

Walkeringham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2035

**A report to Bassetlaw Council on the Walkeringham
Neighbourhood Development Plan**

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Executive Summary

- 1 I was appointed by Bassetlaw Council in January 2020 to carry out the independent examination of the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2 The examination was undertaken by way of written representations. I visited the neighbourhood plan area on 27 January 2020.
- 3 The Plan includes a variety of policies and seeks to bring forward positive and sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. There is a very clear focus on bringing forward housing allocations, designating local green spaces and safeguarding its attractive character. It is a very effective Plan which carefully addresses a series of important issues that face the local community.
- 4 The Plan has been underpinned by community support and engagement. It is clear that all sections of the community have been engaged in its preparation.
- 5 Subject to a series of recommended modifications set out in this report I have concluded that the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum.
- 6 I recommend that the referendum should be held within the neighbourhood area.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
21 April 2020

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the independent examination of the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2035 (the Plan).
- 1.2 The Plan has been submitted to Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) by Walkeringham Parish Council in its capacity as the qualifying body responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans were introduced into the planning process by the Localism Act 2011. They aim to allow local communities to take responsibility for guiding development in their area. This approach was subsequently embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012, 2018 and 2019. The NPPF continues to be the principal element of national planning policy.
- 1.4 The role of an independent examiner is clearly defined in the legislation. I have been appointed to examine whether or not the submitted Plan meets the basic conditions and Convention Rights and other statutory requirements. It is not within my remit to examine or to propose an alternative plan, or a potentially more sustainable plan except where this arises as a result of my recommended modifications to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions and the other relevant requirements.
- 1.5 A neighbourhood plan can be narrow or broad in scope. Any plan can include whatever range of policies it sees as appropriate to its designated neighbourhood area. The submitted Plan has been designed to be distinctive in general terms, and to be complementary to the development plan in particular. It seeks to provide a context in which the neighbourhood area can maintain its distinctiveness and identity. It proposes a range of policies for the parish. They include the identification of housing allocations and the designation of a series of Local Green Spaces.
- 1.6 Within the context set out above this report assesses whether the Plan is legally compliant and meets the basic conditions that apply to neighbourhood plans. It also considers the content of the Plan and, where necessary, recommends changes to its policies and supporting text.
- 1.7 This report also provides a recommendation as to whether the Plan should proceed to referendum. If this is the case and that referendum results in a positive outcome the Plan would then be used to determine planning applications within the neighbourhood area and will sit as part of the wider development plan.

2 The Role of the Independent Examiner

- 2.1 The examiner's role is to ensure that any submitted neighbourhood plan meets the relevant legislative and procedural requirements.
- 2.2 I was appointed by BDC, with the consent of the Parish Council, to conduct the examination of the Plan and to prepare this report. I am independent of both the BDC and the Parish Council. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan.
- 2.3 I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role. I am a Director of Andrew Ashcroft Planning Limited. In previous roles, I have over 35 years' experience in various local authorities at either Head of Planning or Service Director level. I am a chartered town planner and have significant experience of undertaking other neighbourhood plan examinations and health checks. I am a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral System.

Examination Outcomes

- 2.4 In my role as the independent examiner of the Plan I am required to recommend one of the following outcomes of the examination:
- (a) that the Plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (b) that the Plan should proceed to referendum as modified (based on my recommendations); or
 - (c) that the Plan does not proceed to referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 2.5 The outcome of the examination is set out in Section 8 of this report.

Other examination matters

- 2.6 In examining the Plan I am required to check whether:
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area; and
 - the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provision about development that is excluded development, and must not relate to more than one neighbourhood area); and
 - the Plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under Section 61G of the Localism Act and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.
- 2.7 Having addressed the matters identified in paragraph 2.6 of this report I am satisfied that all of the points have been met.

3 Procedural Matters

3.1 In undertaking this examination I have considered the following documents:

- the submitted Plan (and its appendices).
- the Basic Conditions Statement.
- the Consultation Statement.
- the Sustainability Appraisal.
- the representations made to the Plan.
- the Parish Council's comments on the representations received.
- the Parish Council's responses to my Clarification Note.
- the adopted Bassetlaw Core Strategy 2011.
- the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019).
- Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014 and subsequent updates).
- relevant Ministerial Statements.

3.2 I visited the neighbourhood area on 27 January 2020. I looked at its overall character and appearance and at those areas affected by policies in the Plan in particular. My visit is covered in more detail in paragraphs 5.9 to 5.16 of this report.

3.3 It is a general rule that neighbourhood plan examinations should be held by written representations only. Having considered all the information before me, including the representations made to the submitted plan, I concluded that the Plan could be examined by way of written representations.

4 Consultation

Consultation Process

- 4.1 Policies in made neighbourhood plans become the basis for local planning and development control decisions. As such the regulations require neighbourhood plans to be supported and underpinned by public consultation.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 the Parish Council has prepared a Consultation Statement. This Statement is proportionate to the Plan area and its policies.
- 4.3 The Statement records the various activities that were held to engage the local community and the feedback from each event. It also provides specific details on the consultation processes that took place on the pre-submission version of the Plan (February to April 2019).
- 4.4 The Statement sets out details of the comprehensive range of consultation events that were carried out in relation to the various stages of the Plan. They include the following events and processes:
- the initial Village Meeting February 2016;
 - the village Questionnaire June 2016;
 - the Household Questionnaire September 2016;
 - the Call for Sites March 2017; and
 - the drop in event February 2018
- 4.5 The details in the Statement set out the nature of the community questionnaire and other consultation exercises and the responses received. They demonstrate the way in which those responsible for the preparation of the Plan sought to address the expectations of the wider community. A significant part the Statement sets out how the submitted Plan took account of consultation feedback at the pre-submission phase. It does so in a proportionate and effective way. This analysis helps to describe how the Plan has progressed to its submission stage.
- 4.6 Consultation on the submitted plan was undertaken by BDC. It ended on 13 January 2020. This exercise generated representations from the following persons and organisations:
- Anglian Water
 - G.D. Strawson Limited
 - Bassetlaw District Council
 - Canal and River Trust
 - Coal Authority
 - Highways England
 - Historic England

- Natural England
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Severn Trent Water
- Sport England
- West Lindsey District

4.7 I have taken account of all the representations in preparing this report. Where it is appropriate to do so I refer to specific representations on a policy-by-policy basis.

5 The Neighbourhood Area and the Development Plan Context

The Neighbourhood Area

- 5.1 The neighbourhood area is the parish of Walkeringham. It is irregularly- shaped and is principally rural in its nature. The village of Walkeringham is located in the centre of the neighbourhood area. It is located approximately 6 kms to the north-west of Gainsborough. Its population in 2011 was approximately 1022 persons living in 507 households. It was designated as a neighbourhood area on 7 July 2016.
- 5.2 The village of Walkeringham has an attractive and dispersed layout. Its various components of built development are separate by elements of the countryside or open recreation areas. The village is based around the junction of the A161 and the B1403. The former runs in a north-south direction and connects the village with Misterton to the north and with Beckingham to the south. The latter runs along the western side of the parish and connects to Misterton to the north and Gringley-on-the-Hill to the south west. The Doncaster to Lincoln railway line runs in a north-south direction to the immediate east of the village.
- 5.3 The remainder of the neighbourhood area is largely rural in its nature. The River Trent forms its eastern boundary and has a significant effect on its landscape character. Map 4 of the Plan defines a series of Landscape Character Areas. The Trent Washlands and The Idle Lowland are located to the east of the railway line. The remainder is identified as Mid-Nottinghamshire Farmlands.

Development Plan Context

- 5.4 The development plan covering the neighbourhood plan area is the Bassetlaw District Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2010 - 2028 ('the Core Strategy'). The Core Strategy sets out a vision, objectives, a spatial strategy and overarching planning policies that guide new development in the Plan period.
- 5.5 Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy provides a focus for new development based around the existing principal settlements in the District. Walkeringham is identified as a Rural Service Centre where there will be limited rural growth in the Plan period.
- 5.6 Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy sets out specific development opportunities and requirements for the various Rural Service Centres. In summary these include:

Housing Development - Up to 10% (599 houses) of the District's housing requirement will be delivered in the Rural Service Centres through existing permissions and allocations in the Site Allocations DPD, for the plan period 2010-2028. Residential development proposals will be supported within the Development Boundary, in line with other material considerations and planning policy requirements. All housing development resulting in a net gain of one or more units will be required to contribute towards the achievement of affordable housing targets. In the case of Walkeringham

this figure is 35%. This will be either through on-site provision (where appropriate) or through a financial contribution to the delivery or improvement of affordable housing elsewhere within the rural areas of Bassetlaw.

Employment Development - Proposals that deliver rural employment opportunities, of a scale and type appropriate to the settlement and surrounding land uses, will be supported in line with other material considerations and planning policy requirements. Economic development proposals will be supported within Development Boundaries, in line with other material considerations and planning policy requirements.

Community Facilities - Proposals for the provision of rural community services and facilities will be supported where they are of a scale appropriate to, and accord with the role of, the village. Where no available sites exist within Development Boundaries, proposals for standalone community services and facilities will be supported on sites outside of, but adjoining, these Boundaries where need and long-term viability is proven and where there is explicit community support for the proposal.

- 5.7 The District Council has embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan. Once adopted it will replace the Core Strategy. The Local Development Scheme indicates that the Local Plan will be submitted for examination at the end of 2020. On this basis it is not at a sufficiently-advanced stage to play any significant role in the examination of the submitted neighbourhood plan.
- 5.8 The submitted Plan has been prepared within its wider adopted development plan context. In doing so it has relied on up-to-date information and research that has underpinned existing planning policy documents in the District. This is good practice and reflects key elements in Planning Practice Guidance on this matter. It is clear that the submitted Plan seeks to add value to the Core Strategy and to give a local dimension to the delivery of its policies. This is captured in the Basic Conditions Statement.

Visit to the neighbourhood area

- 5.9 I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the neighbourhood area on 27 January 2020. I drove into the neighbourhood area from the A631/A161 from to the south. This helped me to understand the neighbourhood area in its wider landscape context. It also highlighted its proximity to the floodplain of the River Trent to the east.
- 5.10 I looked initially at the part of the village off Station Road. I saw the proposed housing allocation (NP02), the former railway station and the railway line itself. I saw the way in which this part of the village was dominated by the linear alignment of Station Road itself and the variety of building styles.
- 5.11 I then drove to the main road and into the village centre. I saw the Village Hall and the very impressive recreation ground on the corner of Stockwith Road and Mill Baulk Road. I then looked at the proposed housing site NP14 (Policy 12). I saw that it had been carefully chosen to sit between two separate groups of residential areas.

- 5.12 I then walked along Mill Baulk Road down to the School. I saw the various significant green gaps as identified in policy 2. I continued to look at another proposed green gaps during my visit.
- 5.13 I spent time looking at the various proposed housing sites at the western edge of the village (NP 09/13a/13b). This part of the visit helped me to understand better the Plan's proposed relationship between the respective developments of these separate but related sites.
- 5.14 I also saw the new housing being built off Fountain Hill Road. I then went back into the heart of the village to look at the proposed housing allocations on either side of Brickenhole Lane.
- 5.15 Thereafter I looked at St Mary Magdalen Church and the adjacent Manor House. In a village without a traditional centre it was however clear that this was its historic core.
- 5.16 I then drove both to Misterton to the north and to Gringley-on-the-Hill to the south west. This helped me to understand the landscape setting of the neighbourhood area more fully.

6 The Neighbourhood Plan and the Basic Conditions

- 6.1 This section of the report deals with the submitted neighbourhood plan as a whole and the extent to which it meets the basic conditions. The submitted Basic Conditions Statement has helped considerably in the preparation of this section of the report. It is a well-presented, informative and very professional document.
- 6.2 As part of this process I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To comply with the basic conditions, the Plan must:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area;
 - be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations; and
 - not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (7).

I assess the Plan against the basic conditions under the following headings.

National Planning Policies and Guidance

- 6.3 For the purposes of this examination the key elements of national policy relating to planning matters are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued earlier this year.
- 6.4 The NPPF sets out a range of core land-use planning principles to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The following are of particular relevance to the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Development Plan:
- a plan led system– in this case the relationship between the neighbourhood plan and the adopted Bassetlaw Core Strategy;
 - delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
 - building a strong, competitive economy;
 - recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving local communities;
 - taking account of the different roles and characters of different areas;
 - highlighting the importance high quality design and good standards of amenity for all future occupants of land and buildings; and
 - conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 6.5 Neighbourhood plans sit within this wider context both generally, and within the more specific presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 13 of the NPPF indicates that neighbourhoods should both develop plans that support the strategic

needs set out in local plans and plan positively to support local development that is outside the strategic elements of the development plan.

- 6.6 In addition to the NPPF I have also taken account of other elements of national planning policy including Planning Practice Guidance and the recent ministerial statements.
- 6.7 Having considered all the evidence and representations available as part of the examination I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to national planning policies and guidance in general terms. It sets out a positive vision for the future of the neighbourhood area. It includes a series of policies that address a range of housing development and environmental matters. The Basic Conditions Statement maps the policies in the Plan against the appropriate sections of the NPPF.
- 6.8 At a more practical level the NPPF indicates that plans should provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made and that they should give a clear indication of how a decision-maker should react to a development proposal (paragraph 16d). This was reinforced with the publication of Planning Practice Guidance in March 2014. Paragraph ID:41-041-20140306 indicates that policies in neighbourhood plans should be drafted with sufficient clarity so that a decision-maker can apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. Policies should also be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.
- 6.9 As submitted the Plan does not fully accord with this range of practical issues. The majority of my recommended modifications in Section 7 relate to matters of clarity and precision. They are designed to ensure that the Plan fully accords with national policy.

Contributing to sustainable development

- 6.10 There are clear overlaps between national policy and the contribution that the submitted Plan makes to achieving sustainable development. Sustainable development has three principal dimensions – economic, social and environmental. It is clear to me that the submitted Plan has set out to achieve sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. In the economic dimension the Plan includes a policy on windfall sites (Policy 1), eight policies on residential allocations (Policies 8-15) and a policy for employment development (Policy 6). In the social role, it includes a policy on housing mix (Policy 4), one to safeguard its community facilities (Policy 7) and one for local green spaces (Policy 5). In the environmental dimension the Plan positively seeks to protect its natural, built and historic environment. It has specific policies to protect the natural environment (Policy 2) and on housing design and energy efficiency (Policy 3). This assessment overlaps with the Parish Council's comments on this matter in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan

- 6.11 I have already commented in detail on the development plan context in the wider Bassetlaw District in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.8 of this report.

- 6.12 I consider that the submitted Plan delivers a local dimension to this strategic context and supplements the detail already included in the adopted Core Strategy. The Basic Conditions Statement helpfully relates the Plan's policies to policies in the Core Strategy. I am satisfied that the submitted Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan.

European Legislation and Habitat Regulations

- 6.13 The Neighbourhood Plan General Regulations 2015 require a qualifying body either to submit an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 or a statement of reasons why an environmental report is not required. In order to comply with this requirement, a Screening Determination on the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by Bassetlaw District Council in November 2019. The report is thorough and well-constructed. As a result of this process BDC concluded that the Plan is not likely to have any significant effects on the environment and accordingly would not require SEA.
- 6.14 The screening report includes the responses from the three consultation bodies. This is best practice.
- 6.15 The Parish Council decided to prepare a sustainability appraisal of the Plan. In doing so it helpfully summarised the purpose of the appraisal in paragraph 3 of the document as follows:
- ‘(As the Plan includes) site allocations that could potentially see a further 66 houses built within the area the appraisal is being carried out to ensure that the development management policies included in the Plan are sustainable. This appraisal of the Plan is also being carried out as a means to ensure and demonstrate that the principles of sustainable development as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have been taken into account in its preparation.’
- 6.16 The resulting document is well-constructed. It adds value and depth to the submitted Plan. Tables 5 and 6 are particularly effective in mapping the vision and the policies of the Plan against the sustainability appraisal objectives.
- 6.17 BDC also prepared a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan in November 2019. It concludes that the submitted Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on a European site. The report is very thorough and comprehensive. In particular it assesses the likely effects of the implementation of the policies in the Plan on the following sites:
- Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC;
 - Hatfield Moor SAC;
 - Thorne Moors SAC;
 - Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA; and
 - Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar.

It concludes that the neighbourhood plan will not give rise to likely significant effects on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and Appropriate Assessment is not required.

- 6.18 Having reviewed the information provided to me as part of the examination I am satisfied that a proportionate process has been undertaken in accordance with the various regulations. None of the statutory consultees have raised any concerns with regard to either neighbourhood plan or to European obligations. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I am entirely satisfied that the submitted Plan is compatible with this aspect of European obligations.
- 6.19 In a similar fashion I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. There is no evidence that has been submitted to me to suggest otherwise. There has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known. On this basis, I conclude that the submitted Plan does not breach, nor is in any way incompatible with the ECHR.

Summary

- 6.20 On the basis of my assessment of the Plan in this section of my report I am satisfied that it meets the basic conditions subject to the incorporation of the recommended modifications contained in this report. Section 7 assesses each policy against the basic conditions. Where necessary it recommends modifications on a policy-by-policy basis.

7 The Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 7.1 This section of the report comments on the policies in the Plan. In particular, it makes a series of recommended modifications to ensure that the various policies have the necessary precision to meet the basic conditions.
- 7.2 My recommendations focus on the policies themselves given that the basic conditions relate primarily to this aspect of neighbourhood plans. In some cases, I have also recommended changes to the associated supporting text.
- 7.3 I am satisfied that the content and the form of the Plan is fit for purpose. It is distinctive and proportionate to the Plan area. The wider community and the Parish Council have spent time and energy in identifying the issues and objectives that they wish to be included in their Plan. This sits at the heart of the localism agenda.
- 7.4 The Plan has been designed to reflect Planning Practice Guidance (41-004-20170728) which indicates that neighbourhood plans must address the development and use of land. However, it includes specific non-land use Actions and Projects which are separately addressed in Appendix A.
- 7.5 I have addressed the policies in the order that they appear in the submitted plan. I comment on the Actions and Projects thereafter.
- 7.6 For clarity this section of the report comments on all policies whether or not I have recommended modifications in order to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.
- 7.7 Where modifications are recommended to policies they are highlighted in bold print. Any associated or free-standing changes to the text of the Plan are set out in italic print.

The initial sections of the Plan (Sections 1-9)

- 7.8 The Plan as a whole is very well-organised and includes effective maps, charts and photographs. It makes an appropriate distinction between the policies and their supporting text. Its design will ensure that it will comfortably be able to take its place as part of the development plan in the event that it is eventually 'made'. The initial elements of the Plan set the scene for the policies. They are proportionate to the Plan area and the subsequent policies.
- 7.9 Section 2 comments about the background to neighbourhood planning. It also helpfully describes the local planning context within which the Plan has been prepared. It includes a very effective map showing the designated neighbourhood area (Map 1). Paragraph 2.4 advises about the plan period. Section 3 consolidates this position and comments about the need for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan.
- 7.10 Section 4 summarises how the submitted Plan was prepared. It sets out the management arrangements which were introduced. It overlaps with the submitted Consultation Statement.

- 7.11 Section 5 comments about the Actions and Projects which are separately addressed in Appendix A.
- 7.12 Section 6 of the Plan comments about the strategic context within which the submitted Plan has been prepared. It identifies specific policies in the adopted Core Strategy which have had a direct bearing on the development of the submitted Plan.
- 7.13 Section 7 provides information about the parish. It is particularly well-presented and helped me to understand the issues raised in the Plan and the resulting policies. It includes details on:
- Location and Context;
 - Natural Environment;
 - Flood Risk;
 - People;
 - Housing;
 - Economy; and
 - Heritage.
- 7.14 Sections 8 and 9 sets out the Plan's Community Vision and the supporting Community Objectives respectively. They are both well-developed and distinctive to Walkeringham.
- 7.15 The remainder of this section of the report addresses each policy in turn in the context set out in paragraphs 7.5 to 7.7 of this report. Thereafter it comments on the Community Projects and Aspirations.

Policy 1 Sustainable Development, Infill and the Development Boundary

- 7.16 This policy sets the scene for the remainder of the policies in the Plan. In essence it supports development within the development boundary subject to a series of design and density matters. It then comments that development outside the settlement boundary will be limited to that which is necessary to support the rural economy.
- 7.17 In general terms I am satisfied that the policy is appropriate for the neighbourhood area. In particular it takes account of the nature and scale of the village itself, its well-defined development boundary and the relationship between the village and its surrounding rural hinterland.
- 7.18 Paragraph 106 of the Plan and the third part of the policy comment that infill consists of the completion of an otherwise substantially built up frontage by the filling of a small gap normally capable of taking one or two dwellings only. However, section b) of the first part of the policy takes a more general approach in commenting that development within the development boundary should be of a scale, density, layout and design that is compatible with the local, rural character appearance and amenity of that part of the village in which it is located.
- 7.19 I sought advice from the Parish Council on the extent to which the third part of the policy needed to be specific on potential yields. It commented that earlier flexibility of this type has led to several planning applications being submitted for a large number of

houses on infill sites that the community would have considered too big for infill development.

- 7.20 I have considered these comments very carefully. Plainly BDC will need to come to a judgement on development proposals based on policy considerations and an assessment of other issues on a case-by-case basis. In this context an appropriate policy context is essential for clarity and consistency. However as presently configured this policy has internal contradictions between its part 1b) and part 3. Taking all matters into consideration I recommend the removal of the third part of the policy. It is prescriptive in its nature. In any event it is not directly supported by evidence. I am however content that paragraph 106 should remain in the Plan. It provides a degree of guidance to developers (within the context of the general part 1b of the policy) and acknowledges the potential for a development of greater than two dwellings by the use of the word 'normally'.
- 7.21 I also recommend modifications to the wording used in the policy so that it will have the clarity for a development plan policy as required by the NPPF.

In part 1 f) of the policy replace 'possible' with 'practicable'

In part 1 g) of the policy replace 'promoting' with 'incorporating measures which would promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport into the design and layout of the proposed development'

Delete part 3 of the policy.

Policy 2 Natural Environment and Landscape Character

- 7.22 This is an important and comprehensive policy. It aims to safeguard both the natural environment and the landscape character of the neighbourhood area. It is underpinned by extensive supporting text (paragraphs 107 to 124).
- 7.23 The policy addresses the following overlapping issues:
- safeguarding vistas which contribute to the landscape of the village;
 - safeguarding local character and landscape setting;
 - planting and boundary treatment;
 - boundaries to developments;
 - safeguarding two identified viewpoints;
 - safeguarding significant green gaps;
 - the use of sustainable urban drainage; and
 - biodiversity.
- 7.24 I sought advice from the Parish Council on the wide-ranging nature of the policy. I was advised that it evolved during the preparation of the Plan. Having considered all the information available to me I am satisfied that, on balance, the policy should remain as a free-standing policy. The Parish Council is entitled to come to a judgement on the way it has combined related elements of guidance into this and other policies.

7.25 I also sought advice from the Parish Council about the way in which it had identified significant green gaps into the policy. It commented that:

‘The green gaps policy does not seek to prevent all development in these locations, rather it was intended to ensure that proposals that did not affect the sense of openness so small scale sensitively designed development may be acceptable. It is not intended to be as onerous as green belt’.

The Parish Council also commented that:

‘an important part of the community engagement (and the general support for the scale of development implicit in the site allocations) is that there was a recognition of the contribution these gaps made to the character of the parish. Their identification on a map provides transparency about the location of these gaps and some certainty about their protection’.

7.26 I looked at the proposed significant green gaps carefully when I visited the neighbourhood area. I saw the way in which they contributed to the very distinctive character and appearance of the village. As I have already described in Section 5 of this report it has a dispersed nature and which is characterised by the green areas and/or the countryside projecting into the heart of the village.

7.27 However as incorporated into the policy elements of the submitted Plan the significant green gaps result in policy inconsistencies as follows:

- The green gaps are outside the development boundary. In this context the second part of Policy 1 would support development in such locations where it was necessary to support the rural economy. However, part 6 of Policy 2 comments that development in the significant green gaps will not be supported.
- Part 6 of Policy 2 conflates two separate issues. Its first sentence comments about the importance of the green gaps to the character of the neighbourhood area. The second sentence then makes an immediate leap to a very restrictive approach which is more onerous than local countryside policies. Indeed, the very prescriptive approach is even more onerous than Green Belt policies. In these circumstances the policy does not meet the basic conditions.

7.28 However having looked at the various significant green gaps I am satisfied that in general terms their identification in the Plan serves a clear and obvious purpose. I am also satisfied that the approach taken is underpinned with evidence, research and community support. Nonetheless I recommend that two of the proposed significant green gaps are deleted from Map 14. I have reached this conclusion on the basis of the relationship or otherwise of the green gaps concerned to the core of the village. This is based on my own observations and the Plan’s proposed identification of the development boundary in Map 12. The significant green gaps recommended for deletion are as follows:

- the rectangular parcel of land to south of South Moor Road/West Moor Road;
and

- the irregular parcel of land at the eastern extent of the green gap between Station Road and Stockwith Road.

- 7.29 Given the importance of the significant green gaps (as recommended to be modified) I recommend that the sixth part of the policy is modified so that it requires any new development to respect the way in which they contribute to the character of the neighbourhood area.
- 7.30 Another important part of the policy is the way in which it has identified a series of important vistas and viewpoints. They are detailed in Appendix B of the Plan and on Map 13. I am satisfied that the various views are from public vantage points. I can also see their relationship with the form and character of the village and the proposed significant green gaps. However, I recommend that the various parts of the policy on this matter are combined into a single element. This will bring the clarity required by the NPPF.
- 7.31 I also recommend modifications to other parts of the policy so that they have the same clarity. I also recommend that elements of supporting text in parts of the policy are deleted.

Delete the first part of the policy.

In the second part of the policy delete the first sentence.

In the second part of the policy and in the second sentence replace 'is required to' with 'should'

In the second part of the policy and section b) replace 'significant' with 'unacceptable'

Replace the fifth part of the policy with: 'Development proposals should safeguard and take account of the identified significant vistas and viewpoints as shown on Map 13 and detailed in Appendix B. Development proposals which would have unacceptable impact on any of the identified vistas and viewpoints in general, and the way in which they contribute to a sense of openness and place in the neighbourhood area in particular will not be supported'

Replace the sixth part of the policy with: 'Development proposals should respect the way in which the identified significant green gaps as shown on Map 14 contribute to the character of the neighbourhood area'

In the seventh part of the policy replace 'where applicable' with 'where practicable and related to the circumstances of the site concerned'

In the eighth part of the policy replace 'accepted' with 'supported'

At the end of paragraph 122 add: 'Policy 2 sets out an approach which captures the importance of this matter. Where necessary proposals should include an independent assessment of the effects of their development on the relevant character area of the Character and Design Guide 2018'

At the end of paragraph 123 add: 'Policy 2 sets out an approach which captures the importance of this matter. It requires that new development within the village should respect the way in which the green gaps contribute to the character of the village, its openness and its dispersed form and layout'

Policy 3 Energy Efficiency and High-Quality Design

- 7.32 This is a policy which is both well-considered and ambitious. It is based around Character Areas as defined in the Walkeringham Character and Design Guide. The Guide is an excellent product in its own right and the way in which it has fed into various policies in the resulting Plan. Paragraph 132 of the Plan helpfully identifies four key issues that arise from the Guide and which support this policy.
- 7.33 The policy has several related parts. They include:
- the need for new development to reinforce existing character;
 - landscape and boundary treatment;
 - materials, scale and massing; and
 - the design of buildings the construction of low carbon homes.
- 7.34 In general terms I am satisfied that the policy is appropriate to the neighbourhood area and has regard to national policy. To bring the clarity required by the NPPF I recommend detailed modifications to some of the words used in the policy. In the seventh part of the policy I recommend the deletion of reference to the requirements of other organisations. Whilst these may be important matters, they are separate from the planning process.
- 7.35 I recommend that the examples in the sixth part of the policy (on low carbon homes) are deleted and repositioned into the supporting text. I also recommend the deletion of the eighth part of the policy on BfL12 equivalent for two related reasons. The first is that it is more a process issue than a policy outcome. In any event the BfL standards and approaches are already addressed in the supporting text. The second is that the standard has the ability to be replaced or update within the Plan period.
- 7.36 Otherwise the policy meets the basic conditions. It offers a locally-distinctive and well-research approach to this important national matter.

In the first part of the policy delete 'to be supported'

In the sixth part of the policy delete the second sentence (including the three examples).

In the seventh part of the policy replaced 'is encouraged' with 'will be supported' and delete 'and development.... relevant organisations'

Delete the eighth part of the policy.

At the end of paragraph 136 add: 'The sixth part of Policy 3 offers support for the construction of low carbon homes. Examples of such an approach might include [at this point insert the three examples in the sixth part of the submitted policy]'

Policy 4 A Mix of Housing Types

- 7.37 This policy has a sharp focus on meeting local housing needs in general terms and in ensuring in particular that proposals for 1/2/3 bed dwellings are accessible and adaptable to Building Regulations M4(2) standards as identified in the SHMA 2013 and its update in 2017. Paragraph 149 of the Plan comments that such homes could be considered as homes for life and would be suitable for any occupant, regardless of whether they have a disability at the time of initial occupation. The approach has been pursued given increasing age of residents generally in the SHMA area and in the neighbourhood area in particular.
- 7.38 I recommend modifications to the first part of the policy. As submitted, it simply requires housing development to take housing need ‘into account’ rather than to deliver housing proposals that directly reflect housing needs. I also recommend that the commentary about the existing demand is repositioned into the supporting text.
- 7.39 BDC comment that the second part of the policy should be deleted. I sought comments from the Parish Council on this representation. It commented:
- ‘BDC comment questions viability of requirement for M4(2) standards on all 1-3 bed properties because the viability assessment for the Local Plan in 2017 considered that across the parish as a whole this was not viable. However, the Parish Council notes that the average house prices in Walkeringham are above the average compared to surrounding towns and villages. It should also be noted that the provision of life time homes (that are adaptable and accessible) would represent more sustainable development than homes that are not adaptable and accessible.’
- 7.40 I have considered this matter carefully. I have also considered the information in the Plan about the likely additional costs involved in delivering Building Regulation M4 (2) compliant homes. In the circumstances I recommend that the second part of the policy is modified so that it requires smaller dwellings to be accessible and adaptable subject to viability requirements. This acknowledges that two things may happen within the Plan period. The first is that the population in the neighbourhood area will continue to get older and generate a commercial need and demand for such properties. The second is that the development industry may respond in a positive way to such issues and/or reduce the additional costs of such provision.
- 7.41 I also recommend technical modifications to the policy so that it clarifies the role and status of Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

Replace the first part of the policy with: ‘Proposals for new housing development proposals should deliver a range of housing sizes and types that directly reflect housing needs’

In the second part of the policy add at the beginning ‘Where it is viable to do so’

In the second part replace ‘-M4(2) or equivalent meaning that:’ with ‘to standards included in Part 4 (2) Accessible and adaptable buildings of the Building Regulations 2015 and 2016 or any updates of this element of the Regulations. In practical terms:’

At the end of paragraph 157 add the text in brackets in the first part of the submitted policy.

In paragraph 159 delete the final sentence.

Policy 5 Local Green Spaces

- 7.42 This policy sets out the Plan's approach to local green spaces (LGSs). The supporting text (160-162) correctly identifies that the policy owes its origin to the national approach set out in the NPPF (paragraphs 99-101).
- 7.43 The Plan proposes the designation of six LGSs. They are described and assessed against the criteria in the NPPF in Table 9. In general terms the information is well-presented. The photographs of the different proposed LGSs are very effective.
- 7.44 I looked at the various proposed LGSs as part of my visit.
- 7.45 Having considered all the evidence I am satisfied that proposed LGSs B/C/D/E/F meet the three criteria in the NPPF. They are close to the community that they serve, they are demonstrably special to the local community and they are local in scale.
- 7.46 In addition, I am satisfied that the five proposed designations accord with the more general elements of paragraph 99 of the NPPF. Firstly, I am satisfied that they are consistent with the local planning of sustainable development. Their designation as LGSs does not otherwise prevent sustainable development coming forward in the neighbourhood area and no such development has been promoted or suggested. Secondly, I am satisfied that the LGSs are capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period. Indeed, they are an established element of the local environment and have existed in their current format for many years. In addition, no evidence was brought forward during the examination that would suggest that the local green spaces would not endure until 2035.
- 7.47 At 16 hectares in size proposed LGS A is significantly larger than the other proposed LGSs. As the Plan describes 'The Moor' is a collection of farmed arable fields in the heart of the village bounded by North Moor Road, West Moor Road and South Moor Road. I sought comments from the Parish Council on the extent to which this proposed LGS could reasonably be considered as local in scale and not an extensive tract of land. It commented that it was not aware of a definition for what constitutes an extensive tract of land. It also commented that The Moor has a historic function and its value to the community is set out in Table 9. It has a higher significance in this regard than the other significant green gaps.
- 7.48 I have considered the proposed designation of the LGS and the additional information from the Parish Council very carefully. In doing so I have concluded that The Moor is an extensive tract of land and which is not local in scale. On this basis I recommend its deletion from the policy.
- 7.49 The policy itself has two parts. The first designates the various sites as LGSs. The second applies the approach in the NPPF to those sites. In doing so it attempts to identify the limited circumstances where development might be supported on the

designated spaces. Whilst this approach is helpful, I recommend that the policy is modified in two ways. The first lists the designated LGSs in the first part of the policy. The second would apply the matter of fact approach in the NPPF to the policy element. The special circumstances would be for BDC to determine on a case-by-case basis taking account of all material planning considerations. Nevertheless, I recommend that the approach is captured in the supporting text.

Replace the policy to read:

‘The Plan designates the following sites as shown on Map 15 as local green spaces:

- B Description from Table 9**
- C Description from Table 9**
- D Description from Table 9**
- E Description from Table 9**
- F Description from Table 9**

Proposals for development within the five designated Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances’

At the end of paragraph 163 add: ‘Policy 5 applies the matter of fact approach in the NPPF to the five sites. The very special circumstances would be for Bassetlaw District Council to determine on a case-by-case basis taking account of all material planning considerations. Nevertheless, insofar as planning permission would be required, proposals which would enhance any local green space and contributes to the reasons for its designation are likely to be supported’

Policy 6 Maintaining Local Employment

- 7.50 This policy sets out a comprehensive approach towards the sustainable growth of businesses both through the conversion of existing buildings and the development of well-designed new buildings. It includes the following detailed components:
- proposals for a café/shop (part 2);
 - proposals for employment development outside the developed boundary (part 3);
 - a priority for the reuse of existing buildings where development is proposed outside the development boundary (part 4); and
 - the location and design matters for new buildings (part 5).
- 7.51 I am satisfied that in general terms the policy is appropriate for the neighbourhood area. It responds positively to Section 6 of the NPPF. In particular it takes a flexible approach towards rural businesses and diversification.
- 7.52 I sought advice from the Parish Council about the applicability of the fourth part of the policy, and whether it would result in the refusal of planning applications which did not marry up with the Parish Council’s ‘priority’. It advised that this part of the policy had been included to address a particular site. It acknowledged that the fifth part of the policy would be able adequately to address that matter. This would apply both in its

own right and in combination with the other elements of this policy. On this basis I recommend the deletion of the fourth part of the policy.

- 7.53 I also recommend detailed modifications to the words used in the policy so that it has the clarity required by the NPPF.

In Part 3a) of the policy replace ‘fto’ with ‘to’

Replace Part 3d) of the policy with: ‘it incorporates car parking, service and access arrangements to County Council standards’

Delete part 4 of the policy.

In Part 5 of the policy replace ‘will be expected’ with ‘should’

Policy 7 Community Facilities

- 7.54 This policy addresses community facilities. It has four related parts as follows:

- improvements to community facilities;
- development proposals for community facilities;
- the potential relocation of the village hall; and
- the timing of the development of replacement community facilities.

- 7.55 The policy correctly recognises the importance of existing and potential new community facilities in the neighbourhood area. I am satisfied that the first three parts of the policy meet the basic conditions. The potential relocation of the village hall is an exciting project. Appendix A continues the approach with a non-land use community project on this matter.

- 7.56 I sought advice from the Parish Council on its intentions for the fourth paragraph of the policy. I was keen to understand the extent to which it would be practicable for any replacement community facilities to be provided ‘up front’ before the associated commercial or residential development on its former site had been completed. The Parish Council commented that this approach primarily related to the village hall relocation project. In this context the Parish Council would be able to exercise a particular control on this matter in its capacity as a land owner.

- 7.57 I have considered this issue very carefully. As submitted the policy is unclear on the relative timings of a wider development package. In these circumstances I recommend that a more nuanced approach is taken to this matter. It takes account of potential viability issues. Plainly these will vary on a case-by-case basis, and the outcomes will be for BDC to determine based on its consideration of all material considerations. This assessment results in recommended modifications both to this element of the policy and to its supporting text.

Replace the fourth part of the policy with: ‘In circumstances where the relocation of community facilities releases land for housing or commercial development the replacement community facilities should be provided to a timetable to be agreed as part of the wider development package’

At the end of paragraph 170 add: 'In the context of this or any similar proposal elsewhere in the neighbourhood area it will be important that the replacement community facility is delivered on the alternative site as quickly as possible, whilst taking account of viability and cash flow issues. This will be expected to be determined as part of the wider development package. Where appropriate it could be delivered through a Section 106 agreement'

Housing Allocations

- 7.58 The Plan includes a range of housing allocations. It has approached this important matter in a positive fashion. The delivery of the various sites will boost significantly the supply of homes in the neighbourhood area.
- 7.59 As the Plan comments it has sought to deliver the strategic number of new homes for the neighbourhood area arising from the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan. The Parish Council has worked closely with BDC to achieve this outcome. In particular the direction of travel of the various plans has been aligned. This is best practice.
- 7.60 I comment on the various sites in turn in the following sections of this report. However, at this point I raise three common issues which affect all the sites as follows:

The identification of the sites – the supporting text and Map 16 are clear about the location of the various sites. However, their policy titles simply include a Plan policy number and the relevant Plan reference number. Whilst the latter relates to the origins of the Plan itself it will be of limited relevance in the future and as the sites are developed. In this context I recommend that in turn the policy title becomes the description of the site rather than the Plan reference number.

High quality development – each site properly requires high quality residential development. However high quality is not defined. To bring clarity, I recommend that this quality should be defined by reference to Policy 3 of the submitted Plan.

Development yield – each site indicates that development will be supported up to a certain number of dwellings. This is a reasonable approach. In addition, the indicative yields are proportionate to the sizes of the various sites. However, I recommend that the 'up to' approach is modified to one which refers to an approximate number. This will provide a degree of flexibility within the comprehensive approach to design already included in the Plan (Policy 3).

At the end of paragraph 191 add: 'Policies 8-15 provide detailed guidance for the development of the selected sites. In each case they require development to be high quality in nature. For the purposes of each of the policies high quality development is defined as that which meets the relevant requirements of Policy 3 of this Plan insofar as they directly apply to the site concerned'

- 7.61 I recommend modifications to address these matters to each of the policies. I will not repeat the reasons for the recommended modifications on a policy-by-policy basis.

Policy 8 NP02

- 7.62 This site is land at The Laurels, Station Road. Paragraph 195 comments about the relationship between the proposed site and an adjacent committed site.
- 7.63 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.64 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP02’ with ‘Land at The Laurels, Station Road’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part 2 of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

In part 3 of the policy replace ‘possible’ with ‘practicable’

In part 4 of the policy replace ‘will need to show how’ with ‘should deliver’ and then delete ‘can be achieved’

Policy 9 NP07

- 7.65 This site is land south of Kilmeaden, West Moor Road. Paragraph 202 and 203 comment about the importance of addressing potential flood risk issues on the site and the existing mature trees and hedgerows.
- 7.66 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.67 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP07’ with ‘Land south of Kilmeaden, West Moor Road’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part 2 of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

In part 3 of the policy replace ‘possible’ with ‘practicable’

In part 4 of the policy replace ‘will need to show how’ with ‘should deliver’ and then delete ‘can be achieved’

Policy 10 NP09

- 7.68 This site is land north of Fountain Hill Road. Paragraph 208 comments about the importance of incorporating the site in a sensitive fashion into the wider village.

- 7.69 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.70 This policy seeks to establish a relationship between its development and that of sites NP13a and NP13b (in Policy 11) to its immediate west. The fourth part of this policy and detailed components of Policy 11 require complex interrelationships between the development of the three sites concerned. I sought advice from the Parish Council on how it had developed the overlapping policy approach. It commented that:
- ‘There is local concern, reflected in comments from highways about the need to ensure safe access from Fountain Hill Road. Where reference is made to the need for a shared access in Policy 10 (3) and Policy 11 (1) (g) it is suggested that wording could be amended to require an access point that allows for adaption to accommodate further vehicle movements if/when adjacent sites are developed’
- 7.71 I looked at the relationship between the three sites as part of my visit. As the linkages between the submitted policies has not been tested for viability purposes, I recommend modifications to the relationships between the policies. The modifications follow the suggestion made by the Parish Council. In particular their incorporation in the various policies will ensure that the three developments do not conflict one with the other two and can be successfully accommodated into the capacity of the highway network. I also recommend consequential modifications to the supporting text.
- 7.72 This particular policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP09’ with ‘Land north of Fountain Hill Road

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part 2 of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

Replace parts 3 and 4 of the policy with ‘Access into the site for pedestrians and cyclists should comply with County Council highway standards. In the event that the development of the site proceeds before that of land to the north and south of Fountain Hill Road (Policy 11) the proposed access should be designed in such a fashion that it allows for its adaptation in the future to accommodate the additional traffic from the development of those sites’

Replace paragraph 212 with: This policy and Policy 11 provide a context within which the development of the three sites at the western edge of the village can be connected to the highway network in a safe and co-ordinated fashion’

Policy 11 NP13a/13b

- 7.73 These sites are land to the north and south of Fountain Hill Road. Paragraphs 213-217 comment about their relationship with the site identified in Policy 10.
- 7.74 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.

- 7.75 I am satisfied that the detailed highway requirements associated with each site are appropriate and take account of their particular safety and access needs. I recommend a modification to the relationship between the development of sites NP09/NP13a/NP13b to reflect that recommended in Policy 10.
- 7.76 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP13a and 13b’ with ‘Land north and south of Fountain Hill Road’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part e of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

Replace part f) of the policy with: Access into the site for pedestrians and cyclists should comply with County Council highway standards. In the event that the development of either of the two sites proceed before that of Land to the north and south of Fountain Hill Road (Policy 11) the proposed access should be designed in such a fashion that it allows for adaptation in the future to accommodate the additional traffic from the development of the other two sites’

Replace paragraph 216 with: ‘This policy and Policy 10 provide a context within which the development of the three sites at the western edge of the village can be connected to the highway network in a safe and co-ordinated fashion’

Policy 12 NP14

- 7.77 This site is land east of Stockwith Road. Paragraph 223 comments about the setting and the nature of the site in relation to existing residential properties to both the north and to the south and to the views to the large open village recreation area on the opposite side of Stockwith Road.
- 7.78 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.79 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP14’ with ‘Land east of Stockwith Road’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part f of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

Replace part g of the policy with ‘the incorporation of visibility splays to Stockwith Road in accordance with County Council highway standards’

Policy 13 NP23

- 7.80 This site is land east of Brickenhole Lane. Paragraphs 228 -230 comment about the setting and the nature of the site in relation to existing residential properties and to the setting of St Mary Magdalene Church.
- 7.81 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.82 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP23’ with ‘Land east of Brickenhole Lane

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part e of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

In part f of the policy replace ‘does not harm’ with ‘which respects’

Policy 14 NP24

- 7.83 This site is land west of High Street. Paragraphs 235 -237 comment about the surface water issues and the community’s preferences about the layout of the development. Paragraphs 238 to 240 comment about related matters including density, boundary treatments and the setting of St Mary Magdalene Church.
- 7.84 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.
- 7.85 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP24’ with ‘Land west of High Street’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part e of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

In part f of the policy replace ‘does not harm’ with ‘which respects’

Policy 15 NP26

- 7.86 This site is land adjacent to South Moor Lodge, south of South Moor Road and west of Brickenhole Lane. Paragraphs 244 -248 comment about the surface water issues, its semi-rural character and the views afforded from the site to open countryside.
- 7.87 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential purposes is appropriate.

- 7.88 The policy provides a robust means by which its development can be controlled and managed in an effective way. I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

In the policy title replace ‘Development of NP26’ with ‘land adjacent to South Moor Lodge, south of South Moor Road and west of Brickenhole Lane’

In part 1 of the policy replace ‘up to’ with ‘approximately’

In part e of the policy replace ‘will be required to’ with ‘should’

Actions and Projects

- 7.89 The Plan includes Actions and Projects. They are included in a separate part of the Plan to take account of national advice on this matter.
- 7.90 Appendix A comments about four community projects as follows:
- Improving access to the North Notts Wildlife Trust Reserve
 - Improving the maintenance of the Nature Reserve
 - The creation of a community garden in High Street; and
 - The relocation of the village hall and playing field to a central village location.

- 7.91 I am satisfied that the four projects are both appropriate and distinctive to the neighbourhood area.

Other Matters - General

- 7.92 This report has recommended a series of modifications both to the policies and to the supporting text in the submitted Plan. Where consequential changes to the text are required directly as a result of my recommended modification to the policy concerned, I have highlighted them in this report. However other changes to the general text may be required elsewhere in the Plan as a result of the recommended modifications to the policies. It will be appropriate for BDC and the Parish Council to have the flexibility to make any necessary consequential changes to the general text. I recommend accordingly. I also recommend that the Plan is amended and updated to take account of the detailed comments made by BDC in its representation.

Modification of general text (where necessary) to achieve consistency with the modified policies.

Section 20 Reviewing the Plan

- 7.93 The Plan properly comments about the need for monitoring of any made neighbourhood plan. It also recognises that a review of the Plan may be required at some point within the Plan period.
- 7.94 The submitted Plan has been prepared within the context of a development plan context that pre-dates the introduction of the NPPF. BDC is now working towards the preparation of a new Local Plan. It is anticipated that the emerging Local Plan will be

adopted in 2021. This process will be an important milestone in the development of planning policy in the District. In these circumstances I recommend that the submitted neighbourhood plan includes a degree of commentary about its potential impact on the relationship between the emerging local plan and any made neighbourhood plan at that time. Plainly the Parish Council will need to consider the potential impact at that time and reach its own view on the need or otherwise for a review of the Plan.

- 7.95 I also recommend that this part of the Plan addresses a potential scenario where development does not proceed on some of the allocated housing sites.

At the end of paragraph 255 add: 'or if the sites allocated for residential development in this Plan do not come forward'

At the end of paragraph 256 add: 'The adoption of the Bassetlaw Local Plan 2037 will be a key milestone in this process. In this context the Parish Council will consider the need for a review of the Plan based on monitoring information and/or the contents of the emerging Local Plan'

8 Summary and Conclusions

Summary

- 8.1 The Plan sets out a range of policies to guide and direct development proposals in the period up to 2035. It is distinctive in addressing a specific set of issues that have been identified and refined by the wider community to safeguard the character and setting of the neighbourhood area and its community facilities and to promote sensitive new development.
- 8.2 Following my independent examination of the Plan I have concluded that the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan subject to a series of recommended modifications.

Conclusion

- 8.3 On the basis of the findings in this report I recommend to Bassetlaw District Council that subject to the incorporation of the modifications set out in this report that the Walkeringham Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to referendum.

Other Matters

- 8.4 I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Plan area. In my view, the neighbourhood area is entirely appropriate for this purpose and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that this is not the case. I therefore recommend that the Plan should proceed to referendum based on the neighbourhood area as approved by Bassetlaw District Council on 7 July 2016
- 8.5 I am grateful to everyone who has helped in any way to ensure that this examination has run in a smooth manner.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
21 April 2020