

# **Rampton and Woodbeck Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019 - 2037**

**A report to Bassetlaw Council on the Rampton and  
Woodbeck 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 Rampton and Woodbeck Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2 The examination was undertaken by way of written representations. I visited the neighbourhood plan area on 22 May 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 distinctive character.
- 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 Rampton and Woodbeck 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**  
**8 June 2020**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the independent examination of the Rampton and Woodbeck Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2037 (the Plan).
- 1.2 The Plan has been submitted to Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) by Rampton and Woodbeck 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 which 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 submission Plan.
- the Character Assessment
- the Basic Conditions Statement.
- the Consultation Statement.
- the AECOM Site Options and Assessment Report (March 2019).
- 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 analysis of the proposed Local Green Spaces.
- 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 22 May 2020. The timing of this visit reflected Covid:19 travel restrictions that were in place during the examination process and was agreed with both BDC and the Parish Council. 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 (September to November 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 drop in events (November 2016, May 2017 and September 2017);
  - the feedback on the community questionnaire (October 2017);
  - the call for land process (July 2018);
  - the consultation on proposed housing sites (September and October 2018);
  - the general use of local newsletters; and
  - the use of leaflet drops.
- 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. The analysis in Table 2 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 19 March 2020. This exercise generated representations from the following persons and organisations:
- Bassetlaw District Council
  - Canal and River Trust
  - Coal Authority
  - Gladman Developments Limited
  - Highways England
  - Historic England

- JH Walter
- Foljambe Estate
- National Grid
- Natural England
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Severn Trent Water
- Sport England
- West Lindsey District Council

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 Rampton and Woodbeck. It is located approximately 10 kms to the east of Retford. Its population in 2011 was 1139 persons living in 351 households. It was designated as a neighbourhood area on 7 March 2017.
- 5.2 The village of Rampton has an attractive layout based around All Saints Church. It has a good mix of vernacular buildings and more modern houses. It enjoys a range of community services including the Church, the village shop, the garage and the Eyre Arms PH. Torksey Ferry Road provides a historic connection to the River Trent to the east of the village. The eastern part of the neighbourhood area incorporates elements of the Cottam Power Station.
- 5.3 The other settlement in the neighbourhood area is Woodbeck. Its character and appearance are dominated by Rampton Hospital. The remainder of the settlement consists mainly of homes originally developed for staff at the Hospital. They have a garden village character and are set in an attractive landscape setting. There are other operational buildings within the settlement related to Hospital use.

### *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. Rampton is identified as a Rural Service Centre where there will be limited rural growth in the Plan period. Woodbeck is identified as one of a series of other settlements which are identified as having limited or no services and facilities and which are unsuitable for growth
- 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 Rampton this figure is 25%. 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 Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy sets out specific development opportunities and requirements for the various Other Centres. In particular it does not support proposed residential development other than where this involves conversions or the replacement of existing dwellings.
- 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. 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.

*Visit to the neighbourhood area*

- 5.9 I visited the neighbourhood area on 22 May 2020. I approached from the Laneham Lane 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 Rampton. I saw the proposed local green space (LGS1) based on the churchyard of All Saints Church. I saw that it was beautifully-maintained. I then took the opportunity to walk to the western edge of the village to look at two of the three proposed housing allocations in the village. In doing so I saw the Campbell Homes development on the southern side of Treswell Road. I also saw the bench placed in memory of Cllr Ivor Lewin.

- 5.11 I then walked to the southern end of the village. I saw the recently-developed and very impressive recreation ground. I also saw the village shop and garage. The shop was particularly popular during my visit.
- 5.12 I then walked back to the Church and followed Torksey Street/Torksey Ferry Road up to East End Court. Along the way I saw several vernacular buildings and farmsteads, including Home Farm and its attractive courtyard. I saw the distant view to Cottam Power Station to the north and east.
- 5.13 I then drove to Woodbeck. I saw that its character and appearance was very different from that of Rampton. In particular I saw the way in which the estate around the hospital was both structured and very spacious. In this context I took the opportunity to look at the various proposed local green spaces. I saw that they varied from the more formal recreation area (LGS5) to the gardens of buildings/vacant properties (LGS8) to areas of incidental open space (LGS10).
- 5.14 I walked to the east of the Woodbeck estate. I saw the proposed housing allocation off Cavell Close and the way in which it had been designed to continue the layout of the houses to its south.
- 5.15 Thereafter I walked onto Retford Road so that I could see the two proposed housing allocations to the west and to the east of the village. I saw the way in which they would relate to the wider agricultural landscape surrounding the settlement.
- 5.16 I then drove to Retford to the 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 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 Rampton and Woodbeck 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 8), six policies on residential allocations (Policies 2-7) and a policy for employment development (Policy 12). In the social role, it includes a policy on community facilities (Policy 13) and on local green spaces (Policy 11). In the environmental dimension the Plan positively seeks to protect its natural, built and historic environment. 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 January 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 BDC also prepared a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan at the same time. 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; and
  - Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA.

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.

- 6.16 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.
- 6.17 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*

- 6.18 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.
- 7.5 I have addressed the policies in the order that they appear in the submitted plan.
- 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 1-7)*

- 7.8 The Plan as a whole is well-organised and includes effective maps, tables 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 1 and 2 comment about the background to neighbourhood planning. They also helpfully describe the local planning context within which the Plan has been prepared. It includes a map showing the designated neighbourhood area.
- 7.10 Section 3 summarises how the submitted Plan was prepared. It overlaps with the submitted Consultation Statement.
- 7.11 Section 4 comments about the special and distinctive features of the neighbourhood area. It is a particularly successful part of the Plan. It provides detailed information about the character of the village of Rampton, the Rampton High Secure Hospital and the Woodbeck Estate. Table 1 then sets out Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for the neighbourhood area.

- 7.12 Sections 5 and 6 set out the Plan's Community Vision and the supporting Community Objectives respectively. They are both well-developed and distinctive to the neighbourhood area as described in Section 4.
- 7.13 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.

**Policy 1: Growth Requirement in Rampton and Woodbeck to 2037**

- 7.14 This policy sets the scene for proposed new development in the Plan period. In essence it provides a wider context for the proposed development of six housing sites in the neighbourhood area (and as detailed in Policies 2-7).
- 7.15 This approach is helpful in principle. However as submitted it is not written as a policy. In order to remedy this situation, I have considered two options. The first would be to modify the words used so that they took on a policy format. The second would be to incorporate the intended approach within the broader supporting text in Section 8 of the Plan.
- 7.16 In setting out its approach the Parish Council has helpfully sought to respond to the strategic requirements for the parish in the emerging Local Plan. In summary the proposed housing figure for Rampton and Woodbeck is 73 dwellings. This represents a 20% increase in dwelling houses from 2018 to 2037.
- 7.17 On balance I have concluded that the second approach would be the most productive. It would best reflect the current uncertainty over the eventual outcome of the emerging Local Plan and the modifications that I have recommended to the submitted package of housing allocations. The Parish Council agreed with this approach in its response to the clarification note.
- 7.18 In this broader context I also recommend modifications to the existing submitted supporting text. The recommended modifications reflect the current stage of the evolution of the Local Plan. They also identify two specific matters. The first is that Policy 8 in the neighbourhood plan provides a more general approach towards the delivery of new housing within the parish beyond the specific allocations. The second is that there will be the opportunity for the Plan to be reviewed in the event that it becomes clear that development elsewhere will not deliver the strategic target for the neighbourhood area (in the event that the emerging Local Plan retains the 20% growth target).
- 7.19 I have made specific recommendation with regard to the deletion of three of the six proposed housing allocations in Policies 2-7. These matters are reflected in the recommended modifications to this part of the Plan.

**Delete Policy 1**

*Insert additional paragraphs in Section 8 of the Plan as follows:*

*'8.12: Whilst the Plan has sought to bring forward new development to accommodate the strategic target for the neighbourhood area as anticipated in the emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan it has been designed to ensure that it is in general conformity to*

*the adopted Core Strategy. Policy DM4 of that Plan identifies four criteria with which major development should comply. The effect of this approach is that the allocated sites would yield less than the 73 dwellings potentially required by 2037.*

*8.13: This situation will be monitored throughout the Plan period. In particular the Parish Council will assess the extent to which the general approach taken in Policy 8 of this Plan will yield any residual amount of housing. Section 19 of the Plan comments about monitoring and a potential review of the Plan.*

*8.14: Nine homes are currently being developed on the site to the south of Treswell Road, Rampton. 22 homes will be delivered through the development of homes on the three sites allocated in this Plan (Policies [insert numbers]). Additional growth outside the identified allocations will be managed through the implementation of Policy 8 of this Plan'*

*Modify Table 3 to reflect the revised schedule of housing allocations*

#### Proposed Housing Allocations – General Comments

- 7.20 The Plan proposes six allocations for residential use (three in Rampton and three in Woodbeck). They take a common approach in terms of presentation and approach. To avoid repetition on a policy-by-policy basis I address three general issues at this point in the report. Where applicable they translate into specific recommended modifications to the policies concerned.
- 7.21 In the first instance the approach is slightly confusing as each site is identified by its reference number from the broader list of sites assessed as part of the plan-making process. Plainly the reference numbers do not correspond with the policy numbers. Whilst this helps to explain the origin of the sites it will be of little benefit in the event that the Plan is 'made'. In this context I recommend that the reference number is replaced with a geographic description of the proposed site. Corresponding changes are also required to Map 3 (so that it highlights policy numbers).
- 7.22 In the second instance the supporting text of the various policies comments mainly about the consultee feedback on the layout of the proposed sites. Whilst this is helpful to understand how the various criteria have been designed, they provide little detail about the site itself. I recommend modifications on a policy-by-policy basis to remedy this matter. The outcome will be to provide a wider context for the development of the sites concerned through the policy approach.
- 7.23 In the third instance the six sites vary in different ways to the extent to which they relate to the scale, nature and character of the settlement concerned. In some cases, they are within the confines of the settlement concerned. In other cases, they are immediately adjacent to one of the two settlements. In other cases, they are less well related. In assessing the appropriateness or otherwise of the six sites I have taken into account the findings of the AECOM study.
- 7.24 In this context Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy provides clear policy advice for the consideration of major development proposals. In doing so it identifies four key principles are follows:

- (they) make clear functional and physical links with the existing settlement and surrounding area and have not been designed as ‘standalone’ additions. Where physical links cannot be made (e.g. for reasons of third-party land ownership) provision must be made such that they can be provided in future should the opportunity arise;
- (they) complement and enhance the character of the built, historic and natural environment;
- (they) are of a scale appropriate to the existing settlement and surrounding area and in line with the levels of proposed growth for that settlement as set out in policies CS1-CS9; and
- (they) provide a qualitative improvement to the existing range of houses, services, facilities, open space and economic development opportunities.

7.25 Policy 8 of the submitted Plan also addresses similar matters in the way in which it seeks to identify circumstances in which other sites may be able to come forward in the Plan period. One of its criteria is that any such sites should not have an adverse impact on the existing built and natural character, shape, form or appearance of that part of the settlement and it meets the development principles as identified in Policy 9.

7.26 In relation to the six proposed housing allocations (Policies 2-7) I assess each site against the four principles in Policy DM4 of the adopted Core Strategy.

7.27 This assessment results in the recommended deletion of three of the six sites from the Plan. In different ways this reflects the inability of the sites concerned to comply with the first and second of the four criteria in Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy. I can appreciate that the Parish Council has sought to respond positively to national policy to boost significantly the supply of housing land and the strategic housing target in the emerging Local Plan. Nevertheless, the basic conditions tests for the neighbourhood plan continue to apply with regard to national policy and to the existing adopted Bassetlaw Core Strategy. In particular I am not satisfied that the longer term need for new housing should override the need for housing allocation to relate well to existing settlements. In reaching this conclusion I have taken account both of the information in the Plan itself and in the submitted AECOM site assessment study. Plainly over time additional information may come forward to justify the development of these or other sites which would otherwise comply with Policy 8 of this Plan.

7.28 I comment about the implications of these recommended modifications in the section of this report on the Implementation and Review of the Plan (paragraphs 7.86 to 7.89).

#### Policy 2: The Allocation of NP01 Woodbeck

7.29 This policy proposes the allocation of land to the north of Retford Road, Woodbeck for residential use. It is approximately 0.2 hectares in size and is anticipated to yield four new homes.

7.30 The site is the south-eastern corner of a much larger agricultural field. There is a traditional hedge along its southern boundary with Retford Road. As the Plan describes earlier phases of the plan-making process had considered a larger part of the parcel of land for residential development.

- 7.31 Whilst the allocation has been significantly reduced in scale from earlier iterations of the Plan, I am not satisfied that its development would make a clear functional and physical link with Woodbeck as required by Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy. In particular the wider parcel of land is far more characteristic of the surrounding countryside and is poorly-related to the built-up form of the Woodbeck Estate. This is heightened as that there is only limited built development to the north of Retford Road. On this basis I recommend the deletion of the policy and the supporting text.

**Delete the policy.**

*Delete the supporting text (Section 9 of the Plan).*

*Delete the proposed site from Map 4.*

Policy 3: The Allocation of NP03 Woodbeck

- 7.32 The proposed site is located on the eastern edge of Woodbeck and to the immediate east of Cavell Close. It is part of a wider area of open space within the Woodbeck estate.
- 7.33 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential use would be appropriate. It is well-related to the existing built up form of Woodbeck. In particular it would round off the existing built development in Cavell Close and make good and effective use of land within the wider Woodbeck estate. In this context I am satisfied that it meets the criteria in Policy DM4 of the adopted Core Strategy.
- 7.34 The policy is criteria-based. The criteria are distinctive to the site and raise issues that will ensure its successful and safe development. I recommend modifications to some of the criteria to ensure that they have the clarity required by the NPPF. In particular I recommend that criterion e) is deleted given that the view identified on Map 7 is not directly affected by the proposed development of the site. I also recommend that the policy incorporates a series of highways matters to take account of the comments from the Highways Authority.
- 7.35 I also recommend that the initial part of the supporting text is modified and expanded. This will ensure that it provides an appropriate context for the policy in general, and its criteria in particular.
- 7.36 Finally I recommend that the title of the policy is modified so that it refers to the location of the site within the village rather than its site reference number. I also recommend consequential modifications to Map 3.

**In the title replace ‘NP03-Rampton’ with ‘Land to the east of Cavell Close, Woodbeck’**

**In a) replace ‘must’ with ‘should’**

**Delete criterion e)**

**Include a new criterion to read: ‘the development should provide safe access for pedestrians and appropriate turning facilities for service vehicles’**

*In the section 'About the Site' change the text to normal format rather than italic format.*

*After the existing text add: 'The development of the site for residential use reflects its wider location in the Woodbeck estate. It is well-related to the existing built up form of the estate. Policy 3 identifies a series of criteria to inform its development. They provide advice on the layout and form for the development of the site'*

*On Map 3 replace 'NP03' with 'Policy 3'*

#### Policy 4: The Allocation of NP05 Woodbeck

- 7.37 This policy proposes the allocation of land to the south of Retford Road for residential use. It is approximately 0.8 hectares in size and is anticipated to yield ten new homes.
- 7.38 The site is the north-western corner of a much larger agricultural field. There is a traditional hedge along its southern boundary with the Retford Road. The larger field is punctuated by a copse of trees running in a north-south direction from the Retford Road frontage. This copse would form the eastern boundary of the proposed housing allocation.
- 7.39 I looked at the site carefully from both Retford Road and from the open space within the Woodbeck Estate to the south-west. Taking all matters into account I am not satisfied that its development would make a clear functional and physical link with Woodbeck as required by Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy. In particular the wider parcel of land is far more characteristic of the surrounding countryside and is poorly-related to the built-up form of the Woodbeck Estate. This is heightened given that the proposed development would result in linear, ribbon development along Retford Road. On this basis I recommend the deletion of the policy and the supporting text.

#### **Delete the policy.**

*Delete the supporting text (Section 11 of the Plan).*

*Delete the proposed site from Map 4.*

#### Policy 5: The Allocation of NP07 Rampton

- 7.40 This policy proposes the allocation of land to the west of Treswell Road, Rampton for residential use. It is approximately 0.55 hectares in size and is anticipated to yield nine new homes.
- 7.41 The site is the south-eastern corner of a much larger agricultural field. There is a traditional hedge along its eastern boundary with the Treswell Road.
- 7.42 I sought advice from the Parish Council about the way in which it had assessed the site for its suitability for development in these circumstances. I was advised that 'the site is the next logical extension along Treswell Road and is close to site NP14 which is currently under construction. Discussions with the landowner have supported the sites inclusion and its deliverability. In addition, the identified site form part of a much larger area that was originally submitted during the "call for land" consultation.

Feedback from consultation has led to the site being reduced to the area now identified in the Plan’.

- 7.43 I looked at the site carefully from the Treswell Road. I also looked at its relationship with both the development taking place to the south of Treswell Road and to the proposed development in the Plan to the north of Treswell Road (Policy 6). Taking all matters into account I am not satisfied that its development would make a clear functional and physical link with Rampton as required by Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy. In particular the wider parcel of land is far more characteristic of the surrounding countryside and is poorly-related to the built-up form of Rampton. In addition, the site has a very different relationship to the village than either of the two sites to the east. I coming to this conclusion I have taken into account the findings of the AECOM study about the differences in the relationship of the eastern and western parts of the larger parcel of land to Rampton. Nevertheless, on the basis of the information available I am not satisfied that the proposed site would represents sustainable development. On this basis I recommend the deletion of the policy and the supporting text.

**Delete the policy.**

*Delete the supporting text (Section 12 of the Plan).*

*Delete the proposed site from Map 3.*

Policy 6: The Allocation of NP08 Rampton

- 7.44 The proposed site is located on the western edge of Rampton village to the north of Treswell Road. The site is opposite the site currently being developed for residential use by Campbell Homes.
- 7.45 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential use would be appropriate. It is well-related to the existing built up form of the village. In addition, it would consolidate the emerging new western boundary of the village. In this context I am satisfied that it meets the criteria in Policy DM4 of the adopted Core Strategy.
- 7.46 The policy is criteria-based. The criteria are distinctive to the site and raise issues that will ensure the successful and safe development of the site.
- 7.47 I recommend a series of recommended modifications to the criteria as follows:
- to bring the clarity required by the NPPF (generally throughout the criteria);
  - to clarify the hedgerow issue in criterion c);
  - to clarify the location of existing residential properties in Treswell Road;
  - to ensure that the highway access issue is less prescriptive (criterion f); and
  - to make the distinction between land use issues and highways issues in criterion g).
- 7.48 I also recommend that the initial part of the supporting text is modified and expanded. This will ensure that it provides an appropriate context for the policy in general, and its criteria in particular.

- 7.49 Finally I recommend that the title of the policy is modified so that it refers to the location of the site within the village rather than its site reference number. I also recommend consequential modifications to Map 3.

**In the title replace ‘NP08-Rampton’ with ‘Land to the north of Treswell Road, Rampton’**

**In a) replace ‘must’ with ‘should’ and add ‘to the east’ after ‘Treswell Road’**

**Replace c) with ‘the hedgerow on the southern boundary of the site should be retained and incorporated into the wider design and layout of the site except where vehicular access is required into the site’**

**In d):**

- **replace ‘must’ with ‘should’**
- **delete ‘negative’**
- **replace ‘private amenity.... Treswell Road’ with ‘amenity of residential properties to the east of the site and those to the south of Treswell Road’**

**In e) replace ‘there is’ with ‘the development provides’**

**In f) replace ‘away from.... edge of the village’ with ‘in the eastern part of the site’**

**Replace g) with: ‘the layout of the site incorporates a footpath connection to Treswell Road’**

*In the section ‘About the Site’ change the text to normal format rather than italic format.*

*After the existing text add: ‘The development of the site for residential use reflects its location in the village. It is well-related to the existing built up form of the village. In addition, it would consolidate the emerging new western boundary of the village in association with the development taking place to the south of Treswell Road. Policy 6 identifies a series of criteria to inform its development. They provide advice on the form and layout of the site, access arrangements and the retention of the existing hedgerows’*

*On Map 3 replace ‘NP08’ with ‘Policy 6’*

Policy 7: The Allocation of NP11 Rampton

- 7.50 The proposed site is located on the southern edge of Rampton village to the west of Retford Road. The site is within the curtilage of an existing dwelling.
- 7.51 I am satisfied that the development of the site for residential use would be appropriate. It is well-related to the existing built up form of the village. It would make good and effective use of existing urban land. In this context I am satisfied that it meets the criteria in Policy DM4 of the adopted Core Strategy.
- 7.52 The policy is criteria-based. The criteria are distinctive to the site and raise issues that will ensure its successful and safe development. I recommend modifications to some of the criteria to ensure that they have the clarity required by the NPPF. In particular I
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recommend the deletion of the reference to the proposed local green space to the immediate north of the housing allocation. The Parish Council decided to remove the proposed local green space (LGS2) during the examination. This issue is addressed in further detail in the part of this report which comments on local green spaces (Policy 11).

- 7.53 I recommend that criterion b) is modified so that it has the clarity required by the NPPF. I also recommend that the initial part of the supporting text is modified and expanded. This will ensure that it provides an appropriate context for the policy in general, and its criteria in particular.
- 7.54 Finally I recommend that the title of the policy is modified so that it refers to the location of the site within the village rather than its site reference number. I also recommend consequential modifications to Map 3.

**In the title replace ‘NP11-Rampton’ with ‘Land to the east of Retford Road, Rampton’**

**Delete criterion a)**

**Replace criterion b) with ‘existing trees and hedges on the Retford Road and Greenside frontages should be retained and incorporated into the wider design and layout of the site except where vehicular access is required into the site’**

**In d) replace ‘must’ with ‘should’ and delete ‘negative’**

*In the section ‘About the Site’ change the text to normal format rather than italic format.*

*After the existing text add: ‘The development of the site for residential use reflects its location in the village. It is well-related to the existing built up form of the village. In addition, it would make effective use of brownfield land within the village. Policy 7 identifies a series of criteria to inform its development. They provide advice on access arrangements, the retention of the existing hedgerows and amenity issues’*

*On Map 3 replace ‘NP11’ with ‘Policy 7’*

Policy 8: Residential Development

- 7.55 This is an important policy within the general context of the Plan. It has been designed to act in a complementary fashion to the previous policies which allocate sites for development.
- 7.56 The policy has three related parts as follows:
- proposed development within the defined development boundaries;
  - proposals which would represent overdevelopment; and
  - proposed development outside the defined settlement boundaries.
- 7.57 The purpose of the policy is clear in general terms. In its responses to the clarification note the Parish Council provided advice on the intended remit of the initial part of the policy. I recommend modifications to the first and the third parts of the policy to bring

the clarity required by the NPPF. In turn they will provide policy advice on proposed developments within and outside the proposed development boundaries respectively. I also recommend the deletion of the second part of the policy. In essence it is the reverse of the first part of the policy and as such is unnecessary.

**Replace the opening element of the first part of the policy with:**

**‘Proposals for residential development within the defined settlement boundaries for Rampton or Woodbeck will be supported where they meet the following criteria:’**

**In criterion a) replace ‘adverse’ with ‘unacceptable’**

**In criteria c) and d) delete ‘negative’**

**Delete the second part of the policy.**

**Replace the third part of the policy with:**

**‘Proposals for residential development outside the defined settlement boundaries for Rampton (as shown on Map 3) or Woodbeck (as shown on Map 4) will only be supported where the following criteria are met:**

- **the site concerned is immediately adjacent to the relevant settlement boundary;**
- **the development cannot be accommodated within the relevant settlement boundary;**
- **the development would not exceed 11 houses or 0.5 hectares;**
- **the development has the support of the relevant community; and**
- **the development complies with the criteria in the first part of this policy’**

Policy 9: Development Principles

- 7.58 This policy is a key element of the way in which the Plan seeks to ensure that new development comes forward to the highest possible standards. The policy is underpinned by the work carried out on the Character Assessment. The Assessment is an excellent piece of work in its own right. It influences and shapes the content of both this and other policies.
- 7.59 The policy lists a series of development principles which it expects will be incorporated into the preparation of proposals in the neighbourhood area. They are distinctive to the neighbourhood area and have a direct relationship to the submitted Character Assessment. This is best practice in general terms, and provides a clear evidence-based approach in particular.
- 7.60 The policy is very well-developed. Nevertheless, I recommend three modifications to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. The first repositions supporting text from the policy. The second refines the approach to ensure that the development principles should be applied where they relate to the scale, nature and location of the development in the neighbourhood area. The third reconfigures criterion h) so that it adopts a positive approach similar to that of the other criteria in the policy.

**In the opening element of the first part of the policy delete the second sentence.**

**Replace the third sentence of the first part of the policy with:**

**‘Development proposals should be designed to take account of the following development principles insofar as they relate to the scale, nature and location of the development in the neighbourhood area’**

**Replace criterion h) with: ‘the development respects the character of the historic and distinct walling as identified on Map 6’**

Policy 10: Heritage Assets

- 7.61 This policy continues the approach taken in Policy 9. In this case it has a very specific focus on heritage assets. Its approach is one where development will be supported where it conserves or enhances the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting through high quality and sensitive design, taking into consideration appropriate scale, siting and materials. This element meets the basic conditions. In particular it has regard to national policy.
- 7.62 The remainder of the policy sets out practical details against which development proposals will be assessed. Whilst they adopt a very appropriate approach, they are supporting text rather than policy. In this context I recommend that they are repositioned into Section 15 of the Plan.

### **Delete the second part of the policy**

*Insert an additional element of supporting text at paragraph 15.7 to incorporate the deleted element of the policy with the following alterations:*

*In the first section delete ‘should accord... guidance and’*

*Replace the second and third sections with:*

*‘Applications affecting Designated Heritage Assets or their setting will be expected to include:*

- *a heritage statement that clearly describes the significance of the building and explains in detail how the proposals shall conserve this significance, and*
- *be in accordance with the most up to date legislation and national policy and guidance.*

*Applications affecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets will be expected to include:*

- *a heritage statement that clearly describes the significance of the building/site and explains in detail how the proposals shall not adversely affect this significance, or;*
- *where demolition is proposed, an up to date structural report that clearly identifies that the building is incapable of viable repair, or*

- *where demolition is proposed, evidence that the building has no viable use in the medium term through appropriate marketing, and there would be a public benefit arising from its demolition and redevelopment.*

*The heritage statement should consider the setting of heritage assets. In considering the effect a development proposal may have on the setting of a heritage asset, the Council will assess the contribution the setting makes to the overall significance of the asset and how the proposal may impact this relationship'*

#### Policy 11: Local Green Spaces

- 7.63 This policy proposes the designation of nine local green spaces (LGS). They are shown on Maps 3 and 4 in the Plan. I sought advice from the Parish Council about the way in which it had proposed the designation of the various LGSs. It advised that the parcels of land had been specifically assessed. Nevertheless, it produced a table to assess the extent to which their proposed designation would comply with the three criteria identified in the NPPF (paragraph 100). At the same time the Parish Council decided not to proceed with the designation of the proposed LGS2 and LGS7.
- 7.64 On the basis of the wider information provided I satisfied that the following proposed LGSs comfortably meet the three criteria in the NPPF:
- LGS1 All Saints Church Rampton Graveyard
- LGS3 Play Area, Rampton
- LGS5 Play Area, Woodbeck
- LGS9 Football Ground, Woodbeck
- LGS10 Open grassed area, Woodbeck
- 7.65 The proposed LGS8 is very different in character from the other proposed LGSs in Woodbeck. In effect it is the combined rear gardens of former dwelling houses on the estate. I sought advice from the Parish Council on its approach to this matter. I was advised that the curtilages of the buildings concerned are those of temporary accommodation or offices and they do not include private or permanent residential units. I was also advised that the Parish Council considers that the proposed LGS contributes positively towards local character and form part of the original character of the community.
- 7.66 I looked at this matter very carefully when I visited the neighbourhood area. I saw that the proposed LGS was well-maintained and reflected the variety of uses advised by the Parish Council. I also saw evidence of their use by local residents and the wider public. Moreover, I saw the way in which the proposed LGS reflected the open and formally-planned nature of the Woodbeck estate in general, and the spacious and well-landscaped garden areas in particular. On this basis I am satisfied that the proposed LGS is demonstrably special to the local community.

- 7.67 Proposed LGS 6 includes a community building. I recommend that the building is ghosted out of the proposed LGS in a similar fashion to the approach proposed for the buildings in LGS8. This also applies to LGS5.
- 7.68 Map 4 shows a proposed unnumbered LGS. The Parish Council advised that it was intended to be part of LGS 6. I recommend accordingly.
- 7.69 In general terms I am satisfied that the designation of the proposed LGSs accords with the more general elements of paragraph 99 of the NPPF. Firstly, the package of spaces is consistent with the local planning of sustainable development. In this context the submitted Plan includes a suite of allocated housing sites. In addition, none of the proposed LGS have been considered as potential development sites. Secondly, I am satisfied that they are capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period. Indeed, in many cases they are established elements of the local environment and are sensitively managed as green spaces in ways appropriate to their particular uses.
- 7.70 The policy itself sets out an approach which would resist development that would adversely affect the function of a designated LGS. Whilst this part of the policy largely follows the approach in national policy (NPPF paragraph 101), it does not have the necessary clarity for a development plan policy. In particular it fails to identify the types of development which would affect the purpose of such designation. I recommend that the policy is modified so that it takes on the matter of fact approach set out in the NPPF. It will be a matter for BDC's judgement to determine whether any proposals which may come forward within the designated LGSs would conflict with the policy approach.
- 7.71 I also recommend that the policy includes a list of the proposed LGSs. As submitted, it simply refers the reader to Maps 3 and 4. This approach does not have the clarity required by the NPPF. In addition, the matter is highlighted given that the maps concerned are several pages removed from the policy in the Plan.

**At the end of the first part of the policy add the list of LGS numbers and site descriptions.**

**Replace the final part of the policy with: 'Proposals for development within designated Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances'**

*Delete LGS 2 and 7 from Maps 3 and 4 respectively.*

*Identified the unnumbered green area on Map 4 as part of LGS6*

*Ghost out the buildings and structures within LGS5 and LGS6 (in a similar fashion to LGS8).*

Policy 12: Local Economy

- 7.72 This policy offers support to proposals which would sustain the local economy. It has a particular focus on projects which would contribute towards diversification. The supporting text highlights that there is an element of small business activity (such as

local cottage industries and home working) in the neighbourhood area and that these businesses provide both employment and a wider community and social function.

- 7.73 In general terms the policy takes a positive approach to the development of the local economy and has regard to national policy. I recommend that the third part of the policy is incorporated into the substantive (first) part of the policy. This would avoid a situation where diversification projects are addressed in two separate parts of the wider policy. I also recommend the replacement of the prescriptive limit of one hectare for appropriate employment development with a more general approach which refers to the location of the proposed site in the neighbourhood area. This would allow for greater flexibility throughout the neighbourhood area. In any event the proposed size limit is not evidence-based.
- 7.74 I also recommend detailed modifications to the second part of the policy. Whilst they do not alter the approach taken, they bring the clarity required by the NPPF.

**In the first part of the policy replace ‘are not.... per site’ with ‘are of a scale which is appropriate to its location within the neighbourhood area and the scale and nature of any surrounding uses’**

**In criterion a), b) and d) delete ‘negative’**

**Replace the second part of the policy with: ‘Proposals for industrial buildings within, or adjoining, the open countryside should use materials to clad the building(s) of an appropriate colour that blends into its setting and will not lead to an unacceptable contrast between the new building(s) and the surrounding landscape’**

**Delete the third part of the policy.**

Policy 13: The protection of local amenities

- 7.75 This policy identifies a series of local amenities. It then seeks to safeguard their ongoing accessibility to the local community within the Plan period. Paragraph 17.8 comments about the importance of the facilities. They are shown on Maps 9 and 10.
- 7.76 The policy approach comments that their change of use to other non-community uses will not be supported unless alternative community facilities are proposed or the existing use is unviable or the community supports a proposed change of use. I recommend modifications to the approach taken so that it has the clarity required by the NPPF. In the first instance I recommend that the changes of use reference should relate to other non-community uses rather than simply to other uses. This would allow a potential change in the availability and/or mix of community uses. In the second instance I recommend that the supporting text more explicitly comments about viability issues relating to the local amenities which are inherently commercial in their nature and operation. Thirdly I recommend the deletion of the reference to community support. This will be a matter of policy decision. In any event BDC will have the ability to take account of public feedback in its determination of any such planning applications.

- 7.77 Finally I recommend that the various facilities are listed within the policy itself. As submitted the Plan requires the reader to cross-refer to the two maps.

**Replace the initial sentence of the policy with:**

**The Plan identifies the following amenities as key local amenities:**

**[List the facilities with a correct numbering sequence]**

**In the second sentence of the policy replace ‘Proposals for....to other purposes’ with ‘Proposals for the redevelopment or the change of use of any of the identified key local amenities to a non-community use’**

**At the end of the second sentence of the policy delete ‘or that the.....community’**

*At the end of paragraph 17.8 add: ‘Policy 13 provides an approach to safeguard such facilities unless specific exceptions can be met. One relates to the commercial viability of the key local amenities. This may be particularly relevant for those amenities which are inherently commercial in their nature. In these circumstances the premises concerned should be marketed at a realistic price for at least six months to assess the opportunities for other community facilities to occupy any space currently occupied by key local amenities’*

Policy 14: The protection of the parish landscape

- 7.78 This policy is based on an overview of the key qualities and characteristics which define the landscape of Rampton and Woodbeck Parish. It collates the relevant findings of the Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment (BLCA) and presents them in a manner which provides a concise profile of the various landscape character areas and designations within the parish. It also explores the relationship between the settlements of Woodbeck and Rampton and their immediate landscape settings.
- 7.79 The policy itself identifies a series of design principles with which new development proposals should comply. It is appropriately evidence-based. In addition, it is both flexible and non-prescriptive. Nonetheless I recommend a modification so that the various principles would only apply insofar as they are relevant to the development proposal concerned.
- 7.80 I also recommend detailed modifications to some of the development principles. In several cases they incorporate unnecessary elements of supporting text which have already been addressed in Section 18 of the Plan. Otherwise the policy meets the basic conditions.

**At the beginning of the policy add: ‘Insofar as they relate to the scale, nature and the location of the proposed development’**

**In criterion a)**

- **Replace the first sentence with: ‘Well-designed proposals which seek to enhance distinctive character, in particular the soft edges of the village, will be supported’**

- **In the final sentence replace ‘is encouraged’ with ‘will be particularly supported’**

**Replace criterion b) with ‘Proposals which incorporate soft landscaping on boundaries will be supported in general, and southern and eastern boundaries of the Woodbeck Estate in particular’**

**In criterion c) delete ‘rustic’ and replace ‘these village’ with ‘the villages’**

**In criterion d) delete the second sentence.**

**In criterion e) replace ‘be resisted’ with ‘not be supported’**

Other Matters - General

- 7.81 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. This flexibility applies to any changes in policy numbering which the Parish Council may wish to make to take account of the recommended modifications elsewhere in this report. I recommend accordingly.

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

Other Matters – Specific

- 7.82 Neighbourhood plans are required both to identify the neighbourhood area and to define the Plan period in a clear and transparent fashion. As submitted the Plan needs a degree of refinement to ensure that these important matters are addressed satisfactorily.
- 7.83 In relation to the former Map 1 identifies the neighbourhood area within an overall map of Bassetlaw District. Whilst this is helpful it is at a scale which makes realistic identification impracticable within the context of a development plan document. I recommend that the more detailed plan in the Basic Conditions Statement is added into the Plan to remedy this matter.
- 7.84 In relation to the latter the Plan is otherwise clear that it intends to correspond with the Plan period for the emerging Local Plan (2037). For clarity I recommend that the Plan period is made explicit both on the front cover and in Section 1.
- 7.85 I am satisfied that no party has been disadvantaged by this lack of clarity in the submitted Plan. In particular these matters generated no representations to the Plan.

*Insert Figure 1 from the Basic Conditions Statement after Map 1 in the submitted Plan.*

*At the end of paragraph 1.6 add: ‘The Plan period is 2019 to 2037’*

*On the front cover of the Plan replace ‘Submission Version January 2020’ with ‘2019 to 2037’*

#### Implementation and Review

- 7.86 Section 19 of 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.
- 7.87 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. I have commented elsewhere in this report about the relationship between the allocated sites in the Plan (as recommended to be modified) and the current uncertainty about the requirement for new development in the Plan period.
- 7.88 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.
- 7.89 I also recommend that this part of the Plan addresses two potential scenarios. The first would be one where development does not proceed as planned on the broader package of allocated housing sites. The second would be one where the delivery of any residual amount of new homes in the neighbourhood area required in the adopted version of what is now the emerging local plan was unlikely to be delivered through the implementation of Policy 8 of the Plan.

*At the end of paragraph 19.2 add: ‘In particular the Parish Council will consider a review of the Plan if the broader package of housing sites allocated in the Plan does not come forward. In addition, the Parish Council will consider the need for a review in circumstances where the delivery of any residual amount of new homes in the neighbourhood area required in the adopted version of what is now the emerging local plan was unlikely to be delivered through the implementation of Policy 8 of the Plan’*

*At the end of paragraph 19.4 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 neighbourhood plan at that point. This task will be undertaken based on an assessment of developments that have taken place in general, and the delivery of the allocated housing sites in particular’*

## 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 2037. 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 Rampton and Woodbeck 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 Rampton and Woodbeck 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 March 2017.
- 8.5 I am grateful to everyone who has helped in any way to ensure that this examination has run in a smooth manner at a very challenging time.

**Andrew Ashcroft**  
**Independent Examiner**  
**8 June 2020**