattern is well preserved, particularly to the north, west and south...*

*To the south east of the main village core a cricket ground and playing fields have been established during the 20th century to serve the growing population.*

*Further south east lies a large industrial estate, which originated as part of a large army camp and depot established over a considerable area between 1941 and the late 1960s when the army left. Part of the former MoD site is still legible within the landscape. The settlement pattern across the wider landscape is dominated by dispersed historic*

*farmsteads. Within the village the farmstead plan forms are dominated by small loose courtyards and larger dispersed clusters. Farmsteads of similar form are found in the wider landscape particularly to the west. Linear settlement at Birch Cross probably represents the establishment of settlement during a later period (but by the late 18th century).*

*In terms of unknown Heritage Assets, only a few sites are currently known relating to prehistoric and Roman activity around Marchington. The proximity of the River Dove suggests the potential for prehistoric activity within the river valley close to Marchington.*

### **Natural England - National Character Areas**

3.8 Marchington Parish lies within Character Area - 68 Needwood & South Derbyshire Claylands. This is a wider study but in the extracts set out below *in italics*, the points relating to the village and its setting are highlighted **in bold**.

*In general the character area, although it is divided by the River Dove flood plain, is predominately a rolling plateau that slopes from the southern edge of the Peak District to the valley of the River Trent in the south-west. In the south, there are frequent plantations and ancient woodlands of the former Forest of Needwood. Elsewhere, the hedged and pastoral landscape is dominated by mixed farming and **features a dispersed pattern of villages and other settlements**. Hedgerow trees also contribute to the wooded character.*

***There is a distinctive scarp to the south of the Dove**, whose broad flood plain divides the Staffordshire and Derbyshire elements. A predominantly pastoral landscape of rolling countryside that is still largely rural and relatively tranquil, featuring distinctive field boundary patterns and characteristic hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Grassland for livestock is the dominant land use although dairy and cereal farming are also important. The majority of the farms are small- to medium-sized dairying and livestock holdings. Arable cultivation occurs on the better land north and south of the Dove and in the river flood plains. **Ridge and furrow is quite extensive in the Derbyshire part of the NCA, and also survives south of the Dove, particularly around Marchington**. There is an overall wooded character derived from scattered ancient and semi natural woods, parkland and boundary trees. Some large woodland blocks are prominent in Needwood Forest; however, much consists of smaller, fragmented remnants. Predominantly hedgerow bounded, the field pattern varies from small to medium-sized fields north of the Dove; larger/rectilinear on the flood plains; rectilinear in Needwood Forest; and smaller/more irregular to the west. A wide range of habitats associated predominantly with pasture, varying from damp lowland grassland and marshland to drier neutral grassland. There are good surviving examples of water meadows along the three main river valleys. Wood pasture and parklands, often with veteran trees, are found throughout and earthworks relating to ridge and furrow survive. There is also a series of Statements of Environmental Opportunities (SEOs). Those relevant to the assessment are summarised below with key points highlighted in **bold**.*

*SEO 1: Conserve and enhance the essential character of this **mainly pastoral mixed farm landscape with its distinctive field and settlement patterns, hedgerow trees, varied hedgerow types and heritage assets**, enhancing and expanding the network of farmland habitats and improving access opportunities while sustaining food provision:*

- *Seeking to retain the mixed land use pattern of pasture and dairying, arable and woodland, which provides a rural character and a sense of tranquillity.*
- *Maintaining the distinctive enclosure patterns to **conserve fields in the landscape**.*
- *Plant and maintain hedgerows, for landscape character and habitat connectivity.*

- **Maintaining and restoring areas of semi-natural grassland.**
- Encouraging the restoration and creation of ponds.
- **Conserving historical features with heritage interest, including the remains of ridge and furrow, water meadow infrastructure and other archaeological features.**

**SEO 3: Protect the historic and cultural features of Needwood and the South Derby Claylands, in particular the traditional settlement patterns of remaining villages, traditional farmsteads and the country estates that provide a strong sense of place:**

- Establishing a strong landscape framework as the context for existing major settlements and potential development areas within and surrounding the National Character Area (NCA), and ensuring that their influence on the quality of the surrounding landscape is positive and that new green infrastructure is provided.
- **Maintaining the setting of historic buildings, parklands, villages and farmsteads, and ensuring that new development respects character and local distinctiveness.**
- Maintaining and restoring the diverse stock of farm buildings, encouraging continued agricultural use and managing proposals for reuse to retain heritage features.
- Protecting and managing parkland associated with country houses
- **Conserving and enhancing local architectural styles and traditional materials.**
- **Conserving the tranquillity of the area through the planning of new development and its sympathetic design, and in particular minimising light spill and traffic noise.**
- **Conserving upstanding earthworks and structures of water meadows and other archaeological remains, including ridge and furrow.**

#### **4 Area Assessments by SG members and local residents.**

4.1 The surveys used a pro forma summary to assemble survey information in a consistent manner. Teams of individuals of varied age group, gender and address were selected to carry out the surveys to provide independent assessments of the characteristics of the defined areas of the village. The characteristics assessed included layout, topography, road features, landmarks, buildings and details, natural features, streetscape features, land uses and views from public places. This extensive list of characteristics was then summarised for each area to describe the positives and negatives of each area and highlight the prominent features. Appendix 1 is a copy of the master assessment form and those (with photographs) completed by the team are in Appendix 2 (this is lengthy and is presented separately).

4.2 The following paragraphs provide a summary of each of the areas and a conclusion, *in italics*, of the suitability (or not) of new large scale development for that location.

##### **Area 1 The Former Military Zone**

**Area 1a** Forestside is mainly two storey terraced post war housing in a rural setting. A lack of parking creates untidiness. This could be improved by using areas of adjacent land for parking. There is a lack of community buildings and facilities in Forestside.

**Area 1b** This is derelict barrack blocks surrounded by scrubland and mature trees. It is a neglected brownfield site which could be greatly improved by re-development without a negative impact on Forestside or the main part of the village. Re-development could be enhanced by a footpath/cycle way to the village shop, school, church and public houses.

*Overall, it is considered that new housing could be built in area 1b, with no adverse impact on the village character, but limited in scale, with improvements to Forestside and located so that it does not conflict with 1c ( the Industrial Estate).*

**Area 1c** A large scale industrial estate with a regular layout of warehouse buildings.

##### **Area 2 Land between Silver lane and Jacks Lane**

This is a low lying, flat, flood plain area with tree lined stream and drain used for agricultural and recreational purposes with open space and a cricket ground, which suffers occasional flooding. It contains guard house buildings from a WWII POW camp.

*Overall, the land is an important part of the setting of the village, it is floodplain and it is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.*

##### **Area 3 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and B5017**

This is an area of well-maintained farmland with mature trees and hedge boundaries which forms a natural buffer at the western gateways to the village, including parts of the Conservation Area on Bag Lane. A few houses (2 on Jacks Lane and 3-4 on Bag Lane) exist. There are two public footpaths across the land which offer views into and out of the village.

*Overall, the land is part of the attractive rural setting of the village and it is a gateway to the conservation area and as such it is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.*

##### **Area 4 Silver Lane and Church Close**

There is ribbon development of mainly relatively modern housing on the SW (higher) side of the Lane, overlooking low lying open fields in the valley of the Marchington brook - a flood risk area adjacent to the Industrial Estate.

*Overall, the land is part of the rural setting of the village. It is floodplain and is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.*

### **Area 5 Church Lane**

This is a picturesque older part of village with the most prominent buildings being the church and public house and is included in the Conservation Area. It is a focus of activity in the village but susceptible to flooding and suffers from through traffic in Narrow Lane. *Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and this point, linked with flooding and traffic issues means that it is not considered suitable for large scale new development.*

### **Area 6 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and Woodland Views.**

This is an area of established 1970's housing overlooking pastureland to the west containing mature trees and hedges. It sits between the Conservation Area to the NE and open land to the NW & SW, which is an important part of the rural setting of the village. *Overall it is already developed and this area is not considered suitable for new development.*

### **Area 7 Moisty Lane and Windmill Drive**

This is an area of established more recent housing. Well-spaced properties with open layouts and large gardens with prominent views of the Dove Valley, Weaver Hills and woodland escarpment. Moisty Lane is narrow and has through traffic (to Uttoxeter). Open land to the SW is important to the rural setting of the village and the Conservation Area. *Overall it is fully developed and is not considered to be suitable for new development.*

### **Area 8 Bag Lane, High Street, The Square and Hall Road**

This is part of the historic core of the village, containing listed buildings and prominent buildings, mixed with a few modern buildings including the School and Village Hall. It includes sunken lanes with mature hedgerows screening mature properties. The narrow roads carry traffic and are a on through route to Burton and Uttoxeter. *Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and is not considered suitable for large scale development, but there may be potential for a limited number of small, well designed houses at The Bagshaws, but Listed Buildings & Conservation Area need respect.*

### **Area 9 Allens Lane and Allens Close**

This is a historic sunken lane with older development and a small newer cul de sac. It is narrow lane with high clay banks and is busy with traffic. It is in the Conservation Area. Thorn Tree Farm, which is elevated, is to the north. The farmland beyond is mature grassland overlooking the village and is an important part of its rural setting. *Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and it is not considered suitable for large scale development, but there may be potential for a small number of well-designed houses at the Farm, but the Listed Buildings & Conservation Area need to be respected.*

## 5 Consultation with the local community

5.1 Over 100 people attended an exhibition on 28<sup>th</sup> March and 102 questionnaire were returned. The scripts used in the exhibition are set out in Appendix 4 and questionnaire which was used is set out in Appendix 5. A summary of the responses to each of the questions is given below (Q2 is the most relevant to the Characterisation study).

**Q1** Housing Numbers Do you agree that 20 new houses is the right amount in Marchington? (*National Planning Guidance mean that we cannot promote less than this number in the NP*) **84 (82%) agree** (4% disagree and 11% neutral & 3% blanks).

**Q2** The Characterisation Study. Do you agree or disagree with how the village and its setting has been divided up and with the early conclusions on the key characteristics of each area? **84 to 88 agree (82% to 86%)** for each of the 9 areas. A maximum 5 disagreed on any site and there were 12 to 14 blanks.

**Q3** Which sites do you think might be suitable for new housing? If you think that sites are suitable, how many houses may be appropriate on them?

Jacks Lane - 22 (23%) suitable, **56 (55%) unsuitable**, 12 (11%) possible & 12 blanks (11%) (11 houses – average)

Jacks Lane (W) 11 (11%) suitable, **66 (65%) unsuitable**, 10 (10%) neutral & 15 blanks (14%) (8 houses – average)

Jacks Lane (B5017) 9 (9%) suitable, **67 (67%) unsuitable**, 11 (10%) possible & 15 blanks (14%) (9 houses – average)

Thorn Tree Farm - 9 (9%) suitable, 54 (**53%**) disagree, 25 (25%) neutral & 14 blanks (13%) (11 houses – average)

Silver Lane - 2 (2%) suitable, **77 (76%) unsuitable**, 11 (11%) possible & 12 blanks (11%) (13 houses – average)

The Bagshaws - **51 (50%) suitable**, 19 (19%) unsuitable, 26 (25%) possible & 6 blanks (6%) (5 houses – average)

The Barracks - **94 (92%) suitable**, 5 (5%) unsuitable, 1 (1%) possible & 2 blanks (2%) (42 houses – average).

**Q4** Other sites. In addition, houses have been proposed (conversion & new build) on sites away from the village, e.g. former Blacksmiths PH (Birch Cross) & The Riddings (Moisty Lane). Do you agree or disagree with development on this type of site, outside the village? **68 (67%) agree**, 15 (15%) disagree, 14 (15%) neutral & 5 blanks (4%)

5.2 Many of the other comments received showed a strong preference for the development of brownfield land and underused buildings, rather than greenfield sites, for new housing. The results show a very high level of community support for NP policies which will;

- Protect the village and its setting, taking into account the Conservation Area and the wider, highly valued Needwood landscape.

- Enable the redevelopment of the former military zone on the Barracks site, using brown field land to meet housing requirements, addressing environmental problems and providing benefits to the existing community at Forestside.

- Enable limited infill development in the village with houses of an appropriate size and designed to a high standard to reflect the surroundings, for example by building 5 houses on The Bagshaws within or immediate adjoining the existing settlement boundary.

## 6 Conclusions

6.1 The Characterisation Study and the review of the associated Conservation Area, Historic Environment and landscape analyses by others, has informed these opinions and complements the community perceptions and input. It has done so by providing a thorough, evidence based, assessment of the character of the village and its setting in the local landscape, based on a proven methodology.

6.2 The key findings relate to the important of the unspoilt countryside which surrounds the village as a whole and extends into the Conservation Area. It shows that great care and sensitivity is required when the settlement boundary is considered and when greenfield (farmland) sites are being considered for development. As such, the study has identified the following key characteristics.

- The unspoilt nature of the open land in and around the village, with intimate field patterns, heritage landscape features such as ridge and furrow, established hedgerows and mature trees and the importance of topography.
- The way in which past development (especially pre 1970's other than small infill schemes) has fitted into and respected the landscape character of the village rather than being impose on it, such that the important and attractive sunken lanes, boundary treatments and rural/village roads have been retained.
- The importance of the low lying valley of the Marchington Brook to the character of the village and in keeping it visually separate from the former MOD depot.
- The extent to which military occupation and use has changed the character of the land to the east of the village over the past 100 years. The study has highlighted the extent to which this are remains in "Limbo" with the extensive site of the former barracks block becoming increasing derelict over and detracting from the functioning of the industrial estate and setting and residential environment of the 90 or so houses at Forestside.

6.3 In short, there appears to be very little justification or support for the development larger greenfield sites around the village. The emerging preferred strategy is;

- to promote carefully planned development at the Barracks which offers the largest area of land where development could be accommodated without detracting for the historic environment,
- to enable limited (high quality design) infill development in the village itself.

6.4 It remains the strongly held opinion of the Parish Council and the local community that the landscape, geography and military history of Marchington means that the development in nearby settlements such as Birch Cross and (in particular) at the Barracks which is part of an extensive built-up/formerly developed area connected to the village, should be seen as sustainable development which can contribute to the Local Plan allowance that needs to be met. Furthermore, working in accordance with the principles of Localism, it is considered that this should be achieved through a positively prepared Neighbourhood Plan, reflecting the effort and careful consideration which has been put by local people into the Characterisation study.

## Appendix 1 - Assessments sheet master

### CHARACTER ASSESSMENT PROFROMA

Character Area: ..... Date: ..... Assessor(s): .....

LAYOUT	TOPOGRAPHY	SPACES	ROADS / STREETS / ROUTES

1

### CHARACTER ASSESSMENT PROFROMA

Character Area: ..... Date: ..... Assessor(s): .....

GREEN & NATURAL FEATURES / ECOLOGY	LANDMARKS	BUILDINGS AND DETAILS

2

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT PROFROMA

Character Area: ..... Date: ..... Assessor(s): .....

STREETSCAPE FEATURES	LAND USES	VIEWS

3

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT PROFROMA

Character Area: ..... Date: ..... Assessor(s): .....

SUMMARY – WHAT ARE THE KEY DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS AREA? POSITIVES? NEGATIVES?

4

**Appendix 2 - Completed assessment sheets & photographs** (See separate document)

**Appendix 3 - Flyer distributed to publicise exhibition**

## **Appendix 4 - Exhibition content**

### **What do we want you to do today?**

("We" is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering Group (SG) which has been set up by the Parish Council (PC) and includes Councillors & local people).

The exhibition is about two (related) pieces of work which are being undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan;

- A ("Townscape") survey of the built form of the village & its rural setting
- An assessment of sites/options to meet the Local Plan housing requirement.

Neighbourhood Plans have to be evidence based and evidence comprises;

- Facts, figures and technical surveys
- The policy context (national and local)
- The views of the local community (your opinions)

We would like you to look through the exhibition - preferably in the order that it is set out, so that you can see the context for the (NP) and then complete the set of questions on the sheet that you have been given.

The key pieces of information that we need are; your views on the "Townscape" survey and on (each of) the sites covered by the assessment.

These opinions will be considered alongside the technical work that we have completed and the comments that we have had from landowners & developers. We will produce a report on the survey and the assessment by Mid April and use it to;

- Underpin the policies of the draft Neighbourhood Plan which will be written in May/early June.
- Inform the comments which will be made by the PC on the Jacks Lane (and other) planning applications, in April.
- As part of the case to be put by the PC at the (re-opened) Local plan hearing sessions in May

### **What next?**

It is important that we get a good turnout & response today. Your comments will add to those from earlier consultation in the July & December 2014. However, you will have another substantial opportunity to comment in the Draft NP in its entirety in a six week consultation in June and July

## **Introduction – What is a Neighbourhood Plan (NP)?**

Neighbourhood Plans are part of Localism and they are a new way of influencing future development by choosing where new homes, shops and offices are to be built.

They can also influence what those new buildings should look like and include policies to protect local landscape and heritage.

However, they must fit in with national policy (the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF) and complement the Local Plan (in this case the emerging East Staffordshire Local Plan). They must plan positively and they cannot;

Have less houses than are in the Local Plan or try to stop all development

Be one person or group's opinion

Change services - i.e. housing management, gardening & rubbish collection

Set social or policing programmes

The intention is to help local communities, landowners and developers by enabling more predictable and efficient planning decisions. With the Local plan, Neighbourhood Plans are part of the "Development Plan." It is a basic principle that planning applications have to be determined in accordance with Development Plan, unless material considerations dictate otherwise.

### **In summary, the Marchington Neighbourhood Plan will be able to;**

Influence the location of new housing, how it looks & the types of house built

Protect local shops, places of employment & community buildings

Decide where new community facilities could be located

Protect and enhance open spaces

Protect and enhance local (built) heritage

Protect and enhance landscape and the natural environment

Improve accessibility, including walking & cycling

### **Progress – Marchington NP – work completed, current and in the future.**

Agree and seek approval for the Plan area

Prepare a project plan, programme & budget

Research existing background

Consult local people on issues – newsletter, website and events?

Draft plan - Consult local people & stakeholders

Produce the preferred plan and submit it to ESBC for check, examination

The local referendum

We will need to get local support at all stages of the Neighbourhood Plan; 49.9% of people voting “Yes” is not enough at a referendum!

### **Current issues & complexity - scale and location of new development**

The context for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has become complex!

The allowance for new housing in the emerging Local Plan is 20 (but objectors have suggested that 40 is more appropriate). The net figure is 17, noting the permission on the former Catholic Church site.

The original reason for preparing the NP was to be able to suggest alternative locations for the new housing requirement to those in the Local Plan, which were; Jacks Lane frontage (7) and the Bagshaws (10). The Parish Council has ongoing objections to these locations.

In addition, the Local Plan policies restrict development outside a tight village settlement boundary such that any permissions granted for new housing are regarded as “Exceptions” which do not count to the overall allowance.

ESBC, whilst agreeing to the preparation of the NP, did not show flexibility on new housing locations. The intention of the PC was, therefore, to use the Hearings into the LP (by an independent Planning Inspector) to promote the belief that the NP is used to determine locations for new housing, according local circumstance & preferences.

It was anticipated that hearings would be complete and an Inspectors report available pre-Christmas, but they were halted and more information requested from ESBC. They will now re-open in May and a report should be available in June.

Developers and landowners had also objected to the local plan, suggesting a requirement of 40 houses (and an enlarged site on Jacks Lane for 40 houses). Other objectors suggest that additional land on Jacks Lane (across to the B5017) should be allocated. These are being contested by the PC.

However, national guidance favours developers where there is no up to date Local Plan and William Davis has put in a planning application for 16 houses on Jacks Lane.

The NP process has to be robust, transparent and open to landowners and developer, as well as taking the views of the local community into account. Consequently, in this sites/options assessment, the NP has to consider a number of locations that are being suggested for development – but this do not mean that the PC wants more houses than will be required in the Local Plan.

The current assessment is to provide an evidence based rationale for deciding on preferences. That is why your involvement today is so important.

## **Characterisation map & summary of areas**

The large map on this table shows how the village and immediate surroundings have been divided into sub-areas. The purpose of this characterisation is to look at the factors which can be used to assess whether or not a location may be suitable for development and if it is, what design criteria should be applied so that new buildings respect and reflect their setting.

The survey complements detailed work (mainly on buildings & structures) which has been done recently by ESBC and the County Council; a Conservation Area Appraisal and a Historic Environment Character Study. Our work is not intended to duplicate existing Conservation Area & Listed Building policies.

The 9 areas which we have surveyed are;

1a Forestside & sports field ]

1b Barracks Block ] "Former Military Zone"

1c Industrial Estate ]

2 Land between Silver lane and Jacks Lane

3 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and B5017

4 Silver Lane and Church Close

5 Church Lane

6 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and Woodland Views

7 Moistly Lane and Windmill Drive

8 Bag Lane, High Street, The Square and Hall Road

9 Allen's Lane and Allen's Close

## **A summary of the key features and qualities of each “Character” area (Nos. 1 to 4)**

### **Area 1 The Former Military Zone**

Area 1a Forestside is mainly two storey terraced post war housing in a rural setting. A lack of parking creates untidiness. This could be improved by using areas of adjacent land for parking. There is a lack of community buildings and facilities in Forestside.

Area 1b This is derelict barrack blocks surrounded by scrubland and mature trees. It is a neglected brownfield site which could be greatly improved by re-development without a negative impact on Forestside or the main part of the village. Re-development could be enhanced by a footpath/cycle way to the main village shop, school, church and public houses.

*Overall, it is considered that new housing could be built in area 1b, with no adverse impact on the village character, but limited in scale, with improvements to Forestside and located so that it does not conflict with 1c ( the Industrial Estate)*

Area 1c A large scale industrial estate with a regular layout of warehouse buildings.

### **Area 2 Land between Silver lane and Jacks Lane**

This is a low lying, flat, flood plain area with tree lined stream and drain used for agricultural and recreational purposes with open space and a cricket ground, which suffers occasional flooding. It contains guard house buildings from a WWII POW camp.

*Overall, the land is an important part of the setting of the village, it is floodplain and it is not considered to be suitable for large scale development*

### **Area 3 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and B5017**

This is an area of well-maintained farmland with mature trees and hedge boundaries which forms a natural buffer at the western gateways to the village, including parts of the Conservation Area on Bag Lane. A few houses (2 on Jacks Lane and 3-4 on Bag Lane) exist. There are two public footpaths crossing the land which offer views into and out of the village.

*Overall, the land is part of the attractive rural setting of the village and it is a gateway to the conservation area and as such it is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.*

### **Area 4 Silver Lane and Church Close**

There is ribbon development of mainly relatively modern housing on the SW (higher) side of the Lane, overlooking low lying open fields in the valley of the Marchington brook - a flood risk area adjacent to the Industrial Estate.

*Overall, the land is part of the rural setting of the village. It is floodplain and is not considered to be suitable for large scale development.*

### **A summary of the key features and qualities of each “Character” area (Nos. 5 to 9)**

#### Area 5 Church Lane

This is a picturesque older part of village with the most prominent buildings being the church and public house and is included in the Conservation Area. It is a focus of activity in the village but susceptible to flooding and suffers from through traffic in Narrow Lane.

*Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and this point, linked with flooding and traffic issues means that it is not considered suitable for large scale new development.*

#### Area 6 Land between Bag Lane, Jacks Lane and Woodland Views.

This is an area of established 1970's housing overlooking pastureland to the west containing mature trees and hedges. It sits between the Conservation Area to the NE and open land to the NW & SW, which is an important part of the rural setting of the village.

*Overall it is already developed and this area is not considered suitable for new development.*

#### Area 7 Moisty Lane and Windmill Drive

This is an area of established more recent housing. Well spaced properties with open layouts and large gardens with prominent views of the Dove Valley, Weaver Hills and woodland escarpment. Moisty Lane is narrow and there is through traffic (to Uttoxeter). open land to the SW is important to the rural setting of the village and the Conservation Area.

*Overall it is fully developed and is not considered to be suitable for new development.*

#### Area 8 Bag Lane, High Street, The Square and Hall Road

This is part of the historic core of the village, containing listed buildings and prominent buildings, mixed with a few modern buildings including the School and Village Hall. It includes sunken lanes with mature hedgerows screening mature properties. The narrow roads carry traffic and are a on through route to Burton and Uttoxeter.

*Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and it is not considered suitable for large scale development, but there may be potential for a small number of well-designed houses at The Bagshaws but the Listed Buildings & Conservation Area need respect.*

#### Area 9 Allens Lane and Allens Close

This is a historic sunken lane with older development and a small newer cul de sac. It is narrow lane with high clay banks and is busy with traffic. It is in the Conservation Area. Thorn Tree Farm, which is elevated, is to the north. The farmland beyond is mature grassland overlooking the village and is an important part of its rural setting.

*Overall, the area is part of the historic core of the village and it is not considered suitable for large scale development. However, there may be potential for a limited number of small, well designed houses at the Farm, but the Listed Buildings & Conservation Area need respect.*

### **Site assessment**

These sets of summary sheets and plans give information about the seven sites that have been looked at in detail in the assessment. These are

- Jacks Lane
- Jacks Lane (West)
- Jacks Lane (B5017)
- Thorn Tree Farm
- Silver Lane
- The Bagshaws
- The Barracks

A detailed assessment, using a consistent set of criteria, has been made for each of the sites. Landowners and developer a have also been asked to complete sheets for the purposes of commission.

The information recorded for each site has been taken from existing work on the Local Plan and its SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment).

There has been consultation with the County Council/Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and Staffordshire wildlife trust on flooding, drainage and nature conservation factors.

In addition, heritage and landscape information has been taken from the ESBC Conservation Area Appraisal and a County Council study, both from 2015.

A summary of the initial conclusions for each site is given on the next sheet.

We want you to consider which sites you think might be suitable for new housing (using a traffic light system) and if some sites are suitable, how many houses may be appropriate on them?

Please note; in some instances your preferences my not comply with the current/emerging Local Plan policy and if we are to purse those options we will need to negotiate with ESBC to give the Neighbourhood Plan scope to make different recommendations to those in the local plan. This may not be agreed.

Finally, some houses have been proposed (conversion & new build) on sites away from the village, at the former Blacksmiths PH (Birch Cross) and The Riddings (Moisty Lane). We are also interested to hear if you agree or disagree with development on these types of sites? (NB under Local Plan policies, they may not be counted towards the overall allowance of 20 new houses).

## **Summary of site assessments and draft conclusions.**

**Jacks Lane** Available. Capacity for 48 houses (exceeds net allowance by 31). Current application for 16 houses and open space. Outside Settlement Boundary, but adjoins it (Jacks Lane & Woodland view) North of site in Conservation Area. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land south of Bag Lane and beyond newer parts of the village, linking to adjoining open countryside. Locally valued trees hedges and ridge & furrow on site. Requires on site works for drainage and creation of access. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities.

*This site is not favoured for development because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village & Conservation Area.*

**Jacks Lane (West)** Available. Capacity for 62 houses (exceeds net allowance by 45). Outside Settlement Boundary, but adjoins it (Jacks Lane linear development) to south. North of site within Conservation Area on Bag Lane. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land beyond newer parts of the village, linking to wider countryside. Likely to require on site works for drainage and creation of access. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities.

*This site is not favoured for development because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village & Conservation Area.*

**Jacks Lane (B5017)** Available. Capacity for 94 houses (exceeds net allowance by 77). Outside Settlement Boundary, but adjoins it (Jacks lane linear development) to south. North of site is within the Conservation Area on Bag Lane. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land beyond newer parts of the village, linking to wider countryside. Likely to require on site works for drainage and creation of access. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities.

*This site is not favoured for development because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village and the Conservation Area.*

**Thorn Tree Farm** Available in 2-3 years. Capacity for 84 houses (exceeds net allowance by 67). Outside Settlement Boundary (but adjoins in two sides). Existing farmhouse listed and in Conservation Area. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land (countryside) separating older and newer parts of the village. Rise from 75m to 90m. Likely to require on site works for drainage and creation of access. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities.

*This site is not favoured for large scale development because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village and the Conservation Area but some limited development may be possible around the farm buildings.*

### **Summary of site assessments and draft conclusions.**

**Silver Lane;** Not in Shlaa but identified as available by owner. Capacity for 32 houses (exceeds net allowance by 15). Outside Settlement boundary and Conservation Area, but adjoins both at NW tip. Uses; farmland. Forms part of open land (countryside and open spaces) in the valley of the Marchington Brook, separating older and newer parts of the village. Within Floodzone 2 and an objection from EA/SCC is likely. The scale of development could address access and drainage needs and support the provision of community facilities.

*This site is not favoured because of the impact on open land which is an important part of the setting/character of the village and it is liable to flooding.*

**The Bagshaws;** potentially available. In the emerging Local Plan there is a suggestion for 10 houses (not supported by PC). There is a previous planning permission for 5 houses. It is part within in settlement boundary and wholly within the Conservation Area. Uses; houses, gardens yard and paddock. Likely to require on site works for drainage. Designs (scale materials etc. need careful consideration with regard to the CA, with smaller dwellings preferred. There is no impact on rural setting of the village or open countryside.

*Some limited development is favoured in this location, subject to viability and design to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation area*

**The Barracks;** Not in Shlaa but identified as available by the owner. Capacity for 100+ houses (exceeds net allowance by 80+) and indicative scheme suggests up to 50. It is well outside settlement boundary but sits between Industrial Estate and Forestside, forming part of the former military zone. The relationship with existing housing and industrial units is important. EA/SCC advise that drainage options exist. There is mature woodland on site and known habitats (Bats). There potential for in investment in footpath and cycle access to the village and to provide better access, parking and community facilities for Forestside

*This is a favoured location for any necessary housing development (as is to be agreed through the Local Plan), subject to evidence of viability & deliverability. This would re-use brownfield/derelict land and has the potential to improve the environment & community facilities of Forestside. (NB it is acknowledged that ESBC would need to agree to set emerging Local Plan policies need aside and agree to the Neighbourhood Plan taking precedence for any housing committed at The Barracks to count to the allowance).*

## **And finally.....**

Thank you

Please complete the response form, if possible, before you leave the exhibition – if you cannot do this, please return it, by 5:00pm on Thursday 2nd April, to:

- The Parish Clerk; Linda Hoptroff, The Hollies, 9 Chartley Gate Close, Uttoxeter, ST14 8DX.
- The Village Shop or hand it to a Steering Group Member or Parish Councillor.
- Scan a copy and email it to the Parish Clerk; [marchingtonpc@bntinternet.com](mailto:marchingtonpc@bntinternet.com)

In addition to considering the questions on the form, please let us have any other comments that you wish to make and do talk to the Councillors, Steering Group members or our planning adviser

Looking ahead.....

Please stay engaged as we move through the Neighbourhood Plan process;

- We hope to be inviting comments on a full draft of the plan in June/July when there will be a 6 week consultation.
- It will be revised over the summer and the final version submitted to ESBC early in the autumn to be examined soon after.
- We hope that a referendum can be held early in 2015

.....and in the meantime, please feel free to make your views known on any current (and future) planning applications.

NB; planning in general, including Neighbourhood Plans, can be complex and often give rise to controversial issues, the solutions to which are not always categorical. The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan SG is trying to face up to the challenges in Marchington in a responsible and realistic manner. This means that they may not always ask the questions that you favour or that they can come up with answers that will be supported by everyone. However, please be appreciative of the time, effort that they are putting into the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a locally based framework for decision making but negotiation and some compromise is often needed and it is part of the system.

**Appendix 5 - Questionnaire. Marchington Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition 28 March 2015**

**Q1 Housing Numbers** Do you agree that 20 new houses is the right amount in Marchington?  
*(National Planning Guidance mean that we cannot promote less than this number in the NP)*

Agree	Disagree	Neutral
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**Q2 The Characterisation Study** Do you **agree** or **disagree** with how the village and its setting has been divided up and with the early conclusion on the key characteristics of each area?

Area 1 (a,b&c)	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9

If you do not agree, what alternative do you suggest or do you have any other comments?

.....

.....

**Q3 Which sites do you think might be suitable for new housing?** (Using a traffic light system). If you think that sites are suitable, how many houses may be appropriate on them?

	Jacks Lane	Jacks La. (West)	Jacks Lane (B5017)	Thorn Tree Farm	Silver Lane	The Bagshaws	The Barracks
Suitable (Green)							
Possible (Amber)							
Unsuitable (Red)							
No. of houses							

**Q4 Other sites** In addition, houses have been proposed (conversion & new build) on sites away from the village, e.g. former Blacksmiths PH (Birch Cross) & The Riddings (Moisty Lane). Do you agree or disagree with development on this type of site, outside the village?

Agree	Disagree	Neutral
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**Q5** are there **any other comments** that you would like to make?

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