

# MERIDEN

(Including Millison's Wood, Eaves Green and surrounding areas)

## Parish Plan Newsletter

Spring 2011

Published by the Meriden Parish  
Plan Action Group



This edition of the Newsletter is entirely devoted to the Parish Design Statement and seeking your views on planning issues facing the parish as a whole and your particular area.

Please consider and answer the questions carefully. Your answers and your comments will help us produce a Statement that will inform planners and developers of our community's concerns, our views and our guidance on planning and development matters.

**Please complete appropriate sections of this newsletter  
Return it to one of the drop off points (see back page) before Thursday 21 April 2011  
Or email your responses to: [lainRoxburgh@btinternet.com](mailto:lainRoxburgh@btinternet.com)**

## Parish Design Statement – your views needed

**What is it and what is it for?** Meriden's Parish Design Statement (VDS) will form part of our Parish Plan. A parish design statement informs planners and developers what has been agreed by the local community in order to supplement Solihull Council's general guidance on development. It seeks to ensure that any future changes, large or small, are based on an understanding of the parish's past and present. The aim is to draw attention to the valued characteristics of buildings and environmental features throughout Meriden Parish and village so that inappropriate and unsympathetic development can be avoided and to identify where improvements can be made to the public realm to enhance the environment and liveability of the village and the parish as a whole.

**What does it cover?** It will describe Meriden's location and history, the development of the village and surrounding settlements and then describe and outline the issues and concerns in relation to the landscape setting and important views, the character areas of the village and parish and the public spaces in the parish. In each case it will seek to give guidance on planning matters.

**How can I contribute and help get it right?** The remainder of this newsletter lists some of the most important points that we think ought to be made in the Parish Design Statement. Some apply generally to the whole parish and some to specific areas of the village and wider parish.

***Have we got these right? Are there planning issues and concerns we have missed? Do you agree with the guidance? Is there anything else we should be including? Are there particular planning or development issues in your area of the Parish that we have missed?***

**To help us understand your issues, can you please indicate your area of the parish?**

The Green and its environs		Strawberry Fields	
Hampton Rd / Grange, Birmingham Rd		Meriden Hall and Park	
Maxstoke Lane, Maxstoke Close		Berkswell Road	
Fillongley, Archery, Kittermaster Rds		Church Lane, Old Road	
Main Road		Millison's Wood	
Leys Lane, Leymere, Whichcote, Digby		Eaves Green	
Alspath, Arden, Fairfield, The Croft, Waterfall, Glovers, Highfield, Winspear		Rural areas of the Parish (pl. say where)	

## Meriden's landscape setting

Proposed points to be made in the VDS:

- *Parish residents are passionately concerned to preserve the Green Belt – the Meriden Gap, to reinforce the defensible green belt boundary around the Meriden village and to ensure that only very tightly regulated, appropriate development occurs elsewhere in the Parish.*
- *Residents of Meriden and from the surrounding conurbations value highly the quality of the landscape and the footpaths, bridleways and lanes of the Parish. Meriden is of national importance to cyclists with the National Cyclists Memorial and is a popular centre and destination.*
- *The urban landscape could be considerably improved in places by sensitive treatment of the public realm, the narrowing of main roads and selective tree planting and landscaping.*



Do you agree?

Yes	No

Have we missed a point?

Any other comments?

## The built environment

There is much about the built environment that is attractive and highly valued. However, in the past some lamentable planning decisions have been made. The challenge today is to take measures that, over time will mitigate some of the mistakes of the past and gradually improve the character of the built environment overall.

Proposed General Guidance

- *Any future developments should be congruous, harmonise with their environs and be in keeping with the character of neighbouring properties.*
- *Future developments more than two storeys high should not generally be acceptable.*
- *Back-land and garden/site overdevelopment should be resisted.*
- *To improve the appearance of the western gateway to the village and to provide more housing near the village centre a small attractive housing development should be considered on the north side of Birmingham Road (Meriden).*
- *The Leys Lane site designated for 'future housing needs' in the 2006 UDP should be formally returned to the Green Belt following the recent review of future housing land requirements.*
- *Brickwork should be repaired rather than rendered or painted, particularly when the property is terraced or semi-detached.*
- *Any development which requires the removal of trees or hedgerows should require replacement, like for like.*
- *Property boundaries adjoining public roads, lanes and spaces should complement the general character of the area in terms of materials and should avoid runs of contrasting styles and height. Encourage a preference for hedges, particularly in certain roads.*

Do you agree?

Yes	No

Have we missed a point?

Any other comments?



## Public spaces

Spaces and public places in the parish are as important as its buildings. They contribute immensely to how we feel about the place and our sense of wellbeing. The Household Survey 2008 showed that the public spaces in the parish were highly valued by the community. In particular, **The Green**, with its ancient cross and cyclists' memorial, provides a heart to Meriden that makes it distinctive from other places. **Millison's Wood nature reserve** and the **Duck Pond** are very popular and valued, the latter particularly by children. In the wider rural

areas of the Parish, the **lanes, bridleways and footpaths** are highly valued by cyclists, riders and walkers.

### Changes underway

The **new sports facilities** will be open in 2011 and be a great asset to many sections of the community, particularly young people. However, the new sports facilities, together with the **housing development** on the former playing field site in Maxstoke Lane, will change the pattern of movement in the village and increase greatly the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles in the centre of the village.

### Roads, vehicles and pedestrians - key principles

Roads are public spaces and contribute to our impressions of a place. In Meriden, for historic reasons in the development of the village, the needs of the highway have dominated. We have wide roads designed to speed traffic on its way. The Parish Plan (p13) calls for a comprehensive approach to traffic and parking and to managing the relationship between pedestrians and road vehicles.



### Proposed General Guidance

Do you agree?

- *The gateways to the village should be marked by a distinct change in road design*
- *Within the village there should be narrower main roads, more parking bays and more pedestrian crossing points – to naturally slow traffic down and to preserve and enhance the environment of the village.*
- *Within the village pedestrians should be considered first and the street's function as "place" should be equal to its "movement" function.*
- *Particular attention needs to be given to these issues in the vicinity of The Green and the school.*
- *Street "clutter" should be minimised and necessary street furniture and lighting should be unobtrusive, consistent and of high quality.*
- *Grass verges and embankments should be preserved and inappropriate parking and overrunning by vehicles (including Council / Enterprise refuse vehicles) discouraged.*

Yes	No

Have we missed a point?

Any other comments?

## Particular guidance for different areas of the Parish

In addition to the general guidance on planning and public space issues, the Parish Design Statement will give more specific guidance on local issues in your area of the village and parish. The Household Survey of 2008 identified many of these local concerns, but it would be very helpful if you could list below any particular concerns you have today over planning and public space matters in your particular street or area of the parish.

Your road / area of the Parish (see list on p1)	
Current issues and concerns about planning, development and public space in your road or area of the Parish.	

**Please now return this to one of the following drop off points:**

**The Library, The Centre (charity shop), Blitz (Millison's Wood)**

**Or email your responses to:**

**Iain Roxburgh, Chair, Meriden Parish Plan Action Group at:  
[IainRoxburgh@btinternet.com](mailto:IainRoxburgh@btinternet.com)**

