

The Malpas Plan

Economic Issues

Focus Group Meeting

28th May 2005

Present:

Peter Howell (PH)	George Roberts (GR)
Margaret Barker (MB)	David Meredith (DM)
Eric Barker (EBr)	Helen Proudlove (HP)
Sally Sharp (SS)	Joan Allen (JA)
Eric Beak (EBk)	Philip Ravenhill (PR)
Anna Patten (AP)	
Mike Patten (MP)	

PH gave a brief introduction to the purpose and scope of the meeting and how it ties into the Malpas Plan.

The Plan itself is designed to cover the next 5 – 15 years, looking at Malpas as a place to live/work/do business. In order to do this it is first necessary to consider the issues of Malpas now and what it could become in the future.

A SWOT chart (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) was used to list some of the issues raised.

GR – Malpas struggles with traffic – but High Street does have very wide pavements.

There is the potential for widening the road by using some of the pavement, which would allow for traffic to pass without losing the parking

PR – One problem is that vehicles are parked all day on the High Street, by people working in shops/businesses, not in the car parks. In some cases residents are unable to park outside or close to their homes.

MB – What has been the effect of the yellow lines? These are often ignored, particularly outside Owens

GR – What about a mini roundabout at the top of Chester Road, many people use the junction for a U-turn?

MB – Malpas Parish Council tried some years ago but were told it would be too expensive. Perhaps its time to try again.

? – What about widening the road by the Alport, by the old police station, where there is a grass verge. This would allow a parking bay for school pick-ups without blocking Chester Road.

JA – The new yellow flashing lights by the school have helped

GR – the traffic backs up because of the bottlenecks

HP – The HGVs are too big, We are all too impatient at peak times, but the problems are only for a few minutes.

PR – Most of the HGVs are going to Meadowvale. There are oversized trucks doing small deliveries – one pallet jobs

PH – How does this fit in to the future of Malpas?

PR – Meadowvale needs to relocate to somewhere like Hampton Trading Estate

HP – We have an office in Malpas – we want to see an expansion of office premises. Meadowvale would be an ideal location for office units, like those at Cholmondely Post Office.

DM – Car parks – the village one fills up early so that people who work in the shops can't park there. The fire station car park is under-used but the pathway to the shops isn't good enough

PR – Many businesses in Malpas are sole traders, there are a high proportion of self-employed supplying services in Malpas

MP – It is difficult to maintain a business as a viable enterprise without growing too large. Malpas itself has the same problem. How does it maintain its viability without growing too large?

EBk – What about employment opportunities for people in Malpas?

DM – Only 1 in 20 of my employees lives in Malpas

? OK, we're not looking for large-scale new businesses. What about employment for young people?

GR – We're getting better, brighter children coming through into the building trade.

? Need positive relationship with the school. Most children leaving school will not work in Malpas

Cost of housing

JA – Drainage – Malpas can't grow until the drains are sorted out. The volume of water is too great for the drains – water rushes down the Greenway, lifts the manhole covers.

HP – we don't want the village to grow too large. It has a positive feeling of a community, although we do need to move with the times

PR – The school is a big draw for the village

EBk – For a village of its size we have a good range of facilities

PR – Businesses need to be in contact with the school and ensure that kids who don't go off to university have jobs

EBr – Are there enough places like Hampton and Meadowvale for businesses to develop?

PH Are we being NIMBY? We don't want it in Malpas but within 3 – 5 miles

EBk – Incentives are needed for farms to develop light industrial uses for their redundant buildings. At the moment they are more inclined to go for housing development, like the one at No Man's Heath

AP – There is a problem in identifying potential sites in Malpas. Can anyone suggest where we could encourage this sort of development?

HP – The old egg packing station (next to the Recreation Ground) could be suitable for office/light industrial use

MB – One problem is that the City Council don't listen to the views of Malpas, either the Parish Council or the people as a whole.