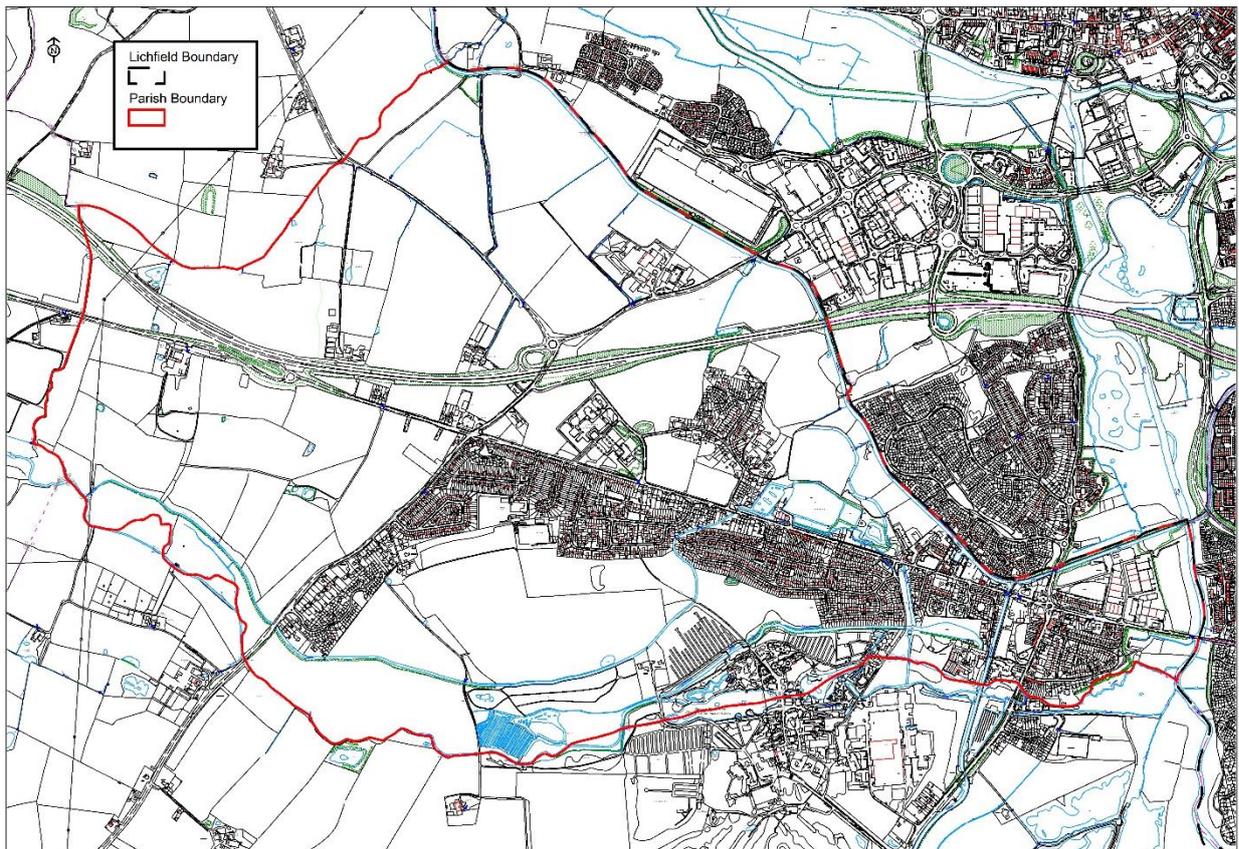




# Fazeley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022 - 2040

## Public Consultation Draft Vision, Objectives and Key Planning Themes March 2022



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**Fazeley Town Council with support from**



## Foreword

1. Welcome to the first document for the Fazeley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan steering group on behalf of the Town Council and is the focus of our first public consultation with residents and stakeholders. Once completed, Fazeley NDP will be an important document which contains local planning policies to inform decisions on future development in the town.
2. We have prepared a Draft Vision, a set of Draft Objectives and some possible key planning themes and ideas for policies which our Plan for Fazeley could address. We would like to hear about whether you agree with these, whether you have any comments about how they could be improved, and whether we have missed anything important.
3. **Hard copies of this document are available on request from the Town Clerk.**
4. There is a short **questionnaire** at the back of the document for you to detach, complete and return to the Town Clerk, Fazeley Town Council, 2C Appian Close, Two Gates, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 1JA. Alternatively the questionnaire can be downloaded from our website at <https://fazeleytowncouncil.wordpress.com> – see the Neighbourhood Plan tab, completed and returned by email to [bluesea02@outlook.com](mailto:bluesea02@outlook.com), or brought to the drop the Drop In event – see below.
5. **Please complete and return the questionnaire by the end of April 2022.**
6. We are holding a **public Drop In event on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March from 5.00pm to 7.30pm at the Town Hall** where you can talk to members of the group and find out more about the NDP. All are welcome to attend.
7. Following this first consultation, we will look very carefully at everyone's responses and ideas and then start drafting the first version of the Draft Plan. This work is likely to include further consultations on key policies such as design over the coming months.
8. We hope very much that you will take the time to read the document and provide us with your thoughts at this early stage so that we can be sure our Plan is locally relevant and embeds our residents' and stakeholders' priorities for planning and development.
9. Thank you for your interest and we look forward to hearing from you.

## What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

10. Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to give local people a greater say in planning decisions that affect their area. NDPs are neighbourhood level planning policy documents with policies designed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities.
11. NDPs can identify where development should take place, set out local design principles so that buildings respond positively to local character, and protect important facilities, historic buildings, the natural environment and open spaces. They are an important part of our planning system because planning applications

are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Made (adopted) NDPs are part of the local statutory development plan for their area.

12. An NDP can cover a range of planning related issues or just have one, single policy.
13. NDPs do not stand alone - they have to have regard to national planning policies (see the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other Government guidance) and be in general conformity with strategic planning policies, here provided in the Lichfield District Local Plan.
14. NDPs have to be prepared through extensive community consultation and backed up by robust technical evidence. The policies and proposals in the Plan are tested against a set of 'basic conditions' through an independent examination. At the very end there is a local referendum, when all those on the electoral role are invited to vote on whether the Plan should be used to determine planning applications. This process is shown **on Figure 1**.
15. It will probably take at least 18 months to 2 years to complete, and we are only at the beginning - deciding what our Plan should include.
16. When finished the NDP will include local planning policies and proposals to inform decisions on development in Fazeley up to 2040 – the same time period as the new Fazeley District Local Plan. The Town Council may also try to progress actions to accompany the policies in the Plan, which may be identified or confirmed through the various consultation processes.

## **Progress so Far**

17. The Town Council decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in 2018 and the Fazeley neighbourhood area was designated on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018 – see the map on the front cover. This area is important as the Plan policies can only apply to development within this boundary.
18. A steering group has been set up to meet regularly and oversee the Plan's preparation.
19. Documents are placed on the neighbourhood plan pages of the Town Council website – see <https://fazeleytowncouncil.wordpress.com/> .

20.

**Figure 1 NDP Estimated Process and Timescale**

## A Portrait of Fazeley

21. Fazeley is located in Lichfield District within the county of Staffordshire, approximately 7 miles south-east of Lichfield and 1.3 miles south of Tamworth.
22. It is a small town with a population of 4,530 in 2011. The built-up area is concentrated from the area around the road junction of Lichfield Street, Atherstone Street, Coleshill Street and Tamworth Road, with linear development extending westwards along the A5 Lichfield Street towards Mile Oak.
23. The area has an important and interesting heritage. The town lies on the route of the old Roman Road of Watling Street which once ran from Dover in Kent to Holyhead on Anglesey. The Birmingham and Fazeley Canal runs northwards through the built-up area and then northwest along the District and Fazeley

neighbourhood area boundary. The Fazeley and Bonehill Conservation Area includes mills, watercourses, pools and other buildings and structures relating to the Peel family dating from around 1790 - 1850. The waterways have more than local significance – they represent one of the most important waterpower systems dating from the early part of the Industrial Revolution. There are 21 Listed Buildings in the neighbourhood area.

24. The historic hamlet of Bonehill, situated just off Watling Street is an important remnant of the area's agricultural past and despite the developments of the twentieth century still retains a peaceful, rural character.
25. There are a few local shops and services concentrated around the road junction, including a small convenience store, public houses, takeaways and a petrol station and another small group of shops at Mile Oak. The built-up area is largely residential but there are several small industrial estates and workshops in converted former mill buildings. Community facilities include the Town Hall, St Paul's Church, Mile Oak Community Centre, Millfield and Longfield Primary Schools and Sir Robert Peel Hospital.
26. Fazeley has good access to the national motorway network, a regular bus service to Tamworth and Birmingham and a rail station at Tamworth which has a Cross rail service to London and services to Derby and Birmingham. There is also a station at Wilmcote. However, the area suffers from high levels of traffic with associated problems of congestion, noise and air pollution particularly at the main crossroads during the summer months.
27. The built-up area is surrounded by Green Belt to the north, south and west. The new emerging Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy lists Fazeley in Level 3 – Larger service village and there is a proposed strategic site, SHA2: Land west of Fazeley, Mile Oak & Bonehill strategic housing allocation for 800 new houses.
28. Much of Fazeley is low lying and at risk of flooding.
29. The area includes several areas of woodland including ancient woodland at Kendall's Wood and Pipes Wood north of the A5. There are a couple of priority habitats including a small area of traditional orchard and areas of wood pasture and parkland at Seventeen Acre Wood and Longwood House to the south of the neighbourhood area.

## Draft Vision and Objectives

30. The NDP Steering Group has prepared the following Draft Vision and Objectives for the NDP.

### Draft Vision

By 2040 the unique heritage of Fazeley will be seen as an asset and integrated as part of Fazeley's regeneration and physical enhancement. Local communities will be more prosperous and better connected by attractive green spaces and improved active transport links, and local wildlife will be protected and enhanced.

**NDP Draft Objectives**

Objective 1: To promote high quality and sustainable design which is sensitive to local character and heritage, whilst ensuring development is resource efficient and fit for the future.

Objective 2: To provide an attractive, safe and high-quality public realm which attracts further investment and is accessible for all, and to alleviate parking problems in the area.

Objective 3: To support small scale housing schemes within the built-up area to meet local needs.

Objective 4: To encourage suitable business and visitor related uses of former mills and historic buildings and investment in local shops and services.

Objective 5: To support improvements in local public open spaces and recreation facilities.

Objective 6: To protect and enhance Fazeley's historic local waterways for wildlife and recreation uses.

**Key Planning Issues**

31. The NDP Steering Group has identified the following as key planning issues which the NDP could address. Fazeley NDP sits within the national (NPPF) and Lichfield level planning policy context so our plan cannot contradict these higher-level policies and proposals, but it can provide more detail so that development is appropriate to the local context and character.
32. We would like to know whether you agree with them and whether we have missed anything important so that as we move forward, we can be sure we are preparing a Plan with policies which are informed and guided by local stakeholders' ideas and concerns.
33. **Built Heritage and Design**
34. The NDP could include more detailed policies on design, to help ensure new development responds positively to local character and built and natural heritage, but also is sustainable and resource efficient. The Conservation Area Appraisal could be considered, and detailed design codes will be prepared for the Conservation Area and wider town.
35. If the strategic site allocation remains on the new Local Plan, then Strategic Policy SHA2 will be used to guide development, with a masterplan and design codes.
36. It is proposed that the NDP will focus on design codes for development on small infill sites and conversions of existing buildings in the built-up area.

Possible NDP planning policies could:

- Provide detailed design advice related to local heritage and character; and
- Promote sustainable and resource efficient development in new housing and other schemes.

### 37. **Public Realm**

38. There is a need to enhance the physical environment of some areas of Fazeley. In recent years there have been a number of improvements: some long standing disused historic buildings such as Fazeley Methodist Church have been converted and Tolson's Mill is being refurbished for residential use.

39. However, the public realm in Fazeley centre would benefit from sensitive environmental enhancements. There is a considerable amount of visual clutter including street furniture, signage and railings which could be reviewed and improved. Solutions could be sought to reduce the dominance of traffic and create a more pedestrian friendly and visually attractive environment.

40. Traffic management goes beyond the scope of NDPs, but the Town Council could use the NDP to provide a positive planning framework to support appropriate and sensitive public realm improvements as part of wider, strategic objectives to enhance the built environment and improve linkages for walking and cycling as set out in the Local Plan.

Possible NDP planning policies and actions could:

- Provide a positive framework for improvements to the centre of Fazeley including enhancements to the public realm; and
- Set out actions to improve problems associated with traffic and parking and promote greener transport solutions including improvements to the walking and cycling network.

### 41. **Housing**

42. Most of the housing need in the area will be addressed at a strategic level through the Local Plan, and, if it remains, the proposed strategic site allocation SHA2.

43. It is proposed that the NDP supports small scale housing proposals within the built-up area where they meet local needs for housing, including more affordable homes.

A possible NDP planning policy could:

- Support small scale housing schemes within the built-up area where they meet local needs.

#### 44. **Business**

45. Fazeley has a wide range of local businesses. Local shops and services around the traffic island at the crossroads include a petrol station, hot food takeaways, a convenience store and Fazeley Inn public house. There is another small group of local shops at Mile Oak.
46. There are two small industrial estates at Lakeside and Riverside, and several small businesses occupy units on Mill Lane next to the canal. Other local businesses are grouped along the route of the old A5 and these include a saw mill, delicatessen and Three Tuns public house.
47. There remain some vacant buildings in the area which require investment and sensitive restoration. The canal and built heritage may offer opportunities for businesses which are linked to the local tourism economy. The marina just outside Fazeley NDP area has moorings for canal boats, and the canal towpath links the marina to the Conservation Area. Opportunities may include those linked to food and drink provision such as cafes and bars, as well as visitor accommodation. These are likely to remain small in scale and will have to be sensitive to the historic character and existing residential areas.

Possible NDP planning policies could:

- Support appropriate and sympathetic conversions of older buildings for business uses; and
- Support small scale business development linked to heritage and the visitor economy.

#### 48. **Open Space, Recreation and the Natural Environment**

49. Fazeley has few accessible open spaces for local residents. Lichfield District Council's Open Space Assessment (December 2020) notes that 'Fazeley has very few amenity greenspaces considering it is one of the largest villages'. Recommendations include 'improvements to existing sites which score poorly' and 'a play area is required to address deficiencies in the centre and south west of the village'.
50. The canal network provides opportunities for walking and cycling along towpaths and the towpaths connect Fazeley north to Fradley and south to Birmingham. As well as providing towpaths alongside the canals, the canals are used for fishing and narrow boating.
51. The many watercourses and sluices form an important part of the area's 18<sup>th</sup> century industrial heritage associated with Sir Robert Peel. Gangs of workmen were employed to cut the channels and construct the numerous sluices and weirs to provide water supplies for industrial activities and to power the mills. The waterways pass through areas of dense tree cover and vegetation and this gives the area a rural, tranquil feel. The waterways also provide a habitat for wildlife and vegetation.
52. In addition, the Town Council owns the open space to the rear of Victory Terrace. The area is currently an underused green space in an area at risk of flooding and

previous ideas have included using part of the site for a car park to ease parking problems around the crossroads. The site remains one of the few accessible open spaces in the town and is used by local people for informal recreation.

53. The NDP could identify proposals to enhance this area of public open space through environmental improvements and an improved children's' play area. Part of the area could be used as a wetland as part of flood alleviation and to benefit wildlife.
54. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the waterways are an important legacy which should be conserved. Some of the pools are silting up and some of the watercourses are now stagnant. Work to restore these, with appropriate consideration of existing flora and fauna, would greatly benefit this ecological and historical resource.
55. The NDP could provide a positive planning policy framework to support improvements to public open spaces and to protect and enhance the historic areas of waterways so that they provide recreational opportunities for local people and a habitat for wildlife.

Possible NDP planning policies and actions could include:

- Including proposals for improvements to public open spaces and parking, including at Victory Terrace; and
- Identifying areas of importance for wildlife and working with landowners and wildlife groups to restore and enhance areas of biodiversity importance.

## **Next Steps**

56. Following this public consultation, the Steering Group will start work on the Draft Plan. We will use the responses to help guide the draft policies and proposals and there will be further opportunities to comment through informal and formal consultation over the coming months.
57. Thank you for your time and interest.
58. Please complete and return the Questionnaire.

## Questionnaire

Thank you for reading the Visions, Objectives and Key Planning Themes Document for the Fazeley NDP.

Please detach and complete this short questionnaire and return it to the Town Clerk, Fazeley Town Council, 2C Appian Close, Two Gates, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 1JA or email it to [bluesea02@outlook.com](mailto:bluesea02@outlook.com), or complete one at the drop the Drop In event on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March from 5pm – 7.30pm at the Town Hall.

**Please return completed questionnaires by the end of April 2022.**

When you attend a consultation event or return a survey or consultation document, the information you provide (personal information such as name, address, email address, phone number) will be processed and stored so that it is possible to contact you and respond to your correspondence and provide information relating to the Neighbourhood Plan. Any comments submitted may be made publicly available on the Fazeley Town Council website, or through other local publications, however, all comments will be anonymised prior to publication.

Name:		
Do you want to be kept informed about the NDP and any future public consultations?	Yes	No
If so, please provide contact details:		
Q1 Do you support the Draft Vision?	Yes	No
Please provide any comments about how it could be improved.		
Q2 Do you support the Draft Objectives?	Yes	No
Please provide any comments about how they could be improved.		

Do you support the proposed Key Planning Themes and Possible Policies and Actions for Fazeley Neighbourhood Plan, as set out on the next page?		
Q3 Built Heritage and Design	Yes	No
Comments		
Q4 Public Realm	Yes	No
Comments		
Q5 Housing	Yes	No
Comments		
Q6 Business	Yes	No
Comments		
Q7 Open Space, Recreation and the Natural Environment	Yes	No
Comments		
Q4 Please let us know if you disagree with anything or think we have missed anything important.		
Q5 Please use the space below to provide us with any further comments about the NDP for Fazeley. Thank you.		