

## **Bassetlaw Local Plan - Statement from Retford Civic Society October 2022**

### **Matter 3 - Employment Land**

#### Issue 3 Item 3.4

Retford Civic Society supports the proposal to develop Apleyhead for employment. This site, being next to the A1, has considerable potential to attract logistics and similar businesses, and this would benefit the local economy. There are of course risks associated with the development of a site like Apleyhead, no matter how attractive it might be to developers. The Civic Society is concerned about the extent to which these risks have been considered.

First, a developer needs to be found to invest in the site and there may be a need for public sector assistance to facilitate this. Secondly, without doubt the national economy is perilous for developers. Brexit will continue to have effects on the economy, which may well include a lack of EU workers and of immigration from other countries to fill posts necessary to underpin a development. Covid has also affected the labour market negatively. In this situation the development at Apleyhead could be delayed for many years. If we fall into a recession it could fail. Thirdly, the nature of employment is changing and the number of jobs per hectare which will be provided cannot be predicted with any certainty.

When we view the number of houses proposed by Bassetlaw, and place them into the economic context we have described, a number of important risks are identified. Again, Retford Civic Society supports the ambition to develop Apleyhead but feels that the risks and uncertainty attached to this development have not been adequately taken into account when determining the number of additional dwellings to be provided during the period of the Plan. A smaller number of houses might be appropriate.