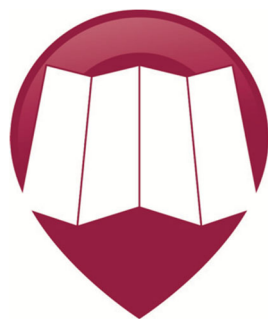


# Pre-Submission Version

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## Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038



**RETFORD  
TOWN CENTRE**  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP

*Produced by Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group  
on behalf of Retford Businesses and residents*

19/07/2023

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## Common Abbreviations

AECOM	Name of national consultancy used to provide technical support through the Locality programme
BDC	Bassetlaw District Council
BFHL	Building for a Healthy Life
EA	Environment Agency
eLP	Emerging Local Plan (the most up to date version at time of writing is the Examination Version)
HEDNA	Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment
HNA	Housing Needs Assessment
LAA	Land Availability Assessment
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
NCC	Nottinghamshire County Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RBF	Retford Business Forum
RTCNPG	Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group (this is the Qualifying Body for neighbourhood planning purposes)
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

## Foreword

Retford has a long and important heritage from when it was established as a Borough in 1105. It has prospered over time by being well connected by major road, rail, and canal links. It benefits from visitors from a range of locations and has a number of historic and cultural references. Its main architectural influence is from the Georgian period, and it benefits from leisure-based retail activity as well as active markets and events.

The Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan will seek to enable appropriate development, whilst retaining and enhancing those aspects of the town centre that make it an attractive business, residential and visitor location. The Neighbourhood Plan has been designated a Business Plan reflecting the high concentration of businesses within the plan area.

Addressing the population increases being planned through adjacent housing developments and the STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production – utilising fusion nuclear power) investment on the site of the nearby West Burton Power Station will require positive, and sensitive, responses to ensure transport and facilities requirements are met smoothly in and around Retford Town Centre.

The desire for a consistent agreed view of the development of Retford Town Centre came from discussions at Retford Business Forum (RBF) and so, in consultation with Bassetlaw District Council (BDC), it carried out various informal surveys and consultations during 2019 and 2020 resulting in the formation of The Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group (RTCNPG) in January 2021 and the approval by BDC of the final version of the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan Area (RTCNPA) in September 2021.

With support from Locality UK, and consultant, Planning With People, and projects conducted by Aecom relating to Design Codes, Masterplan, Housing Needs and Site Assessment the Neighbourhood Plan was constructed. Ecological reports were also carried out by specialist agencies to advise on this important aspect of the Town Centre.

RTCNPG has been keen to carry out as much engagement as possible consultation has included a number of public consultations, leaflet distributions, and drop-in sessions. Local stakeholder groups, including local schools, were engaged through presentations and discussions. The RBF and BDC websites have also made documents publicly available.

Retford Town Centre seeks to enhance its heritage-related character and attractiveness as a leisure-based, retail and service environment, which meets the needs of the growing population whilst positively addressing the issues of the future.

My sincere thanks go to the members of RTCNPG Management Committee for their help and contribution, and for staying the course. The Committee has been supported brilliantly throughout by the Neighbourhood Planning Team at BDC; by Planning With People and Aecom, and our thanks go to everyone involved.

**Rick Brand Chair of Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group**

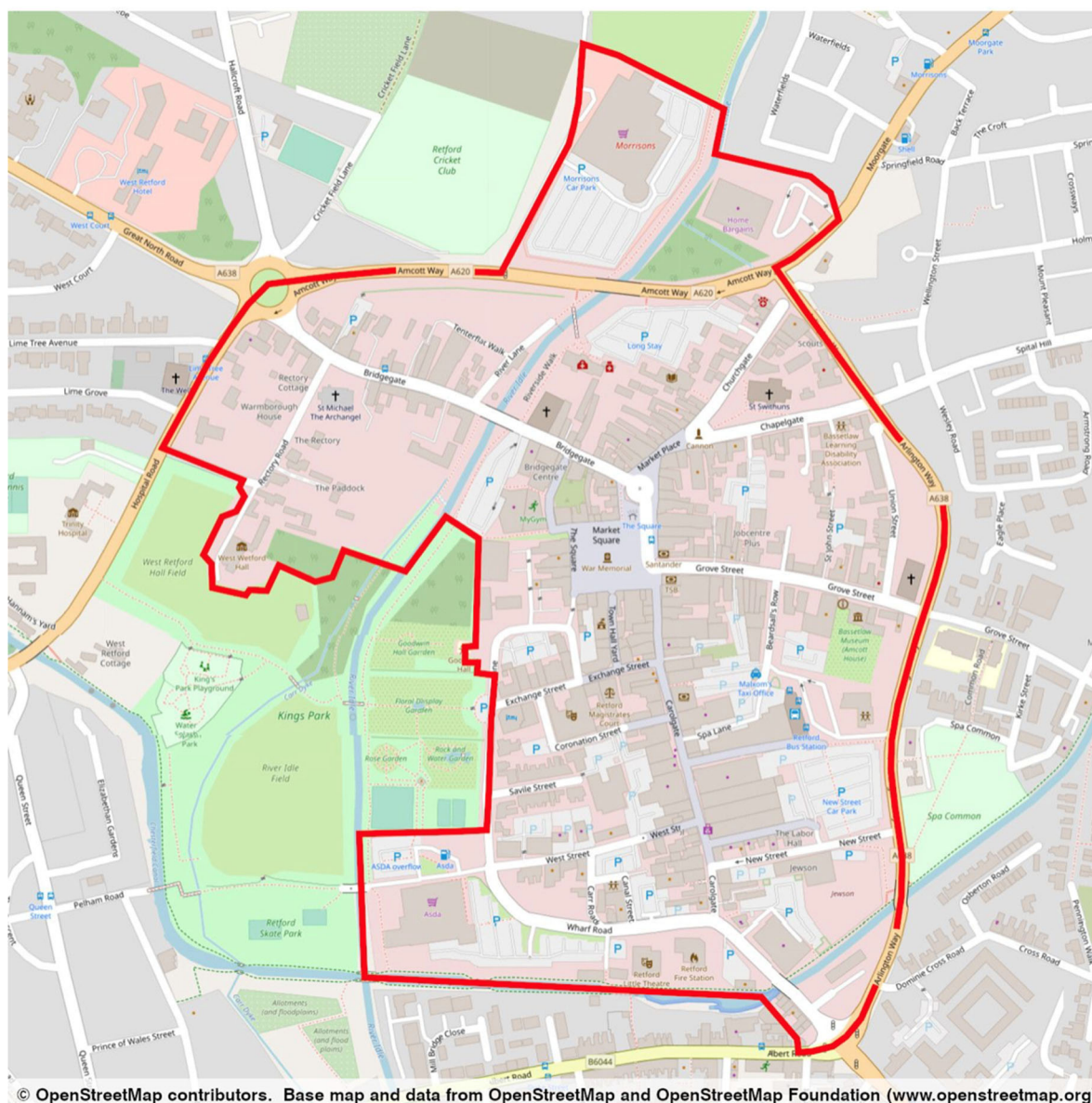


## 1 The Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan

- 1 The Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter ‘the Plan’) is a document produced in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 by the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group (RTCNPG), who are the Qualifying Body.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Once the Plan has been ‘made’ by Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) it will form part of the Development Plan for Bassetlaw, which also includes the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies and the Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Minerals and Waste Strategy.
- 3 The Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Core Strategy, the NPPF and NCC policies. BDC have an emerging Local Plan (eLP) which has been submitted for examination (November 2022). The evidence base that informs eLP has been used to support this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4 The time frame for the Plan extends to 2038 to match the time frame of the eLP.
- 5 The Plan will have significant weight in the determination of planning applications. The Plan will be used by;
  - a) developers when preparing planning applications for submission to BDC
  - b) BDC in assessing and determining planning applications
  - c) inspectors in determining appeals.
- 6 The RTCNP policies form a framework of policies and supporting documents that will guide development over the Plan period.
- 7 The Plan area covers the Town Centre and land to the north west up to Amcott Way (see Map 1). This was considered the most appropriate boundary in relation to the issues of relevance to local people and was accepted when the area was designated by BDC in September 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> The Forum was designated on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The Plan Area was designated on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and the area modified on 23 September 2021

**Map 1 Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area**

- 8 A number of District – wide documents that support the preparation of the Publication Version Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020-2038 have been used to support the preparation of the Plan. These are:
- Land Availability Assessment June 2021
  - Strategic Housing Market Assessment Objective Assessed Need Update 2017
  - Landscape Character Assessment 2009
  - Site Allocations: Landscape Character Study 2019 and Addendums 2020 and 2021
  - Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment HEDNA 2020
- 9 Plan Area based studies have also been commissioned by the RTCNP Forum Neighbourhood Plan these are<sup>2</sup>:
- Site Assessment AECOM 2022

<sup>2</sup> The supporting documents are available at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnp/supporting-documents>

- g) Design Guide AECOM 2022
- h) Housing Needs Assessment 2022
- i) Masterplan AECOM 2022
- j) Two Ecological Reports EMEC 2022

## 2 The need for a Neighbourhood Plan

- 10 Retford is a popular, attractive market town that serves the needs of the Retford built up area as well as providing facilities for a wide rural catchment. In 2011, the Retford built up area had a population of 22,023 living in 10,293 dwellings. However, the Neighbourhood Area covers only the centre of the Town and has a population of approximately 750.<sup>3</sup>
- 11 The eLP Policy ST1 defines managed sustainable growth around the built-up area of Retford as a having total of approximately 2272 dwellings by 2038. Whilst no sites are allocated within the Town Centre in the eLP sites are allocated for 1332 dwellings in the Retford built up area. Appendix 3 of the Local Plan Second Addendum shows that the balance of 796 dwellings already have planning permission or are under construction.<sup>4</sup> This projected growth in the eLP will see a 22% increase in the size of the Retford built up area to 2038.<sup>5</sup>
- 12 This expected increase in population looking to be served by the Town Centre will generate more demand for the services in the Town Centre and more people and vehicle movements. Anticipating this impact and making sure the infrastructure of the Town Centre can accommodate this demand was a major driver for the RTCNPG wanting to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 13 The designated area is the Town Centre. The interest of the RTCNPG in preparing a neighbourhood plan reflects the need to focus on the heart of the Town, making sure it is suitable to meet the needs of the growing population of the wider Retford built up area. The RTCNPG wants to ensure that Town Centre businesses are able to adapt and thrive, ensuring that the Town Centre remains attractive for shoppers, residents and businesses. The Town Centre must;
  - a) contain thriving local businesses,
  - b) be attractive to shoppers, businesses and residents,
  - c) provide high quality green spaces and other types of public realm,
  - d) be accessible on foot and cycle,
  - e) support high quality development that enhances the Town's historic character,
  - f) provide high-quality, well-designed housing,
  - g) function as a modern 21<sup>st</sup> century Town minimising its carbon footprint.
- 14 This Neighbourhood Plan process has provided the opportunity for the RTCNPG to work collaboratively with its membership, BDC, and residents of the Town to help shape how the Town Centre will evolve up to 2038.

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<sup>3</sup> Based on analysis in the AECOM HNA see <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpng> and the figure is based on census data and the best available proxy see para 2

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/6862/lp-second-addendum.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Based on census 2011 data number of dwellings was 10293 and housing growth 2272



### 3 Consultation

- 15 The RTCNPG recognise that consultation is key to successfully developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Retford Town Centre. The production of a Neighbourhood Plan requires an open process and on-going consultation. It also requires the involvement of a wide range of people from across the area.
- 16 Despite the restrictions associated with Covid in 2021, the RTCNPG engaged with their community from the start. To ensure the Plan focused on the issues that mattered to businesses and local people most, RTCNPG members sought conversation and comment using a variety of engagement methods, including having a market stall, visiting schools (once restrictions were lifted), meetings with local groups and business breakfasts. There was also an effective use of social media and the RTCNPG web site.



**Photo 1 Market stall for the early consultation September 2021**

- 17 This engagement ensured that it was the community that set the priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 18 Progress on the Neighbourhood Plan is reported to the RTCNPG every quarter with work on the Plan undertaken by a Management Group in collaboration with a planning consultant.
- 19 The key consultation events and activities that shaped the production of the Plan will be summarised in the Consultation Statement.<sup>6</sup>

### 4 Community Aspirations

- 20 The process of producing this Neighbourhood Plan has been a catalyst for a range of initiatives. The RTCNPG wants to undertake all of them relating to the Vision for Retford. Not all are related to land use planning but because they have arisen during consultations and other work they are described as aspirations and are described in detail at Appendix A.

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<sup>6</sup> This will be available on the RTCNPG web site when the neighbourhood plan is submitted to BDC

## 5 Retford in Context

### *History*

- 21 The name 'Retford', was derived from the red colour of the local clay, probably exposed at a ford over the River Idle. The name 'Redforde' is found in a 1086 entry to the Domesday Book. Today, the bridge over the River Idle on Bridgegate has red markings in its foundations, signifying the origins of the town's name when, probably, the site of a ford.
- 22 Retford is one of the oldest market towns in England receiving its charter in 1105 and the market was situated at what is now known as Cannon Square. However, the River Idle could not be developed as a transport route to improve Retford's trade, and wider communication links were required to develop the local economy.
- 23 In the 18th Century, the Great North Road by-passed Retford to the west. As traffic along this road increased it was seen that Retford's economy would grow if it passed through the Town. By Act of Parliament in 1760, the Great North Road was re-routed through Retford, along Bridgegate and Carolgate. With the increased economic prosperity brought by this development a new Square was built alongside the new route. Many fine houses were also built around the Square and along adjacent streets. Coaching inns, like the White Hart, standing at the junction of Bridgegate and Market Street, are testament to Retford's key location on the Great North Road.
- 24 The Chesterfield Canal (which forms the southern boundary of the Plan area) along with the Great Northern Rail Line (outside of the Town Centre Plan area), brought further economic opportunities. Today, the East Coast Main Line provides fast access to London in 1 hour and 44 minutes as well as to cities like Sheffield, Hull, Doncaster and Lincoln.
- 25 This convergence of road, rail and waterways meant Retford remained an important trading point for hundreds of years.

### *Location and Context*

- 26 Retford is the second largest town within Bassetlaw and lies within the eastern half of the District. The Town is approximately 8 miles to the east of Worksop and 20 miles south east of Doncaster.
- 27 The Plan boundary follows the line of Arlington Way on the eastern side and the edge of Kings Park is the western boundary. The Chesterfield Canal forms the Plan area's southern boundary and the northern boundary follows Amcott Way, and extends around the site of Morrisons supermarket.
- 28 Retford Town Centre has buildings with a variety of architectural styles which are generally harmonious and contribute to a strong historic character.
- 29 The Square, with its Georgian origins, is central to the Town and sets the tone for a consideration of visual aspects of its public realm. The Square changes its character as the week passes. It is animated and colourful on its three market days, relatively quiet and restful on others. This contrast in atmosphere is valuable, and the flexibility of this space contributes to the character of the Town. However, the presence of vehicles (the eastern side of the Market Place is a through road and there is associated on street parking) impacts on the amenity of the Square and intrudes on its flexibility to be used as a community space.
- 30 The majority of buildings within the Square and along Carolgate and Bridgegate continue the built form cohesion. With the exception of Home Bargains and Morrisons to the north, the entire Plan area is within the Retford Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 31 The importance of developing and retaining a definite style is underlined by the Retford Design Code 2022 and the Masterplan, both commissioned for this Neighbourhood Plan. These

documents, along with the community consultation, form the evidence base for the policy approach in this Plan.

## 6 Boosting the Town Centre Economy

- 32 This is a business led Neighbourhood Plan. Its Vision, Community Objectives and policies provide a development framework that anticipate the changes needed in the Town Centre to support these businesses as they adapt to a 20% expansion of the Town. The RTCNP proposals all stem from a focus on boosting the Town Centre economy.
- 33 The diagram below shows how all the different policies in the RTCNP contribute to boosting the Town Centre economy.

Figure 1



### STEP – Looking to the Future

- 34 In October 2022 it was announced that the UK Atomic Energy Agency (UKAEA) had chosen West Burton Power Station (located approximately 8 miles east of the Town Centre) as the future home of its STEP project. The decision will see game-changing investment for the area with the STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) programme seeking to pave the way for the development of commercial power plants capable of producing a limitless supply of low-carbon, clean energy.
- 35 STEP offers the potential to transform and regenerate the area, creating thousands of jobs, a number of apprenticeships, and supply chain opportunities across a number of sectors, in an area already intimately linked with energy production. This will impact on the infrastructure (roads and rail), housing, health and education services.
- 36 The site is expected to be up and running by 2040. Retford is the nearest Town in North Nottinghamshire and welcomes this investment which will establish it nationally and allow it to



exploit its excellent transport links to support the STEP investment. The development of a relationship with UKAEA and its associated companies, especially UK Industrial Fusion Solutions Ltd (UKIFS) is important and transport and facilities are issues to be addressed early within planning. This, in addition to the expansion of the wider Retford urban area, means that there will be pressure and opportunity for businesses in the Town Centre.

## 7 Community Vision

- 37 This Vision has been prepared by the NPG and has been endorsed by the community based on the consultation events.

**By 2038, Retford Town Centre will be safe, healthy, accessible and sustainable, supporting people of all ages. Its heritage buildings will remain attractive to businesses. It will be a place to grow and prosper, providing a range of employment sites and premises.**

**Retford Town Centre is future facing, the home of people and businesses looking to reduce their carbon footprint. The value of natural assets will be enhanced and extended, and investment will create a rich mix of shopping, leisure, sports, health, cultural and social facilities making Retford Town Centre appealing as a place to live, learn, develop, work and spend quality leisure time.**

## 8 Community Objectives

- 38 Based on the Vision and through further consultation, the RTCNPG members have identified community objectives.

<b>Community Objective 1:</b> To promote the development of key spaces and vacant or underutilised properties to the benefit of businesses and residents.
<b>Community Objective 2:</b> To protect and enhance the historic character of the Town Centre to ensure that all new development is designed to a high standard in accordance with the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038. All development will: a) respect the materials, style and layout of the historic Town Centre and Conservation Area b) enhance the character of the Town Centre
<b>Community Objective 3:</b> To support and encourage development of the wide range of community facilities in the Town Centre.
<b>Community Objective 4:</b> To upgrade Retford's landscape and public realm to enhance its attractiveness as a destination.
<b>Community Objective 5:</b> To support the growth of a vibrant and varied daytime and evening economy attracting micro, small and medium sized businesses.
<b>Community Objective 6:</b> To create a well-connected street network, facilitating its harmonious use by all, to promote health and well-being.

**Community Objective 7:** To promote improvements in public and private spaces that will enhance biodiversity and mitigate climate change and flood resilience measures.

**Community Objective 8:** To support and promote innovative solutions to accelerate the Town Centre to Net Zero by 2035, including the promotion of solar energy, increasing the provision of electric charging points.

## 9 Engaging with the Community: A Key Principle

- 39 The Plan reflects the community's need to have greater involvement and influence in development proposals up to 2038. The importance of pre-application engagement is endorsed in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 40 The NPPF recognises the importance of early discussion between applicants and the local community. Para 39 states that *'Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'*
- 41 Encouraging consultation between developers and the RTCNPG<sup>7</sup> at an early stage in the planning process will be of benefit to the applicant as issues can be discussed and resolved at an early stage. The key principle set out below is a voluntary process and is intended to encourage applicants who are submitting plans for new build or replacement buildings to talk to the RTCNPG prior to a scheme being submitted for planning permission. This process should result in a scheme that is more acceptable to the community and, provided it meets the requirements of District policy, is more likely to secure approval by Bassetlaw District Council.

### ***Key Principle: Pre-Application Community Engagement***

- 1. Applicants are encouraged to actively engage with the RTCNPG as part of the design process at the pre-application stage.**
- 2. Applicants are encouraged to provide a short document with the planning application to explain:**
  - a) how the developer has consulted with the RTCNPG; and**
  - b) how issues of concern raised by local people and the RTCNPG have been taken into account; and**
  - c) how the layout, boundary treatment and design of the proposal responds and reinforces local character as detailed in the Retford Design Guide or equivalent; and**
  - d) where the proposals are for housing development, how this meets local housing need.**

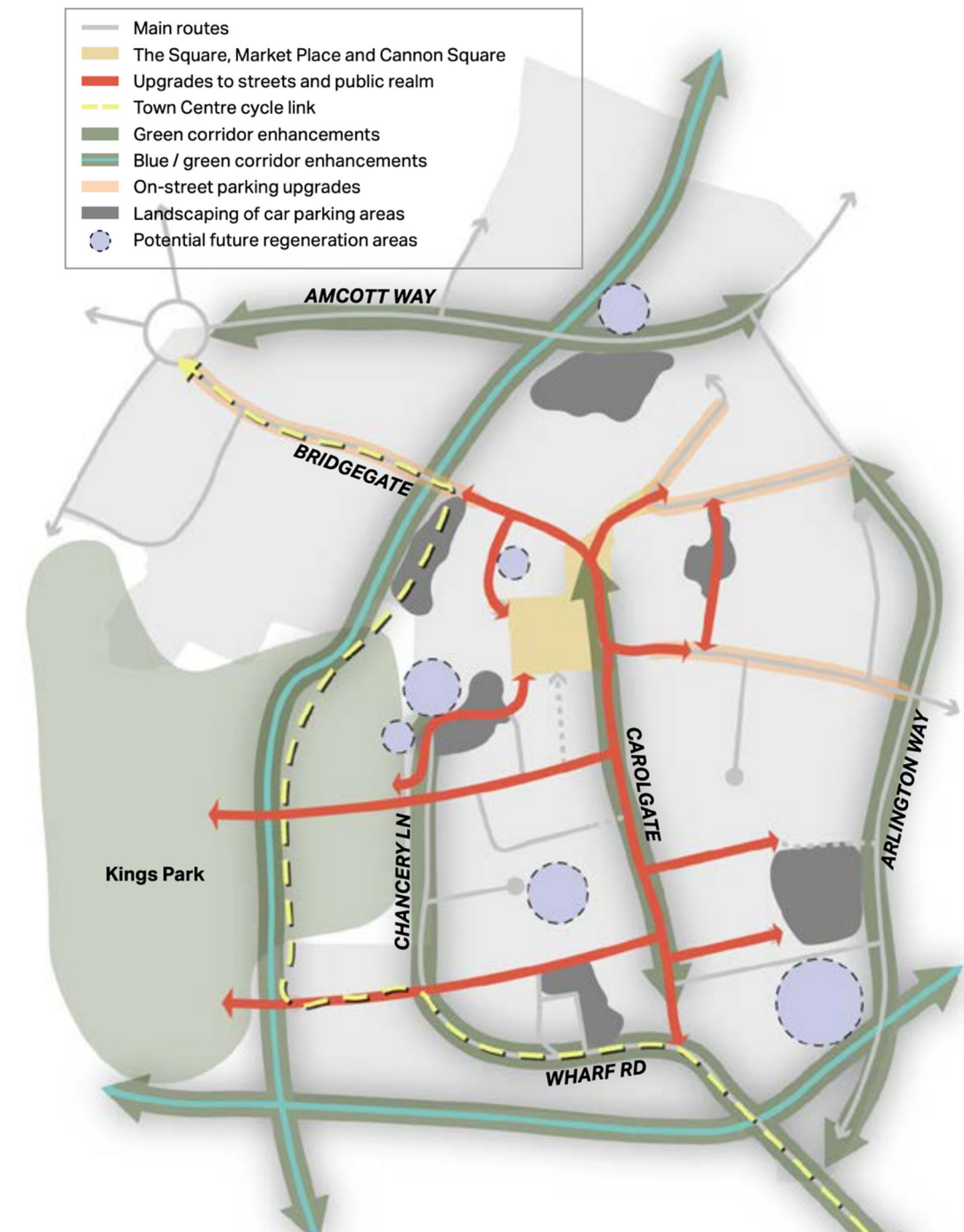
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<sup>7</sup> The Retford Civic Society (which is a member of the RTCNPG) is active and well informed and will contribute to this discussion

## 10 A Masterplan for Retford Town Centre

42 The RTCNPG commissioned a Masterplan for the Town Centre. The document is available at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpg/supporting-documents>. The conceptual masterplan framework covers the following themes, blue (water) and green corridors, public realm, parking, landscaping, cycle connectivity and future regeneration sites. Figure 2 below shows how these themes relate to the Town Centre and each other. Each policy contributes to the delivery of this conceptual framework.

Figure 2





## 11 Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets

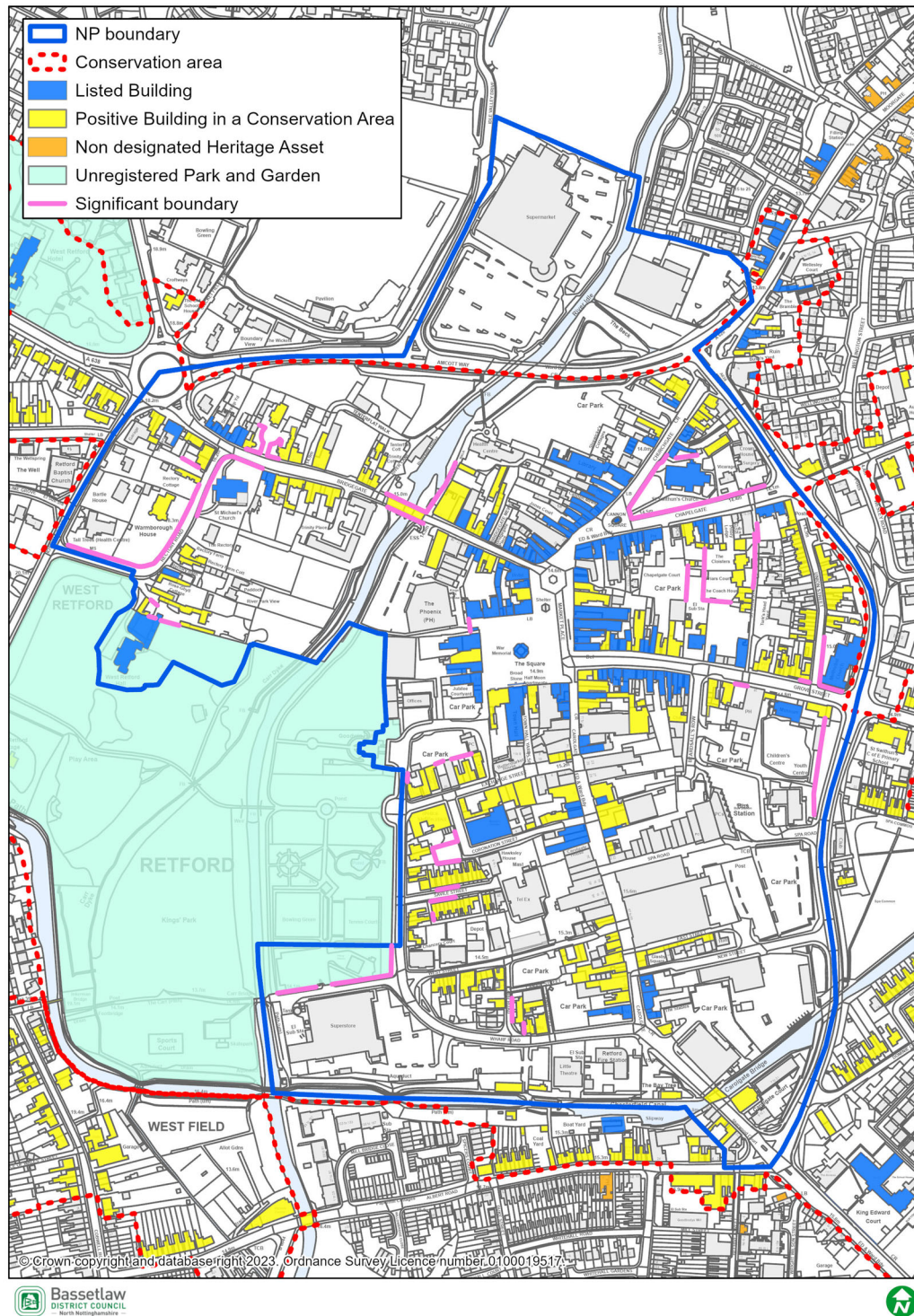
- 43 Map 2 shows the extent of the Conservation Area boundary and the number of listed buildings<sup>8</sup>. Listed and positive buildings<sup>9</sup> have been identified by BDCs conservation team as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 44 The NPPF requires Local Plans (and neighbourhood plans where applicable) to set out a positive, clear strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of securing the optimum viable use for heritage assets consistent with their conservation.
- 45 Historic England provides further guidance in its Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1, where it states that *'a positive strategy is not a passive exercise but requires a plan for the maintenance and use of heritage assets and for the delivery of development including within their setting that will afford appropriate protection for the asset and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'*
- 46 The RTCNPG are aware of some listed buildings and positive buildings in the Conservation Area that are under used and/or vacant (e.g., the first floor of some of the shops on Carolgate and some former pubs and clubs).
- 47 It is recognized that the original use of some heritage assets is no longer viable or appropriate and this can be a reason for their lack of use and disrepair. New uses can often be the key to a building's preservation. Generally, the best way of securing the upkeep of heritage assets is to keep them in active use.
- 48 It can be a difficult balance to encourage the use of all buildings in the Plan area whilst protecting the heritage of these buildings. The RTCNPG is clear that the historic character of the Plan area is a major attribute. The renovation of these buildings must be sensitive to their heritage features. Good design will find creative solutions that enables their suitable adaptation.

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<sup>8</sup> For listed buildings see <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results/?searchType=NHLE+Simple&search=Retford>

<sup>9</sup> Positive buildings have a local historic and/or architectural value

Map 2 Heritage Assets<sup>10</sup>



<sup>10</sup> The Identification of significant boundary features like walls and railings may not be exhaustive. The absence of any feature from the above map does not necessarily mean that it is of no interest or that it makes no positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area advice should always be sought from the conservation team. Trees also contribute to the character; these are shown on map 6.

- 49 Policy 1 supports the principle of encouraging the renovation, redevelopment or change of use of heritage assets especially any on the heritage at risk register, where this will result in the preservation or enhancement of those assets and their setting. This will help to support a prosperous Town Centre economy.
- 50 The Retford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan<sup>11</sup> provides a detailed analysis of the Plan Area in relation to heritage assets. The maps in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan identify the listed buildings, positive buildings within the Conservation Area and significant boundaries (walls and railings), all of which combine to create the high-quality historic environment. The identification of significant boundaries is particularly important as the contribution boundary treatment can make to the character of the area can sometimes be underestimated. These boundaries have been reviewed and updated and are shown on Map 2.
- 51 The Retford Design Code<sup>12</sup> also identifies the contribution boundary treatment (as well as the style of buildings) makes to the coherence and quality of the Plan area. The Design Code identifies those buildings or boundary treatments that are unsympathetic to the character of the area. The Design Code Frontages and Boundaries (4.2.4) provides guidance on how development proposals should ensure boundaries enhance character. (This is also addressed in Policy 2.)

#### ***Policy 1 Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets***

- 1. Development within the Conservation Area<sup>13</sup> should demonstrate an understanding of its history and commercial quality as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the Retford Design Code 2022.**
- 2. Development should respect the scale, building plots, height, roof line and significant boundary walls and railings<sup>14</sup> and complement existing materials and architectural detailing to reflect the prevailing pattern and design.**
- 3. Development within the Conservation Area should preserve the character and appearance of the Area and/or the significance of the setting of Listed Buildings. Development will only be permissible in the Conservation Area if it causes less than substantial harm or where the harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.<sup>15</sup>**
- 4. Proposals that require a change of use of a heritage asset will be considered favourably where all of the following can be demonstrated:**
  - a) there is no reasonable prospect of the original use being retained or re-instated,**
  - b) the proposed development would represent a viable use that would secure the future of the heritage asset,**
  - c) where the proposed use will help to support the town centre economy,**
  - d) the change of use will not be detrimental to the significance of the heritage asset and its setting.**

<sup>11</sup> See <https://data.bassetlaw.gov.uk/conservation-area-appraisals/retford/>

<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpng/supporting-documents>

<sup>13</sup> It is acknowledged that the NPPF also protects the setting of Conservation Areas but the Plan area only covers the Conservation Area and cannot seek to influence development outside the Plan area and by turn the Conservation Area

<sup>14</sup> As originally identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal see maps 27,39 and 45 where they still exist

<sup>15</sup> In accordance with Para 196 NPPF



## 12 Achieving Well Designed Places

- 52 The NPPF notes that *'Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design'*.<sup>16</sup>
- 53 The National Design Code 2019 identifies 10 characteristics of good design based on national planning policy, practice guidance. The Design Code states that *'specific, detailed and measurable criteria for good design are most appropriately set at the local level.'*
- 54 The Retford Design Code 2022<sup>17</sup> has been prepared by AECOM and the local community. It provides a robust local character analysis, this forms the basis for the specific local criteria and a set of design principles. The Retford Design Code 2022 is an important part of the RTCNP and provides the evidence base for Policy 2.
- 55 The Retford Design Code 2022 divides the Town Centre into 7 character areas – see figure 1 below.

**Figure A Extract from Retford Design Code 2022 showing the Character Areas**

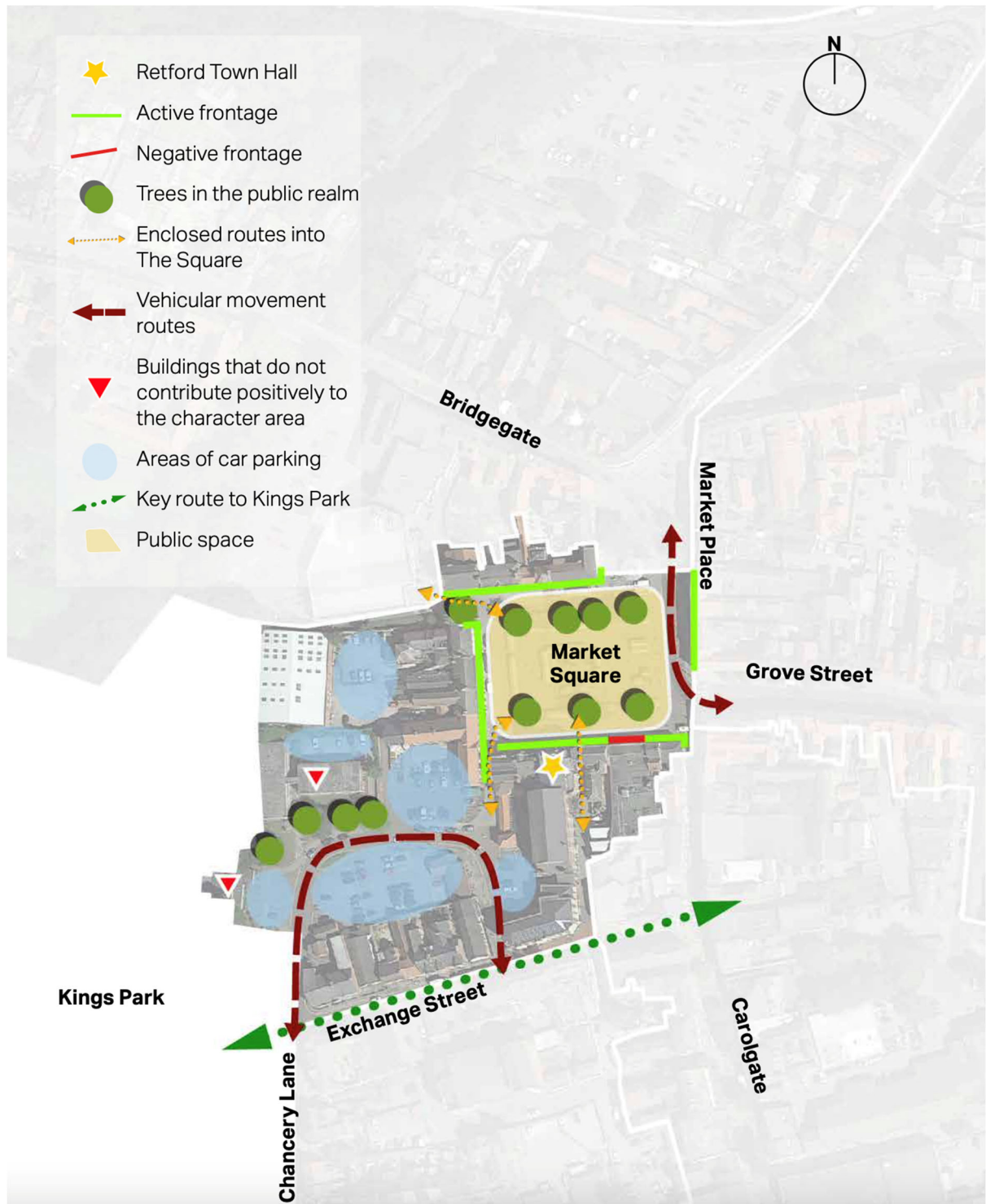


<sup>16</sup> See NPPF para 134

<sup>17</sup> The document is available at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnp>

56 The Design Code provides an analysis of each area and includes a key diagram show the positive and negative features of each area and how people and vehicles move through them.

**Figure A (1) The Square Character Area**





**Figure A (2) Bridgegate Character Area**





Figure A (3) Supermarkets Character Area

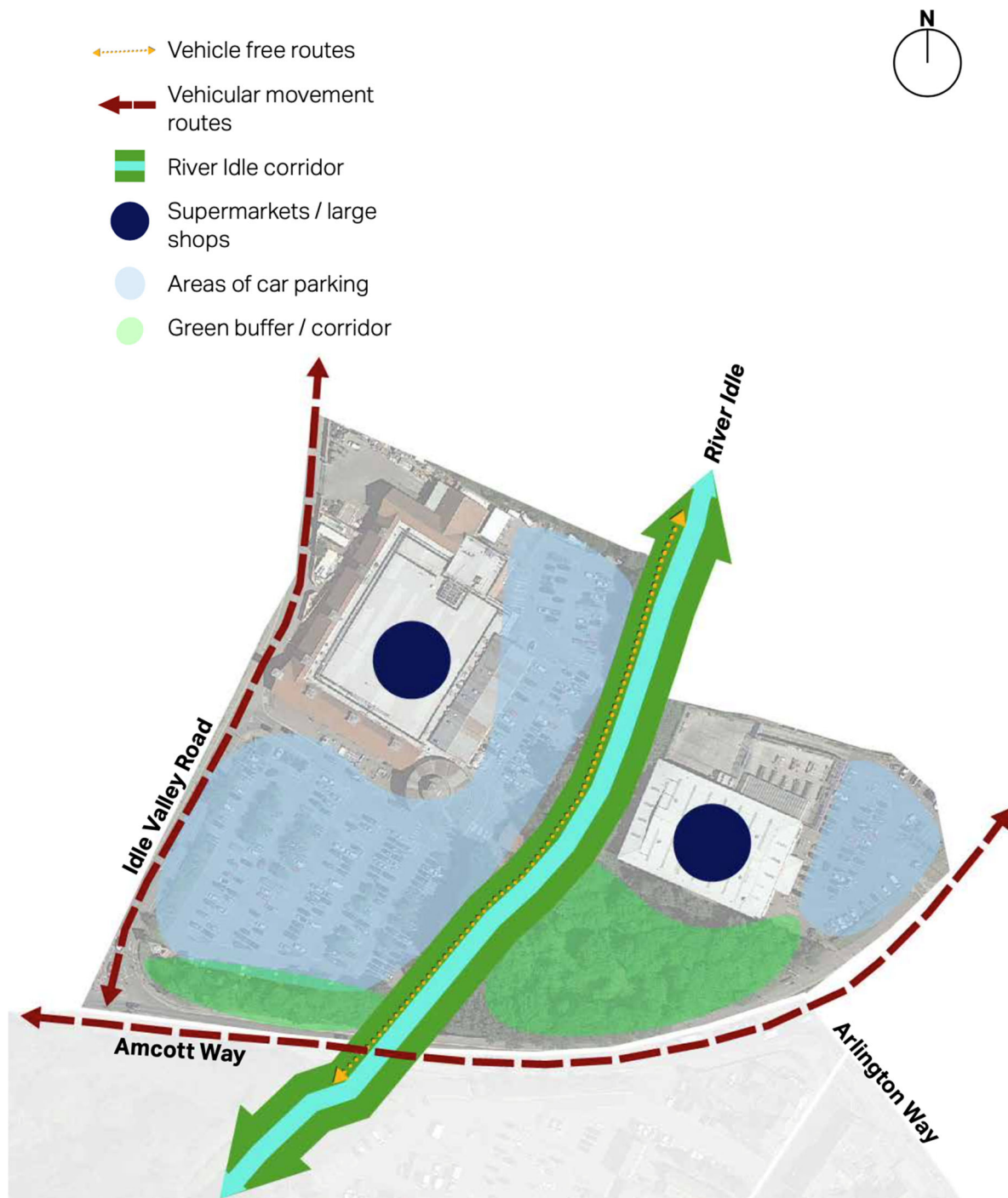


Figure A (4) Cannon Square, Chapelgate, Churchgate and Grove Street





Figure A (5) Carolgate East Character Area

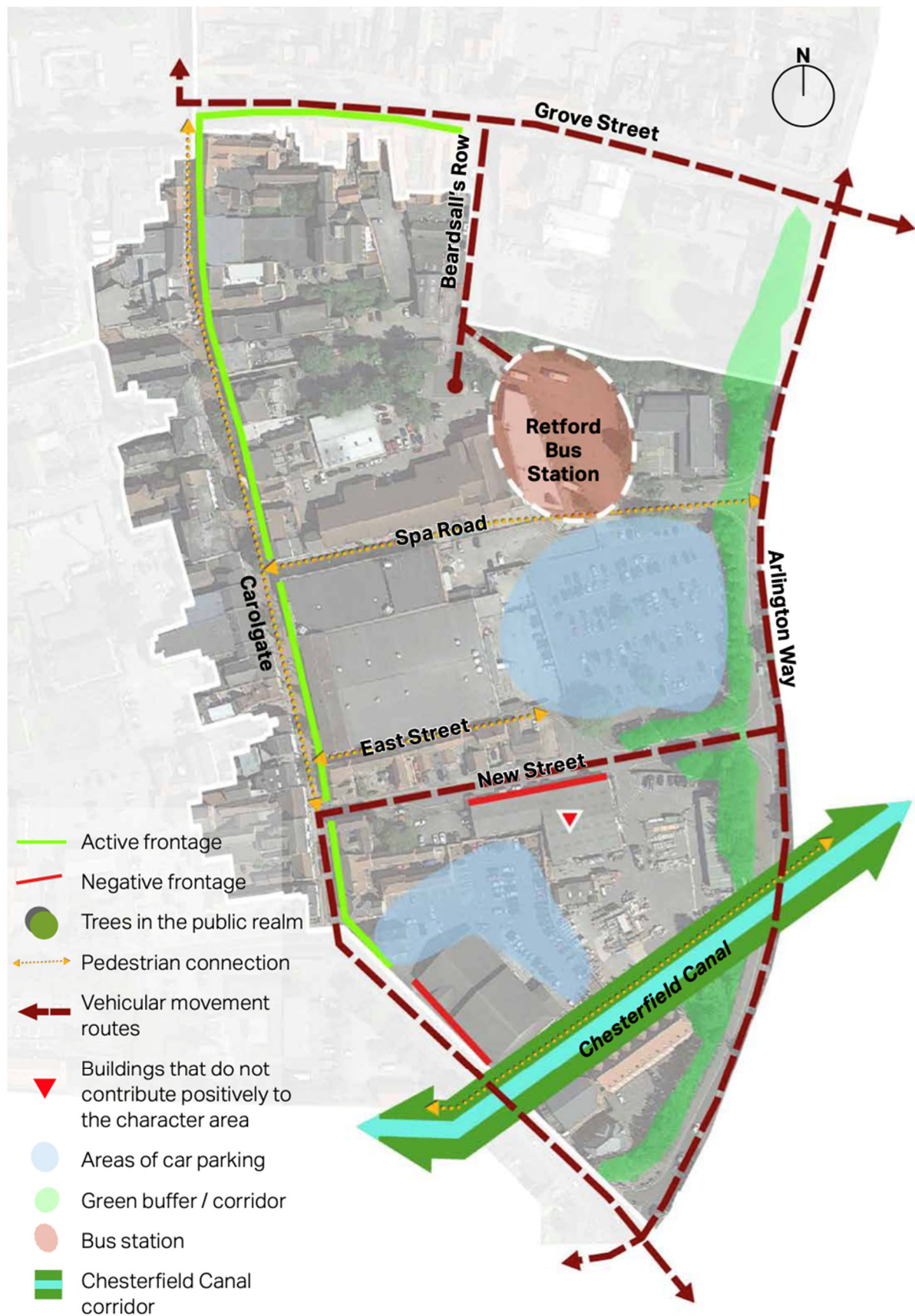
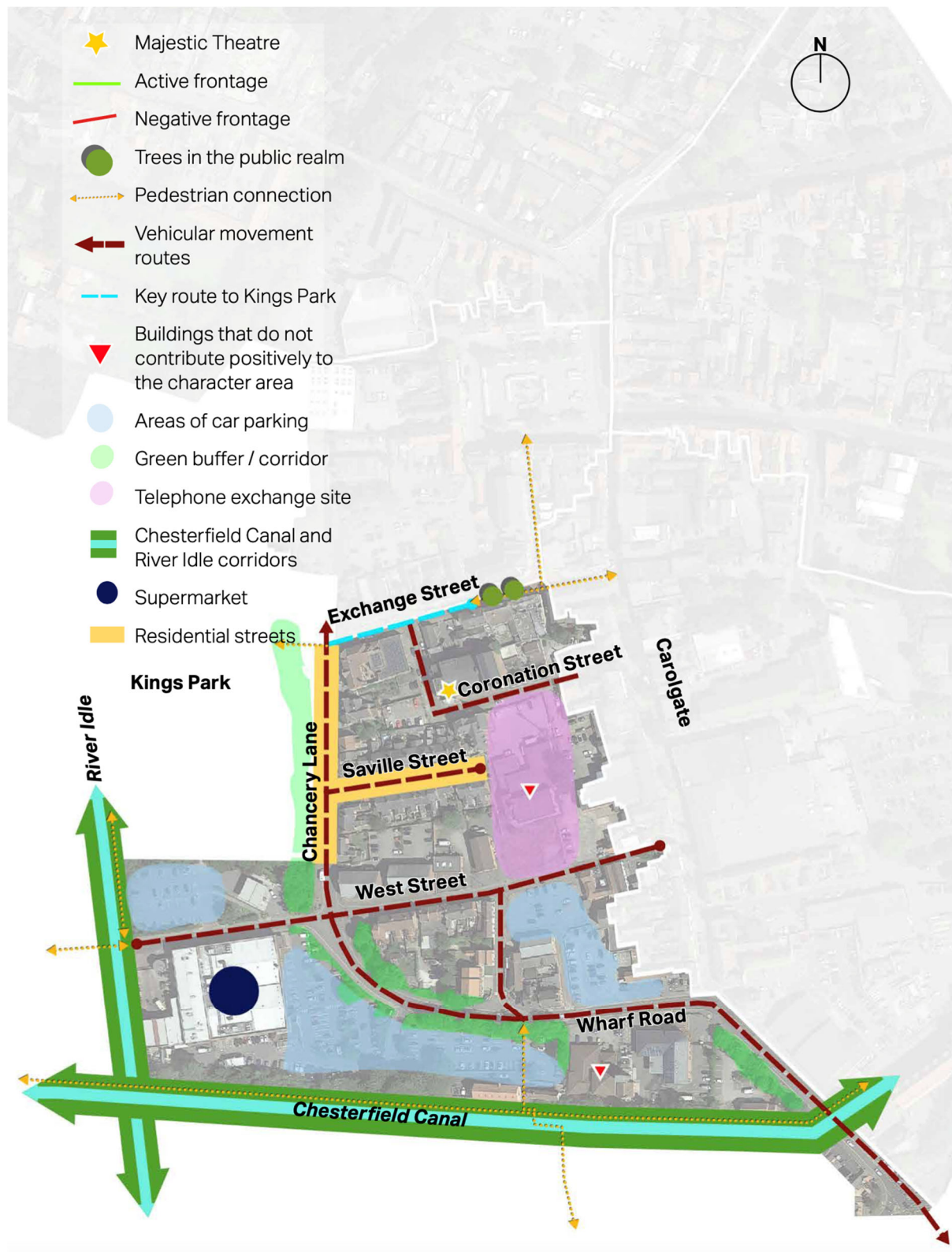


Figure A (6) Carolgate West Character Area



57 Development should reinforce the historic character of Retford Town Centre and proposals should respond to the historic context of the Town. Development should contribute positively to the experience visitors, local businesses and residents have of the Town Centre and be of a sustainable

design which provides measures to mitigate climate change (where possible and proportionate to the scale of development proposed.)

- 58 Visual coherence is a prevailing character, especially around the Square. Moving out of the central core the visual coherence is less dominant but common aspects remain.
- 59 Development along the Canal and River should make the most of this aspect and be orientated to provide active frontages looking onto it. This provides natural surveillance for the tow path and riverside walks making these more appealing walking routes.
- 60 Development in the vicinity of the River or Canal should ensure that gaps between buildings allow for glimpsed views of the River or Canal from within the Plan area.
- 61 A few buildings and boundaries have been identified as having a negative impact on these character areas. This is due to the wrong use of materials and/or a design which is at odds with neighbouring properties. These developments jar and erode the character.
- 62 This highlights opportunities for improvements where planning applications are submitted for development in this location.
- 63 The Design Codes are at section 4 of the Retford Design Code 2022. They are split into the following themes:

## 4.2 Design Codes

**1** Building Heights & Roofs

**2** Building Materials and Detailing

**3** Frontages & Boundaries

**4** Public Realm

**5** Parking



***Policy 2 Achieving Well Designed Places***

- 1. Development proposals should demonstrate a high design quality that will contribute to the character areas as defined in the Retford Design Code 2022.**
- 2. In a proportionate way, depending on the nature of the development proposals are required to demonstrate that they have taken into account the Design Codes as set out in Section 4 of the Retford Design Code 2022. Proposals should;**
  - a) respond to the local character of the immediate area and provide a clear rationale for how this is taken into account in the design of the proposals;**
  - b) use street trees suitable for their location,**
  - c) use of materials that reinforce the existing character as defined in the Retford Design Code 2022 (clay pantiles, Welsh Slate, Rosemary Tiles, red brick, Staffordshire Blue or yellow brick for detailing, painted render, stone window sills),**
    - a) have a roof form that reflects the existing roofs of adjacent or neighbouring buildings being hipped or gable (unless a flat or single story roof does not erode the character of area),**
    - b) have a scale and massing that reflects neighbouring properties,**
    - c) have window sizes and architectural detailing that reinforces the character area in which they are located,**
    - d) have a boundary treatment (low red brick walls, combined with planting, some railings) that is present between the building and the footway where possible,**
    - e) have a layout that maximises opportunities to integrate new development with the canal, river and public open spaces,**
    - f) use buildings, landscaping and planting to create well defined streets and attractive green spaces,**
    - g) have a landscaping scheme that maximises the use of wildlife beneficial plants and creates ecosystems that support birds and other wildlife,**
    - h) provide direct and safe access points for pedestrians and cyclists, and**
    - i) provide safe access and where off street parking and servicing arrangements have been provided.**

**13 Significant Views**

- 64 The tight grain of the streets that open out across public spaces, the high skyline of some buildings, the value of distant views of others, the contribution of green areas and trees and the presence of the Canal and River provide a range of key views.
- 65 The long views to impressive historic buildings and structures like the War Memorial in the Square, the Canon and St Swithun's Church, provide a dramatic backdrop for the day-to-day activity of the Town. This contrasts with the glimpsed views into court yards and down alley ways between buildings that are also characteristic of the Town.
- 66 Members of the RTCNPG have undertaken a local analysis of the key views in the Town. The Key Views are shown in Map 3 below. Photos and descriptions are at Appendix B.

### Map 3 Significant Views



**Policy 3 Protecting Significant Views**

- 1. The Significant Views are an important part of the historic character and distinctiveness of Retford Town Centre. These views identified on Map 3 and described in Appendix C have been identified due to their importance in reinforcing the historic character of the Town Centre (this includes long views to listed buildings and glimpses around buildings).**
- 2. Proposals are required to demonstrate how they will respond, conserve and enhance these significant views insofar as this will protect the historic character of the Town Centre.**

**14 Improving the Public Realm**

- 67 The public realm is commonly defined as the space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces.
- 68 The significant areas of the public realm in the Town Centre are the Square, Carolgate and Cannon Square. Evidence from the public consultation, Design Code and Ecology Study identified multi benefits from improving these areas as follows:
- a) adaptation measures (e.g., planting) will assist in mitigating the effects of climate change,
  - b) providing amenity space for visitors and resident (seating and planting provides places to meet in the shade)
  - c) diversifying the Town Centre's commercial offer (by creating spaces for more social activities) and
  - d) enhancing the attractiveness of the Town Centre as a destination (increasing dwell time increases visitor spend).

***The Square***

- 69 The Square is centrally located and the Georgian listed buildings provide a handsome backdrop to the market which is held there 3 days a week. On the other days and evenings, the Square is largely unused. Public consultation supported adaptations to The Square to enable the space to be used for other community activities with seating and places to eat and drink.
- 70 The Retford Design Code 2022 noted that space should be used flexibly and that changes to the Square should not restrict the use of the space.
- 71 A long-standing issue is the impact of vehicular movement along the eastern and northern edge of the Square. Market Place Road leads to Bridge Street and bisects the pedestrian area around Canon Square from (market) Square. However, this is also an important access route that provides good visibility for some businesses and easy access for their customers and delivery vehicles.
- 72 The highway requirements for safe vehicular movement at 30 mph has resulted in
- a) a poor quality hard urban environment in this part of the Market Square
  - b) a car friendly rather than people friendly space in a prominent part of the Town
- 73 The photos below show the impact car movement has on the significant public space in the Town.





**Photo 2 Market Place Road loops round the edge of the Market Square**

74 The RTCNPG want to explore ways of making this space more attractive for pedestrians whilst providing flexibility for vehicular access. It is feasible that over the lifetime of the Plan the space currently taken up with two-way vehicle movements could be redesigned and incorporated into the Square increasing the opportunity to enhance the social, economic and environmental benefits the Square provides.

#### ***Policy 4a Improving The Square***

- 1. Development within the Square that supports its use as a place for community events and other social activity suitable for a Town Centre location will be supported where proposals will not**
  - a) be detrimental to the significance of the heritage asset and their setting,
  - b) effect the sense of openness of the Square,
  - c) effect residential and business use in the vicinity, or
  - d) effect the primary function of the space as a market.
- 2. Proposals that prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement over vehicular movement through the Square are supported.**
- 3. Proposals that significantly reduce vehicular movement along Market Place to the bridge on Bridgegate to the minimum required for residential access and the satisfactory functioning of businesses are supported.**
- 4. Environmental improvements to the eastern and northern edge of the Square to reflect this reprioritisation of vehicle movement should use materials that complement the rest of the Square (York Stone or equivalent) and tree planting in accordance with RTCNP Policies 5 and 6.**

### Canon Square

75 Canon Square is a triangular public space connecting from Market Place to St Swithun's Church. Vehicular movement through this space currently divides the Church and the public space at Cannon Square. Photo 3 shows that Canon Square is in fact a canon in the middle of a roundabout, as Chapelgate loops round to Churchgate.



**Photo 3 Canon Square dominated by tarmac**

76 Environmental improvements should link to the wider strategy for movement with parking bays interspersed with planting and repaving to reduce the width of the road using materials that reinforce the historic character of the area and reflect the proximity of Canon Square to the main Square.

#### ***Policy 4b Improving Canon Square***

- 1. Proposals that enable safer pedestrian and cycle movement around Canon Square are supported.**
- 2. Environmental improvements to the junction of Churchgate and Chapelgate (around the Canon) should reflect this change in priority for cyclists and pedestrians and use paving materials that complement those used in the Square to reinforce the historic character of the area.**

### Carolgate

77 Carolgate is the primary shopping area in Retford Town Centre. The Retford Design Code 2022 notes that the surfacing scheme along Carolgate is dated and of a lower quality than The Square. There is also a short section of Carolgate that allows vehicular movement to join New Street. *This*

*section of Carolgate feels disconnected from the main high street and is a less welcoming environment to pedestrians visiting the Town Centre.<sup>18</sup>*

- 78 The photos below shows where the more recent block paving from the Square joins the older paving of Carolgate. The paving of Carolgate is of its time and does not (as effectively) reinforce the heritage quality of the Conservation Area.



**Photo 4 heritage paving off the Square**



**Photo 5 lower quality paving on Carolgate**

- 79 However, the paved street allows flexibility for cafes to put tables outside increasing the sense of hustle and bustle in this primary shopping street.

<sup>18</sup> Retford Design Code 2022 page 37





**Photo 6 Cafes put tables outside to attract trade**

***Policy 4c Improving Carolgate***

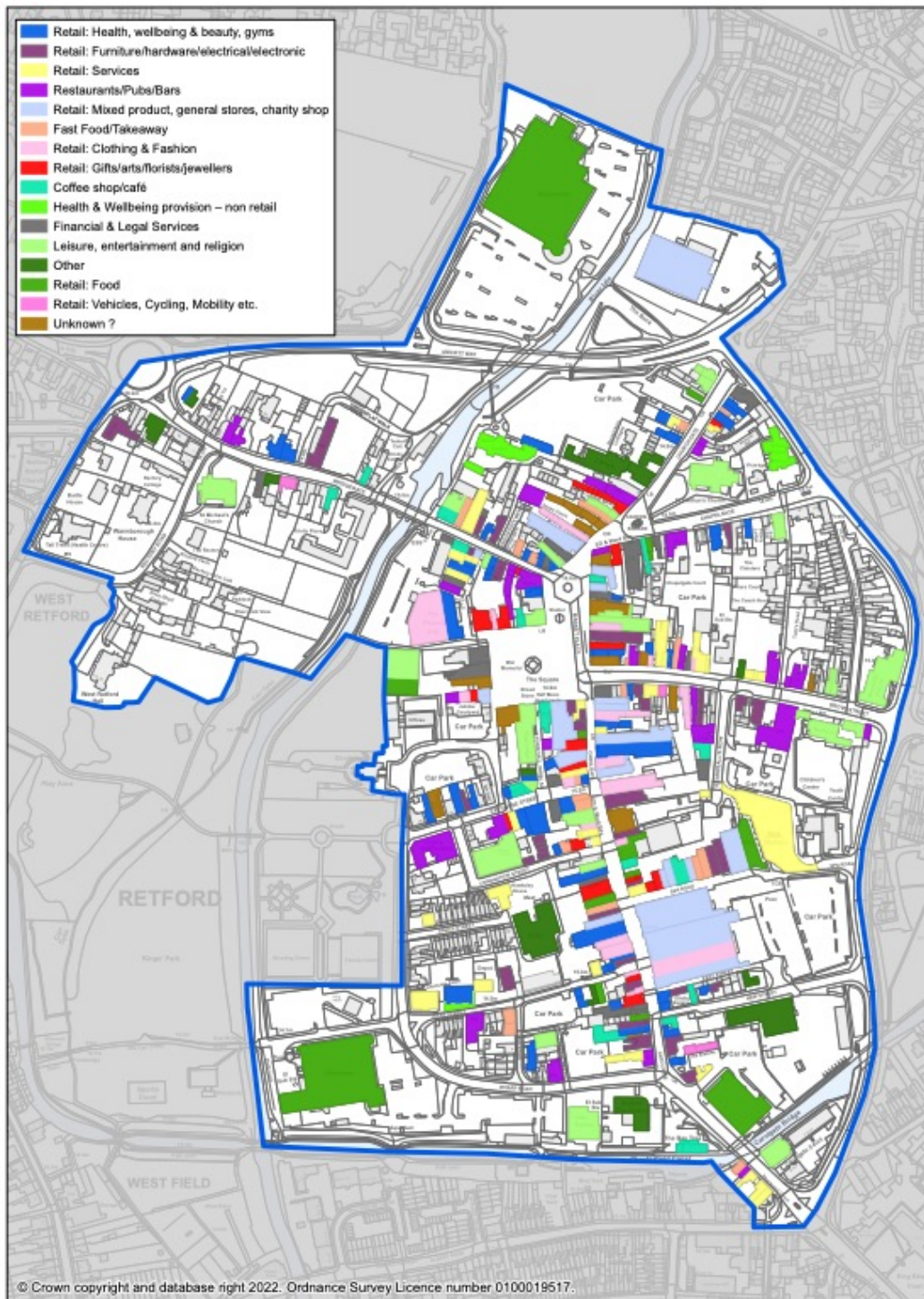
- 1. Proposals that reprioritise pedestrian movement over the vehicle movement at the southern end of Carolgate up to New Street are supported.**
- 2. Where planning permission is required, a paving scheme (and street furniture) that uses materials and colours reflecting the historic character of the area. The paving should extend the whole length of Carolgate to where it joins with Wharf Road is supported.**

## 15 Maintaining the Vitality and Vibrancy of the Town Centre

### Acceptable Uses in the Town Centre

80 Map 4 shows the variety of shops and services within the compact Town Centre.

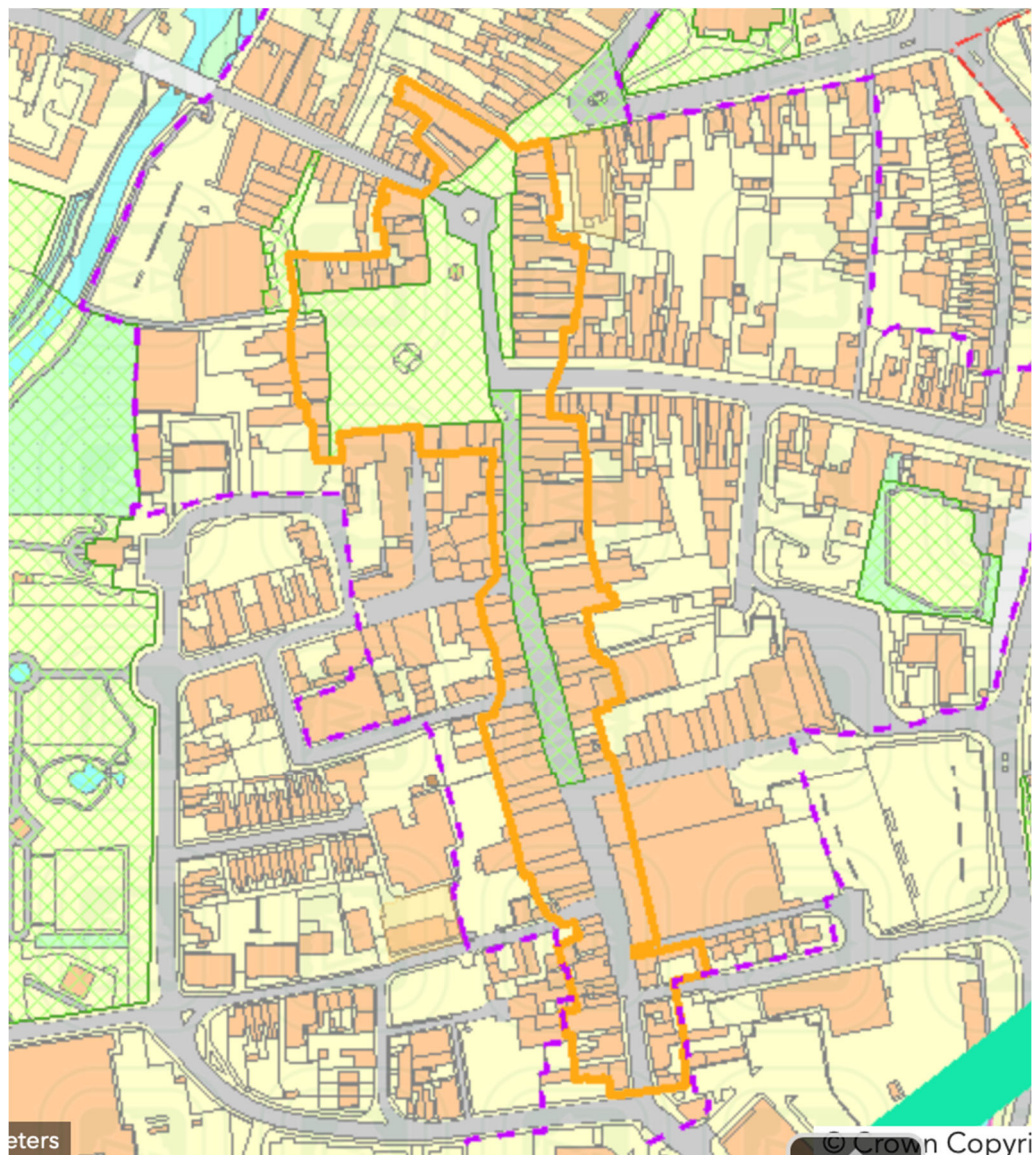
**Map 4 Businesses in Retford Town Centre**





- 81 The RTCNPG wants to support businesses to locate and grow in the Town Centre. Map 4 shows the diversity of businesses in the Town Centre.
- 82 The RTCNPG want to ensure that the fabric of the Town is both visually attractive and works for its businesses. Well located, safe public car parks for customers, the ability to receive deliveries and the provision of good quality premises will help these local businesses to thrive.
- 83 The most significant way the planning system can support businesses in the Town Centre is by controlling the change of use from retail to other uses.
- 84 Section 19 on Housing below shows that residential uses also play a specific and important role within the Plan area, creating a mixed-use area with 24 hour natural surveillance. However, it is important that there remains a concentration of uses suitable for a Town Centre especially along Carolgate and along the other streets leading off the Market Place.
- 85 The eLP policy ST14 defines a primary shopping frontage for Retford Town centre. This is shown on Map 5.

**Map 5 Primary Shopping Frontage extract from BDCs Polices Map**



- 86 The Bassetlaw Retail and Leisure Study 2017 showed that for a primary shopping area to operate successfully, it is necessary for shops (in Class Ea<sup>19</sup>) to group together in order to enable shoppers to make comparisons. ST14 aims to direct most retail development to the primary shopping areas in order to retain the existing retail function within easy walking distance, maintain vitality and viability, avoid the area being diluted by too many non-retail uses and contribute to a stronger town centre. It also ensures that other main Town Centre uses such as leisure, offices and secondary shopping take place within the wider Town Centre boundary and complement the retail focus within the primary shopping area.
- 87 The RTCNPG support this approach and as ST14 is not yet in an adopted Local Plan, Policy 5a provides this policy approach for Retford.
- 88 Policy 5a seeks to ensure that within the primary shopping frontage, retail uses are promoted and protected. Maintaining the cluster of retail uses should result in fewer empty units. The conversion of retail to other commercial uses within the same Use Class however does not require planning permission (in addition to retail, Use Class E comprises financial services, cafes and restaurants, offices, research and development, and industrial processes).
- 89 Covid saw an increase in the number of premises within the Town Centre changing to non-retail use but within the primary retail frontage such changes of uses were not at ground floor level. Policy 5a focuses on protecting ground floor Ea uses.
- 90 Where planning permission is required, the conversion of ground floor retail units to non-retail uses within the Town Centre is supported only where the proposal increases the provision of services and facilities for the wider community. Across the Town Centre, including land outside the primary retail frontage, it is essential to bring vacant properties back into community or commercial use as they have an adverse effect on the visual amenity and commercial viability of the Town Centre as a whole.
- 91 Businesses that open in the evening are important, contributing to activity in the evening for residents and attracting people to the Town Centre to spend money when it might otherwise be quiet.

***Policy 5a Acceptable Uses in the Town Centre***

- 1. Within the Primary Retail Frontage, as defined on Map 5, where planning permission is required, applications for retail development at ground floor level within class Ea will be supported.**
- 2. The design of retail frontages should comply with the Retford Design Code 2022. Proposals within the Town Centre, but outside of the primary shopping frontage, for non-retail uses at ground floor level will only be supported where they can demonstrate enhancement of the vitality of the Town Centre. These include, entertainment, cultural, leisure and community uses, such as spaces for youth training or community learning or pubs to support the economy.**

<sup>19</sup> See use classes order at <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes> Class Ea is the Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food

## Shop Fronts

- 92 The visual coherence of the Town Centre is one of its attributes making it an attractive place to shop and live. The design of shop frontages should make a positive contribution to the sense of place and local character and be in accordance with the Bassetlaw Shopfront and Signage Guide 2014<sup>20</sup> and the Retford Design Code 2022.
- 93 The Retford Design Code 2022 identified several buildings and shop fronts in the Town Centre that have a negative value in that they do not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. It is important that all development proposals and especially those for shop fronts and/or within the core shopping area (along Carolgate, Bridgegate and in the Square) reinforce the visual harmony and heritage character.
- 94 The policy below sets out criteria for how new shop frontages should be designed. It includes details of proportion, glazing and street displays as well as how the frontage will be secured when the premises are closed.

### ***Policy 5b Shop Fronts***

**Where planning permission is required for the refurbishment or replacement of existing shop frontages and the installation of new shop fronts, proposals must demonstrate how they have considered and addressed the following design criteria:**

- a) consideration of the architectural styles of adjoining buildings and shop fronts and the wider street scene, including where appropriate, contemporary design,**
- b) facias should be of a scale proportionate to the rest of the building; they should not obscure windows and other architectural detailing,**
- c) the subdivision and proportions of windows should relate to the character of the building and its neighbours,**
- d) signage should respect the character of the individual building and adjoining properties,**
- e) solid shutters will not be supported, and security measures should maintain a level of transparency to and from the street, such as laminated glazing, lattice grilles and perforated shutters,**
- f) projecting boxes and external shutters are also considered to be inappropriate and will be resisted.**

## Supporting the Creative Industries

- 95 The Town is a growing centre for artists and other creative industries. There are art galleries and art clubs in the Town, a volunteer run Art Hub, a monthly Craft Market and annual music and comedy events as well as two theatres.
- 96 Below are the murals around the Town. The Masterplan (page 30) identified the opportunity to use the wall space under Amcott Way Bridge for art works - this is an aspiration see Appendix A. The execution of further public murals using a similar style will be welcomed and supported.

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/2122/spd-shopfronts-signage-approved-1st-july-2014.pdf>





- 97 Methods to foster the creation of business start-ups and to help them evolve would be welcomed, allowing students in schools, as well as hobbyist and career changers, to have opportunities to present their talents and sell their produce. This will enable them to start new businesses and careers in the Town helping to enliven the Town Centre.
- 98 Additional performance spaces within the public realm would be welcomed where this can be safely accommodated within the Design Codes and Health and Safety guidelines. This is an aspiration see Appendix A.



## Improving Broadband and Mobile Connectivity

99 The importance of being able to access on line services has increased rapidly for working, for accessing health services and for shopping. A study by the Office of National Statistics in 2018 compared the number of people working from home between 2008 and 2018. Nationally, there was an increase of 47%.<sup>21</sup>

100 For residents, the growing desire to work from home is being driven by digital technology, an ageing population, a reluctance to commute, increased awareness about the environmental benefits of homeworking and an increase in self-employment generally. The covid pandemic has rapidly accelerated this move to online services.

101 Service within the Plan area is generally good but not everyone can access the broadband speeds they need. Where this is due to a lack of the necessary infrastructure this Plan supports the roll out of technology like up grading the fibre network and the 4G and 5G wireless communication which supports cellular data networks.

102 The Government recently (December 2022) amended Building Regulations to require all new development to be fitted with infrastructure to accommodate gigabit broadband. This is an important step in enhancing future accessibility to broadband but will only apply to new build<sup>22</sup>.

### ***Policy 5c Improving Broadband and Mobile Connectivity***

- 1. All new development should be provided with appropriate street ducting to allow connection to Gigabit broadband in accordance with Building Regulations.**
- 2. Masts and associated infrastructure should be located to minimise impact on the historic character of the Plan area.**

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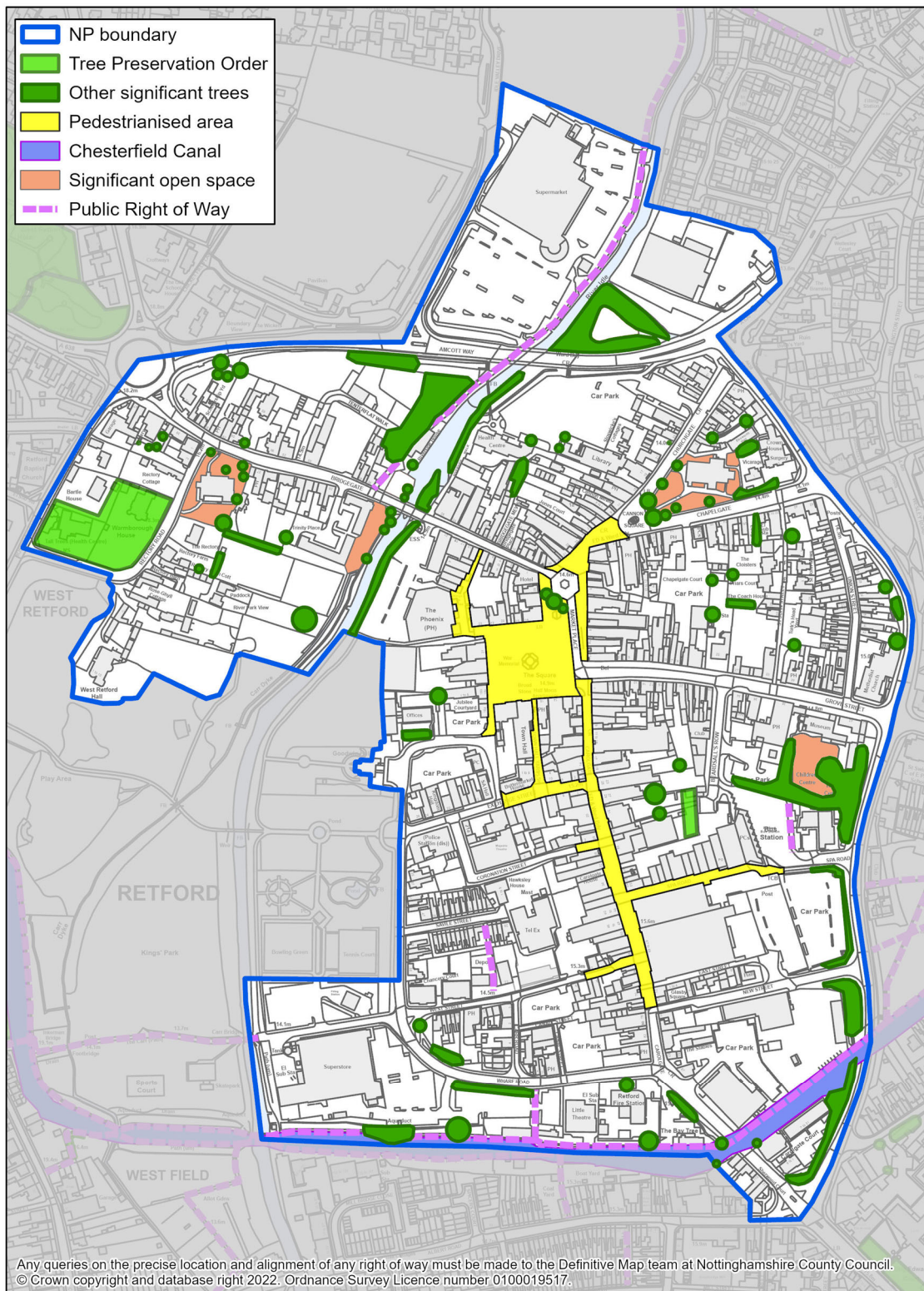
<sup>21</sup> See

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/009913homeworkersbyukregion2008comparedto2018>.

<sup>22</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-of-homeowners-and-tenants-to-get-better-access-to-faster-broadband>

## 16 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity

104 Map 6 shows the existing landscape designations within the Plan area.



105 An important focus of the RTCNP is to encourage a more coherent landscape planting and management regime. This 'Greening of the Town' will increase the number of trees, planting and green spaces and will provide multi benefits. It will:

- a) create a more attractive place to live, work and socialise to attract greater uses to the town centre and ultimately support and grow new businesses,
- b) increase habitats for wildlife and create wildlife corridors connecting to the parks and canal and river corridors,
- c) increase areas where water can naturally soak away,
- d) create more places for residents and visitors to dwell,
- e) extend the time visitors want to spend in the Town Centre increases their spend.

### ***Greening the Streets***

106 The NPPF highlights the important contribution trees can make to the character and quality of the environment<sup>23</sup>. Trees enrich the quality of the Plan area and mature trees have significant biodiversity value. It is important to use the right tree for the right place. For example, smaller-canopied species should be deployed where a tree is desirable but spatial constraints forbid a forest-sized species. Native species are desirable but this is not prescriptive and not all suit this locality – species diversity is important and is a way of building climate change resilience and disease resistance.

107 Policy ST50 of the emerging Local Plan identifies tree planting as a Council priority to address climate change and proposes 5 trees per new dwelling or 1,000sqm of non-residential floorspace.<sup>24</sup>

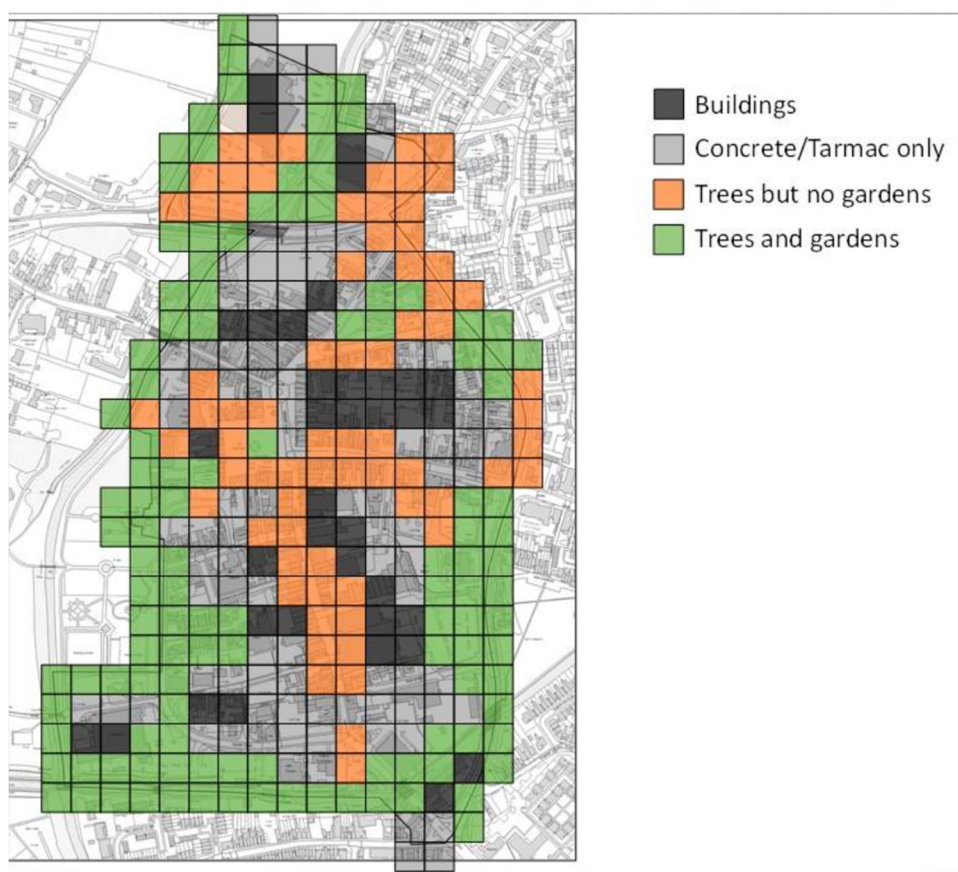
108 Analysis of the existing biodiversity in the Plan area is show graphically in the Ecology Brief. The map below taken from the Ecology Brief<sup>25</sup> shows where there are areas of concrete and tarmac only. The Ecology Brief proposed an Eco bridge connecting Kings Park on the West of the Town to Spa Common on the East of the Town.

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<sup>23</sup> See NPPF para 131

<sup>24</sup> See Local Plan Publication Version August 2021 para 10.1.14

<sup>25</sup> The document is on the RTCNPG web site at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpng/supporting-documents>

**Map 7 showing the concentration of trees and other planting in the Town**

109 Based on this initial work EMEC Ecologists were commissioned to provide a detailed analysis of the existing ecological value of the Plan area and to identify the opportunities for significantly enhancing the biodiversity within the Town. These are both on the supporting documents page of the Retford Business Forum web site <sup>26</sup>

110 Consideration should be given to the suitability of trees and their location in the Town. Some of the trees on Carolgate block the views from the CCTV demonstrating the importance of planning carefully the location of both. Trees and CCTV are important and necessary to make Retford Town Centre a pleasant and safe place but at present at certain times of the year a conflict exists.

111 The provision of additional street trees is encouraged across the Town. The Retford Design Code 2022 notes that these should be of a species which is tolerant to urban environments. Priority should be given to providing green spaces and planting trees in areas identified as having high levels of hard surfacing. The Retford Design Code also encourages the replacement of some hard surfaces with greener or softer surfaces which work more positively with the environment.

112 There should be a strong tree network across the Town, providing cooling and shade and enhancing biodiversity. Species rich areas of landscaping such as grassland or meadow are also encouraged. Interventions that support nature such as bird boxes, bat boxes and bee bricks is also supported across the Town.

113 There is community, national, District and local evidence to support an approach that ensures there is a net gain of tree canopy and where possible a net gain. This may mean planting more than one tree to replace a mature tree (where it had a large tree canopy). Where trees are

<sup>26</sup> For the full report <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpng/supporting-documents>



removed as part of a development scheme they should be replaced in line with the recommendations in this Plan and supporting studies.

114 Over 50% of the Plan area is in Flood Zone 2 or 3, simply increasing the planting of shrubs and trees and increasing areas that are grassed rather than paved, will provide ways to capture the water and let it soak into the ground. This is covered in relation to flood risk in policy 12.

### ***Policy 6a Greening the Streets***

- 1. Development proposals should demonstrate they:**
  - a) retain existing trees (e.g. the trees on Carolgate and on the Market Square) and hedges or where this is not possible replace them using species identified in the EMEC Ecology Assessment and the Ecology Study Report;**
  - b) include a landscape scheme that recognises and, where possible, enhances the significance of the existing trees and green/soft boundaries,**
  - c) where relevant, reflect the need to enhance the greenery along frontages,**
  - d) contribute towards making Retford a Greener Town in accordance with the actions identified in the Ecology Report and Map 8a and 8b.**
  
- 2. Any new highway infrastructure proposals should, where feasible:**
  - a) retain existing trees and landscaping and grass verges; and**
  - b) include street trees and grass verges in new streets; and**
  - c) achieve a net gain of tree canopy, as part of the landscaping scheme (of a species in accordance with the findings in the Ecology Assessment and Ecology Study Report).**



**Photo 6 Carolgate – the trees soften the pedestrianised street and provide shade but the canopy blocks the CCTV.**

115 Whilst the Plan area is, of its nature, an urban space, the eLP identifies the River Idle and Chesterfield Canal corridors as 'main corridors' with 30m buffer zones reflecting their ecological value (policy ST39). The Chesterfield Canal is a designated Local Wildlife Site. Increasing the opportunity for habitat within the Town Centre will provide stepping stones to these important wildlife corridors.

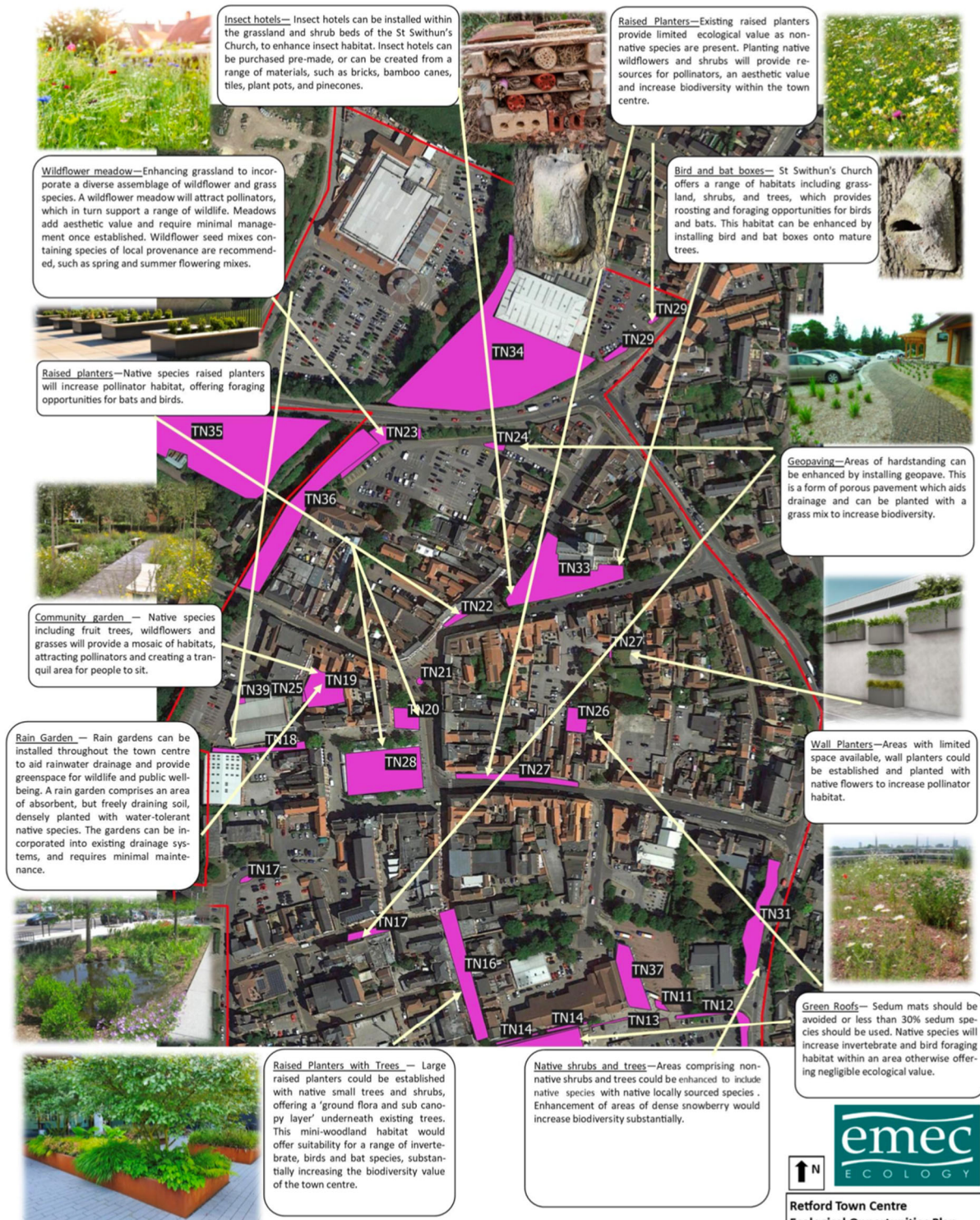
116 Map 8a and 8b below are from the Ecology Assessment produced by EMEC. Whilst many of the proposals do not require planning permission, they demonstrate the potential that exists for significantly enhancing the biodiversity and climate resilience of the Plan area. The conflict with the trees on Carolgate and the CCTV demonstrates the importance of having a masterplan approach to landscaping to ensure it achieves the intended benefits. An aspiration is to seek funding and to work with landowners and local groups to deliver some of these projects.

117 The specific initiatives are listed as community actions.

118 A follow up Ecology Study Report provided further detailed analysis of the existing biodiversity in the Plan area. (Both Ecology Reports are on the RTCNPG web site).



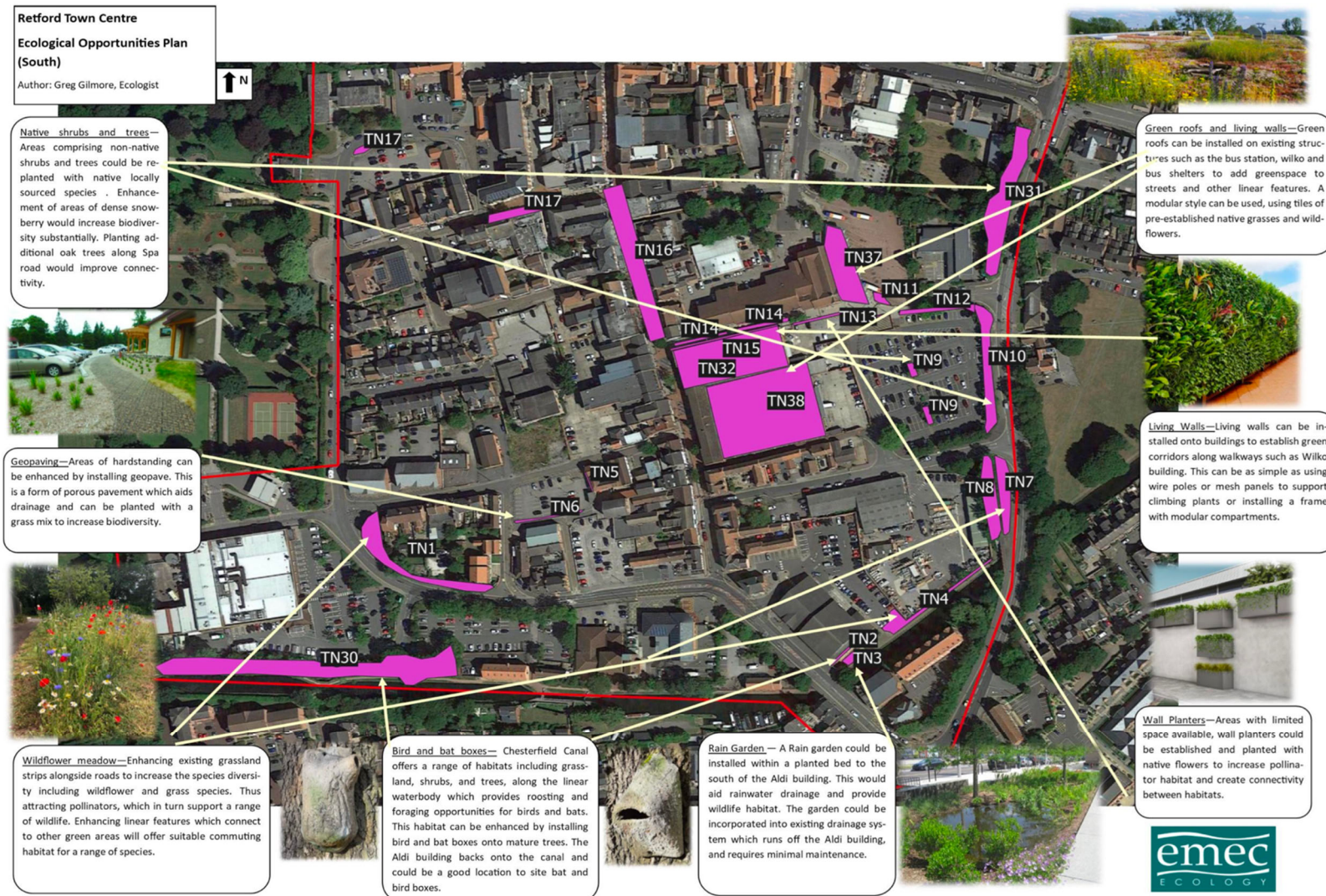
Map 8a Ecological Opportunities North



**Retford Town Centre Ecological Opportunities Plan (North)**  
 Author: Greg Gilmore, Ecologist



Map 8b Ecological Opportunities South





119 Enhancement measures should contribute to the delivery of the actions in the EMEC Ecology Assessment highlighted in Figure 3 and 4 and may include:

- a) planting wild flower meadows and strips,
- b) planting appropriate trees and shrubs, especially species that provide good berry or nectar sources,
- c) encouraging the creation of sustainable urban drainage schemes (SUDS), (e.g., rain gardens, pond and wetland creation and geopaving) in new schemes and 'retrofitting' where appropriate,
- d) the installation of habitat features (i.e. nest boxes) to benefit all bats and bird species of conservation concern, such as swifts, swallow, house martin and house sparrow,
- e) planting and management regimes along the River Idle and Chesterfield Canal corridors that increase biodiversity.

***Policy 6b Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity***

- 1. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should provide at least 10% net biodiversity gain in line with the applicable legislative requirements. Exceedance of this is encouraged.**
- 2. Development proposals which would have significant negative ecological impacts will not be supported unless appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures are incorporated in the overall development package.**
- 3. Development should achieve a net biodiversity gain that is measurable in accordance with local and national planning policy. Any such measures should be targeted to benefit local conservation priorities as identified in the EMEC Ecology Assessment.**
- 4. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location and in accordance with national policy, programmes which enhance biodiversity should be incorporated into development proposals so that there is net ecological gain. Where on site provision is not feasible off-site provision within the Plan area may be acceptable.**
- 5. As appropriate to their scale nature and location, development proposals should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems which are designed to address the particular circumstances of the site concerned.**

## 17 Improving the Canal and River Corridors

120 The presence of water within the Plan area is a defining characteristic affecting how the area has grown and is an important attribute in continuing to attract residents and visitors to the Town.

121 The Chesterfield Canal runs along the edge of Asda supermarket, Aldi, the Retford Little Theatre and The Fire Station. The approach to this waterway is unannounced and for the most part visitors would not know it was there. The River Idle runs between Morrisons and Home Bargains and similarly unannounced. These water courses could be character defining if future development alongside the canal and river ensured continuous public access (this is not always the case, for example the walk along the River Idle to Kings Park is through Sports Direct Car Park).

122 Previous development along the canal and river corridors has not always been sympathetic to their location near an important waterway. For example, Asda backs onto the River Idle and presents a large blank wall to the river. There are other sites along the River and Canal which over time may be redeveloped. It is important that future development within the Plan area assists in the delivery of an uninterrupted and attractive pedestrian and cycle corridor through the Town. This has a range of benefits including encouraging walking and cycling and will enhance the Town as a place to spend leisure time as well as to shop.

123 Development is required to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain on the site, it is expected that layout and landscaping schemes takes every opportunity to create or enhance connections with the Canal and River corridors.

124 Access to and along the Canal and River is important to local people with well used footpaths, and cycle routes along the Canal towpath and part of the River Idle. These routes should be protected and where possible enhanced. Development in the vicinity of the River and Canal may provide opportunities to improve access.

### ***Policy 7 Improving the Canal and River Corridors***

- 1. Development proposals along the Canal and River corridors should incorporate a buffer zone free from proposed development and hardstanding next to watercourses which can be naturalised to provide space for water, biodiversity and natural geomorphological processes. \***
- 2. Development adjacent to the River Idle or Chesterfield Canal should demonstrate how it has considered its location next to a waterway and should provide an active frontage to the Canal or River where possible.**
- 3. Development should contribute to the delivery of a waterside walkway to create a continuous walking/cycling route along the Canal and River through the Plan area.**

\* for the Retford Beck and River Idle an 8 metre easement from the River Bank is required by the Environment Agency

## 18 Significant Green Areas

125 Within the Plan Area there are Significant Green Areas that have a variety of important functions. Some have been identified as having a wildlife value (see the Ecology Assessment and Ecology Study Report), others provide an important visual contrast, with the greenery of the trees and shrubs contrasting with the typically red brick of the Conservation Area. These areas vary in size and form from the Cemetery around St Swithun's to the grass verges at the end of West Street and Wharf Road. In combination, they soften the otherwise hard landscaping of the urban built form.

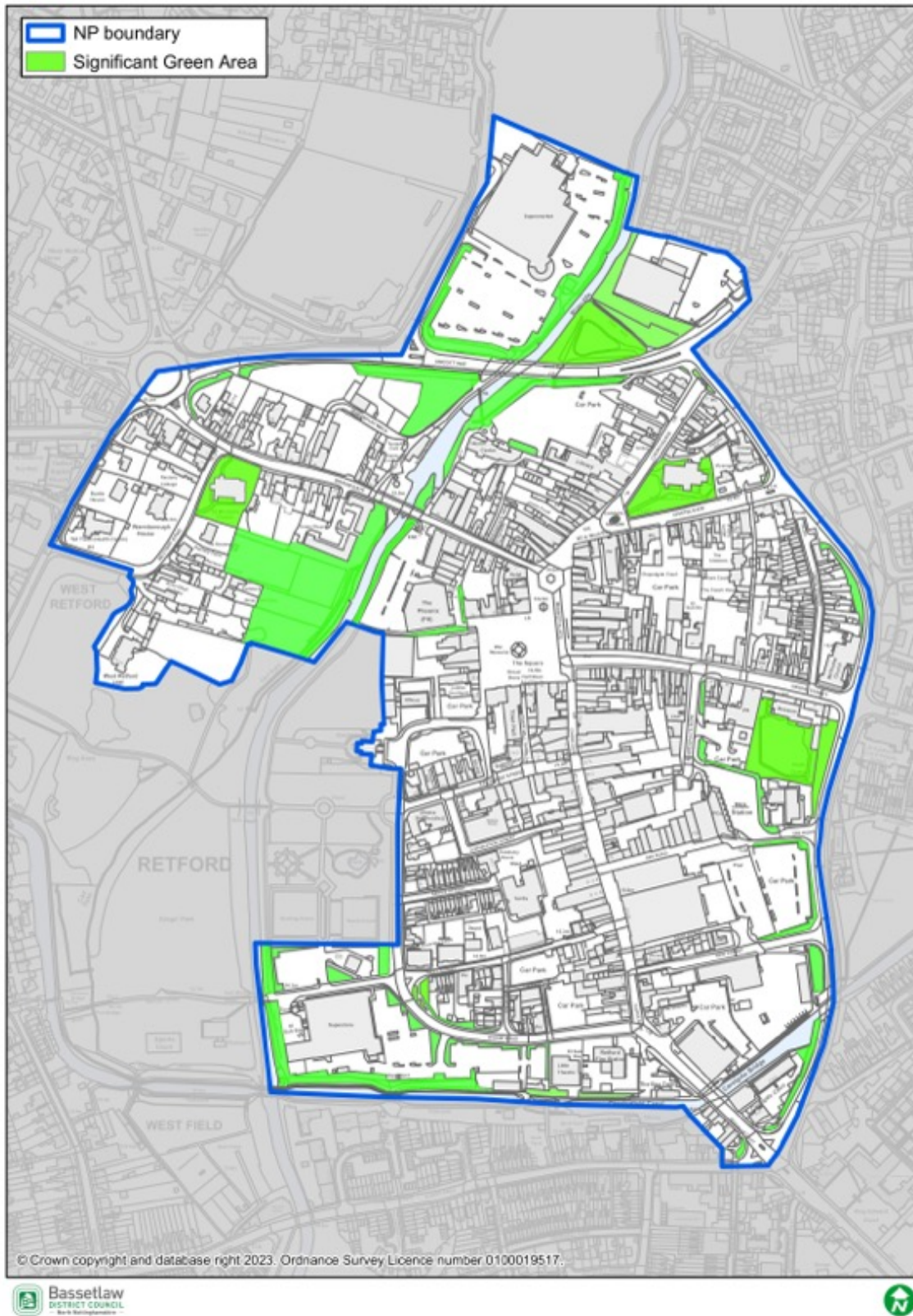
126 These Green Areas were highlighted in the Conservation Area Appraisal produced by BDC in 2012 and identified as 'landscape features' that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.<sup>27</sup>

127 Map 9 shows the Significant Green Areas that the RTCNPG consider are character forming and a valued landscape feature within the townscape. The identification of Significant Green Areas is not intended to be a bar to development but to provide more information about the variety of the townscape and to identify the pockets of green spaces that are valued by the community. Local people acknowledge that development may take place within them, but where possible the layout of development should minimise its impact on these green areas to demonstrate an understanding of the value of these Significant Green Areas to the wider setting of the Conservation Area.

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<sup>27</sup> See Maps 27, 39, 45, 53 at <https://data.bassetlaw.gov.uk/conservation-area-appraisals/retford/>

### Map 9 Significant Green Areas





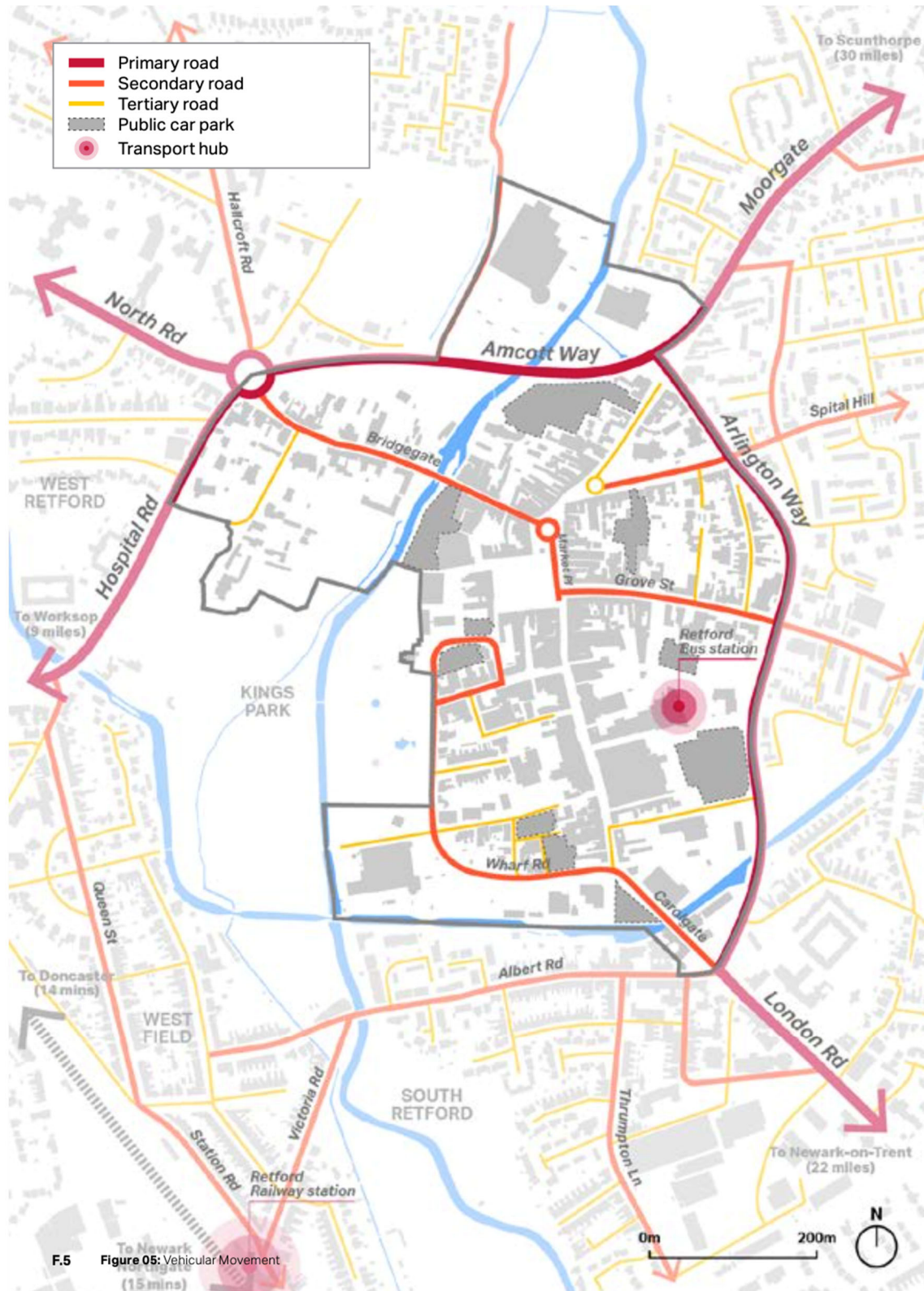
***Policy 8 Significant Green Areas***

- 1. The areas on Map 9 are identified as Significant Green Areas.**
- 2. In these Significant Green Areas development will be limited to that which maintains the sense of openness and landscape value (visually and ecologically). Proposals will be required to demonstrate how the scheme has minimised the visual and ecological impact on the Significant Green Area.**
- 3. Exceptions will only be considered favourably where the benefits of development to the functioning of the Town Centre significantly and demonstrably outweigh the adverse impacts.**

## 19 Getting Around the Town Centre

128Maps 10a and 10b (extracted from the Masterplan) show vehicular and pedestrian movement around the Town Centre.

### Map 10a Vehicular Movement



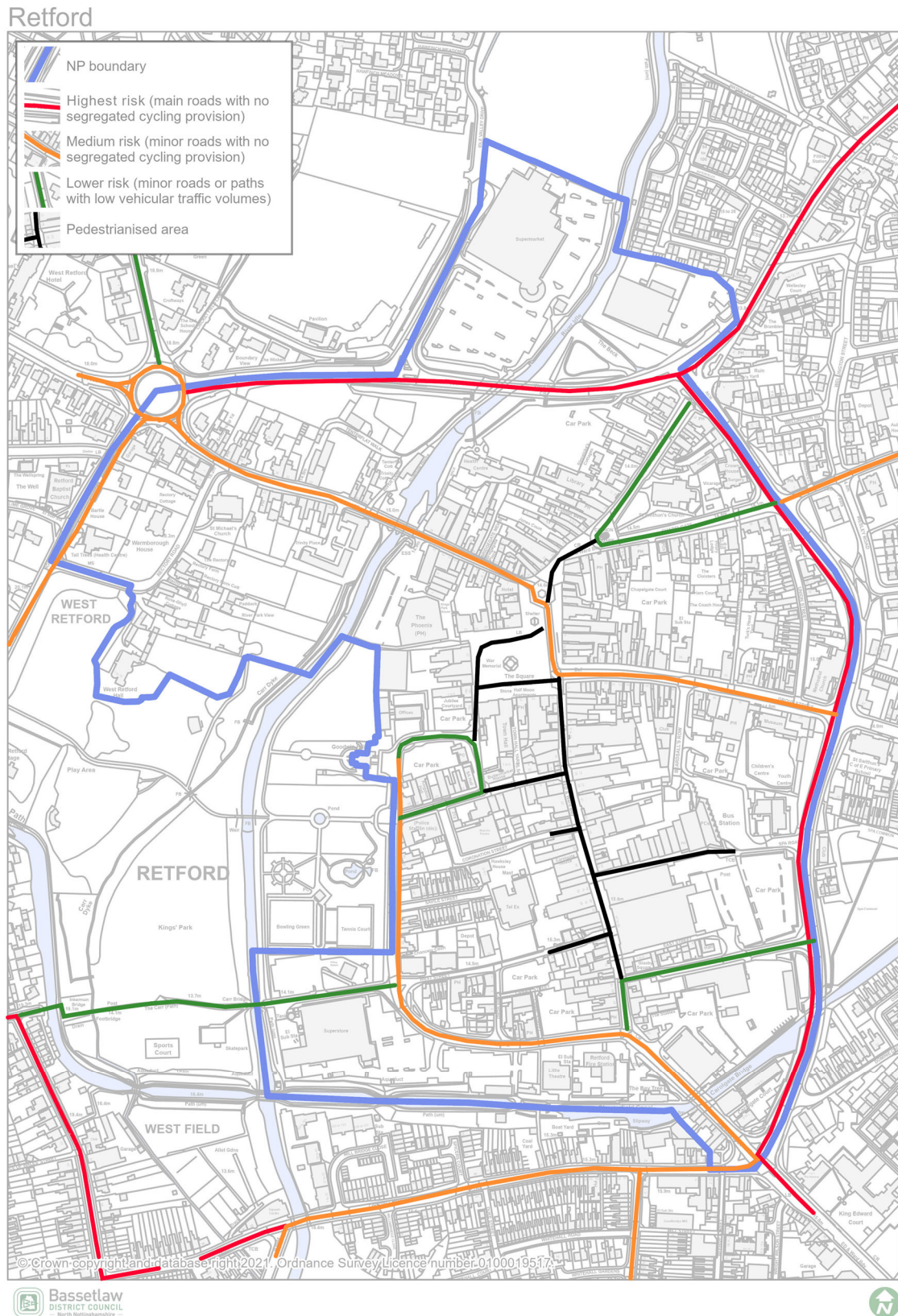
- 129 Much of the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan area is bounded by primary vehicular routes; the northern edge by the A620 (Amcott Way) and Hospital Road and the eastern edge by the A638 (Arlington Way). Together these routes compose a ring road around Retford.
- 130 The Town's radial routes include Spital Hill, Carolgate (southern portion), Grove Street, and Bridgegate. These routes serve the north west and eastern boundaries of the Neighbourhood Plan area due to the location of the River Idle and Chesterfield Canal to the west of the town centre.
- 131 The topography of the Town and its compactness means that accessibility is relatively good. However, there are improvements that could be made to texture the paving and repair or replace kerbs that would improve access for those with mobility issues. The RTCNPG are keen to make the Town Centre accessible for all.
- 132 There is now an online accessibility guide for Retford which provides detailed information on the accessibility of car parks, public buildings, health services and community venues. There are 29 entries, this can be found at <https://www.accessable.co.uk/bassetlaw-district>. The web site should help people to plan their visits and feel more confident that they can access a range of services and facilities in the Town. A pdf report of the accessibility of the Retford car parks, public buildings etc has been usefully produced and is available on the RBF web site at [www.retfordbusinessforum.org/uk/rtcnpg/supporting-documents](http://www.retfordbusinessforum.org/uk/rtcnpg/supporting-documents).

### ***Improving Cycling and Walking***

- 133 Improving active travel reduces car usage, improves health and well-being and represents sustainable development. The topography of the Town Centre and wider urban area is relatively flat and the Town Centre is compact making it an ideal place to encourage more cycling and walking.
- 134 Map 10b is an assessment of the hazardous nature of the roads within and that bound the Town Centre. Traffic volumes and the speed of traffic make the major roads that run around the Plan area suitable only for the most confident of cyclists.



**Map 10b Assessment of Safety of Roads in the Plan Area for Cyclists (done local cyclist and member of the RTCNPG)**



135 Map 10b from the Masterplan identifies existing pedestrian routes.

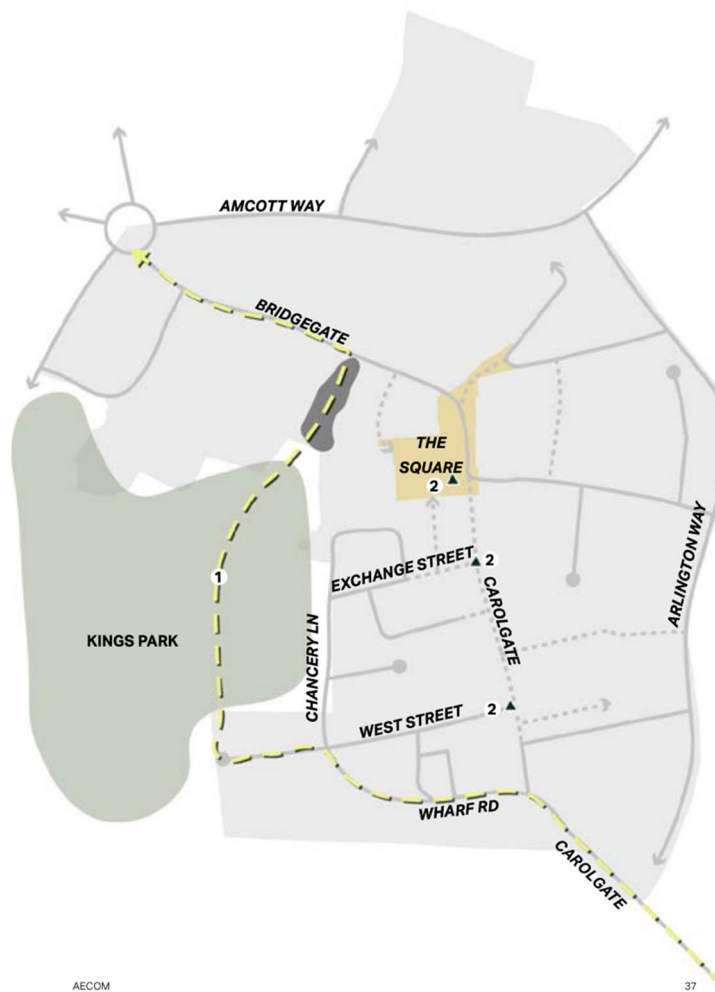


Map 10b Pedestrian Movement



- 136 The Market Square and high street (Carolgate) are pedestrianised zones, with the exception of service vehicles and disability access. Carolgate is therefore the Neighbourhood Plan area's principal pedestrian corridor given it is Retford's main retail street.
- 137 There are also several pedestrianised/partially pedestrianised streets that splinter off from Carolgate connecting to nearby areas. These include Exchange Street that provides connections to Kings Park and Spa Road that connects to further retail and Retford Bus Station.
- 138 Other key pedestrian routes include the Chesterfield Canal towpath which lies just within the southern edge of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Unlike the Chesterfield Canal, the River Idle's footpath is somewhat disjointed due to a number of gaps in the path. A short stretch within the Neighbourhood Plan area runs between Bridgegate and Kings Park.
- 139 The Masterplan (page 30) also identifies the opportunity and benefit of providing a pedestrian route on the east side of River Idle underneath Amcott Way Bridge allowing access to Churchgate Car Park without crossing Amcott Way.
- 140 The principal obstacle is the lack of adequate joined-up cycling infrastructure and dedicated routes. Many people are deterred from making the modal shift from motorised travel, even for short distances, by the perceived risks of using busy roads.
- 141 The canal towpath is not well maintained for cycling and is of limited use as the access points to it are difficult to negotiate on a bike. Encouraging more people to cycle into the Town Centre requires the existing network of cycle routes to be extended.
- 142 The RTCNPG supports the improvement of cycle routes and the reprioritising of some tertiary streets to complement the existing provision and extend it to form a cohesive network within the Town Centre and linking to neighbouring communities.
- 143 The absence of a north-south link is the single most significant obstacle to cycling in the Town as the pedestrianisation of Carolgate, lack of cycle paths along Arlington Way and Prohibition of cycling across the Market Square and through Kings Park, means cyclists have no alternative but to use Arlington Way (A636), which is a busy trunk road.
- 144 Representation from the local cycling community advises that a preferred route would be between Bridgegate and Chancery Lane, via the Bridgegate Centre car park and a new path along the eastern fringe of Kings Park to the Sir Stuart Goodwin Hall. The masterplan identified the opportunity to create such a north-south route (which would go through Kings Park which is outside of the Plan area). They would also like to see a reassignment of the space between Chapelgate and the Market Place around the Canon to designate a cycle route to the Market Place. Map 10c shows an indicative cycle route that would provide this north to south connection.
- 145 It is noticeable that the Public Right of Way network is very limited in the Town Centre, see Map 10b above. An improved pedestrian experience is suggested by extending the east-west green corridor from Spa Road across Carolgate and along West Street. This could also be a valuable cycling route (with a need to dismount along Carolgate.)

**Map 10c Suggested cycle route (extracted from the Town Centre Masterplan)**



**1.**

The provision of a dedicated cycle way through the town centre.

A potential route for this could connect cycle lanes to the north and south of the town centre via Bridgegate, King's Park, Wharf Road and Carolgate. This would require reconfiguration of the car park to the south of Bridgegate.

**2.**

The upgrading and increased provision of cycle parking facilities across the town centre.

**Policy 9 Extending the Footpath and Cycle routes**

Development that enables the extension of the cycle and footpath network is supported, in particular;

- a) changes to the road layout, crossing points, pavements and street scene that make active movement routes safer and more direct (for example to access the Market Place from Chapel Gate);
- b) provides a north south route from Bridgegate to Chancery Lane;
- c) improves pedestrian and cycling connectivity between Spa Road and West Street,
- d) provides a pedestrian route on the east side of the River Idle underneath Amcott Way Bridge allowing access to Churchgate Car Park



## 20 Housing in the Town Centre

147 The housing market of the Town Centre is not self-contained but plays a particular functional role in relationship with wider Retford and the surrounding rural area. A Housing Needs Assessment was commissioned for the RTCNP which provides a valuable and unique analysis of the functioning of the housing market in the Town Centre in the context of the wider Retford built up area.<sup>28</sup> Retford Town Centre is not expected to contribute to any specific housing target (but there is potential for additional development in the Town Centre)<sup>29</sup>

### Key Facts on the Housing Stock in the NA<sup>30</sup>

- There are approx. 487 dwellings
- This is a 31% increase (115 new dwellings) since 2011
- 86% of these new properties are flats
- 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of all dwellings in the NA are flats
- 76% of dwellings have 2 bedrooms or less
- In 2011 the NA had a far higher proportion of single person households than wider averages, 75% of single person households are made up of people under 65
- In 2011, 23% owned their own homes (this is one third of the rate across Retford, Bassetlaw and England)
- 44% rent from private landlords 32% from social landlords

148 Map 11 below shows that these dwellings are scattered across the Plan area. Recent increases in business and retail conversions and the popular option of having flats over the shops, ensures natural surveillance in the Town Centre in the evenings and contributes to the vibrancy of the Town Centre's evening economy.

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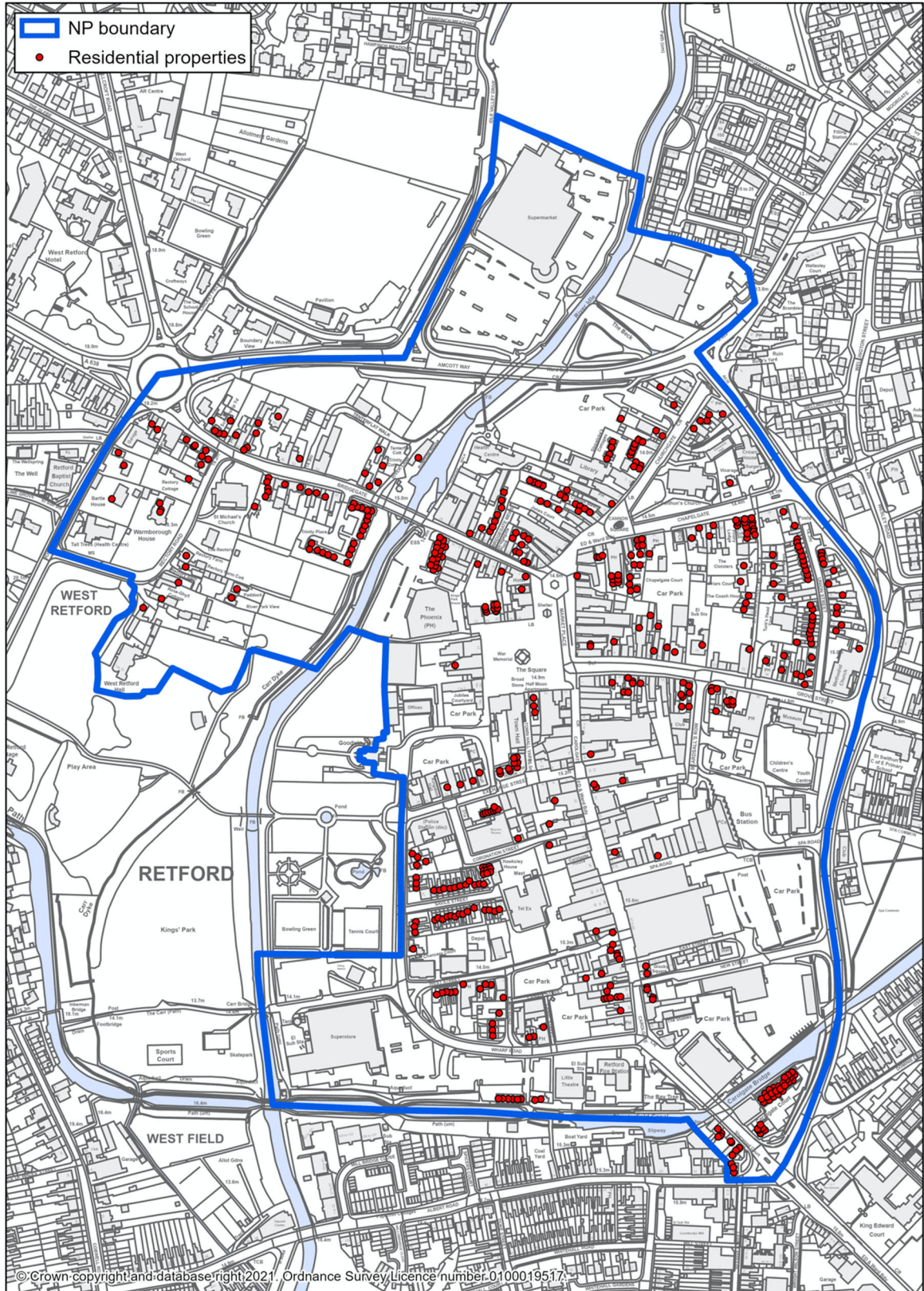
<sup>28</sup> See HNA at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnp/supporting-documents>

<sup>29</sup> See site allocations policies x and y below

<sup>30</sup> See HNA at

Map 11 Residential Properties in the Plan Area

Retford



### **Housing size**

149 The housing mix currently on offer in the NA serves a range of groups, but holds particular appeal to single-person households, people of working age without children, and the oldest age groups. When the demographic characteristics of wider Retford have been surveyed for comparison, it is evident that key groups not living in the Town Centre are present in the wider Town, namely families with children, early retirees, and individuals cohabiting in non-family groups. This demographic picture chimes with the features of wider Redford's housing stock, which offers a greater choice of mid-sized and larger homes.

150 The statistics show the dominance of flats that are 1 or 2 bed. The function of the Town Centre means that this need not necessarily be an issue as it complements the housing mix of the wider Retford built up area where there are more 3 bed plus houses.

151 AECOM recommend a dwelling size mix for future development in the Town Centre as follows:

- 20% homes with 1 bedroom
- 30% with 2 bedrooms, 35% with 3 bedrooms, and
- 15% with 4 or more bedrooms

152 This is a compromise between diversifying the Town Centre mix and accommodating a broader range of demographic groups, and accepting existing density patterns and improving affordability (because the provision of smaller market homes does increase access to home ownership for most groups, see table 5-6 below).

153 Recent applications in the Town Centre have sought permission for flats that are very small and with limited natural light. This will not create healthy living spaces and the RTCNPG want to support dwellings that confirm to the minimum national space standards.<sup>31</sup>

### **Affordability**

154 The AECOM analysis shows that the average household income covering the Town Centre was £36,800 in 2018, and the lower quartile income (per person) for Bassetlaw was £15,379 in 2020. Local households on average incomes (including those with two lower earners) are able to afford most forms of market housing for sale in the Town Centre and some of the entry-level options in the wider town, but not its largest detached properties. Single people on lower quartile earnings, however, appear unable to afford any market purchase options without the advantage of additional savings.

155 Affordable rented housing appears generally affordable to households with two lower earners (average earning households are unlikely to be eligible). Single lower earners can afford social rents but not affordable rents. Social rent should therefore be protected as far as possible.

156 The table below from the HNA shows the issues with affordability especially for single lower quartile income earners, but demonstrates that shared ownership products would enable a single earner to get on the housing market where the shared ownership is 10% or 25% for the occupier. Access to a home via the first homes route would only be possible if the discount was 50%.

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<sup>31</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>



**Table 5-6: Affordability thresholds in Retford Town Centre (income required, £)**

Tenure	Mortgage value (90% of price)	Annual rent	Income required	Affordable on average incomes? £38,600	Affordable on LQ earnings (single earner)? £15,379	Affordable on LQ earnings (2 earners)? £30,758
<b>Market Housing for Purchase</b>						
Retford Median House Price	£148,500	-	£42,429	No	No	No
Retford Entry-level House Price	£114,300	-	£32,657	Yes	No	Marginal
NA Median House Price	£99,225	-	£28,350	Yes	No	Yes
NA Entry-level House Price	£88,875	-	£25,393	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Market Housing for Rent</b>						
Retford 3+ bed Market Rent	-	£9,600	£32,000	Yes	No	No
NA 2-bed Market Rent	-	£9,000	£30,000	Yes	No	Marginal
NA 1-bed Market Rent	-	£6,120	£20,400	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Affordable Home Ownership</b>						
First Homes (-30%)	£69,458	-	£19,845	Yes	No	Yes
First Homes (-40%)	£59,535	-	£17,010	Yes	No	Yes
First Homes (-50%)	£49,613	-	£14,175	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shared Ownership (50%)	£49,613	£1,378	£18,769	Yes	No	Yes
Shared Ownership (25%)	£24,806	£2,067	£13,978	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shared Ownership (10%)	£9,923	£2,481	£11,104	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Affordable Rented Housing</b>						
Affordable Rent	-	£5,056	£16,836	Yes	No	Yes
Social Rent	-	£4,603	£15,328	Yes	Marginal	Yes

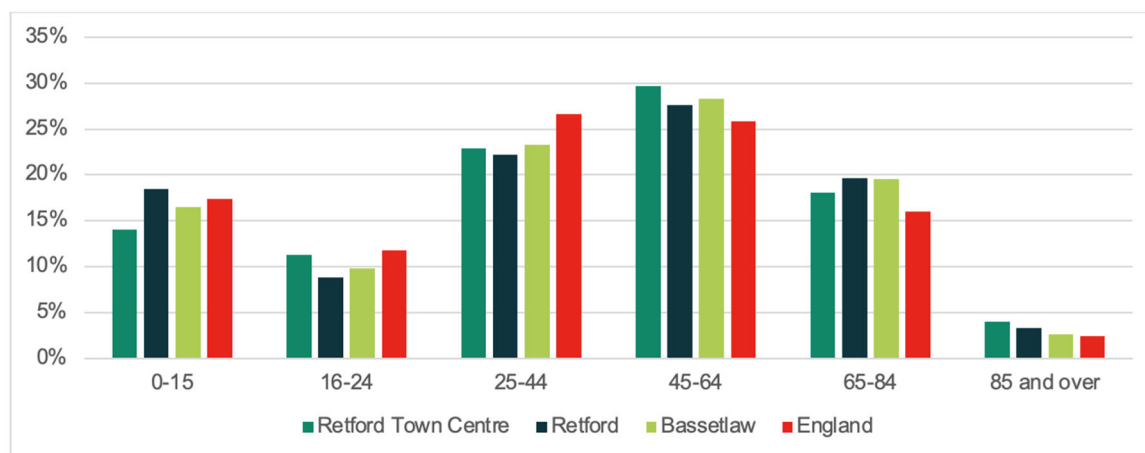
Source: AECOM Calculations

157 Whilst AECOM estimates that there is very little long term unmet need in the affordable rented housing market (because the turnover rate meets the current need) there is a backlog of existing need and homes that come available may not be appropriate to those on the list so a limited amount of affordable rented housing should still be encouraged.

158 AECOM identifies a need for affordable home ownership and notes that there are no shared ownership dwellings available in the NA.

### **Demographics and Implications for Housing**

159 The age structure of the population is a key indicator of the future need for housing. The Town Centre population is estimated to have aged since 2011, with growth in the age groups above 45 (and marginal growth in the number of children), while the population of younger adults has decreased slightly. This broadly aligns with the trends observed in the initial 2021 Census results for Bassetlaw as a whole.

**Figure 4-1: Age structure in Retford Town Centre, 2020/21**

Source: ONS 2021, ONS mid-2020 population estimates, AECOM Calculations

160A clear majority of households aged 55 – 75 in 2011 are likely to reach the 75+ bracket by 2038. Table 6.2 of the HNA shows that 77.9% of this age group own their own house, 22% rent.

161 There is no specialist accommodation or care homes within the designated NA boundary at present, according to the Elderly Accommodation Counsel search tool. (There are, however, 351 units of specialist accommodation across 9 schemes elsewhere in Retford.) The HNA notes that the older people who live in Retford Town Centre are healthier and 61% have no disability limits compared to 41% across wider Retford. *‘What is not clear is whether the relatively healthier older population of the Town Centre is a consequence of the lack of specialist provision that would allow relatively less healthy people to live there, or an effect of other factors (such as leisure and community amenities) that attract active older people to this location. Most likely it is some combination of the two.’*<sup>32</sup>

162 The 75+ population of the Town Centre is projected to increase from 98 in 2022 to 156, a 59% increase.<sup>33</sup> The HNA analysis suggest a projected household growth of 41 and that between 50% and 70% of this will be for sheltered housing with limited support. One way of meeting this need whilst recognising the limited opportunity for bespoke new build dwellings, is to have higher standards of accessible and adaptable housing.

163 The Draft Local Plan policy ST31 supports specialist development to accommodate older people but it does not set specific targets for the proportion of new housing that might be required to meet national standards for accessibility (M4 (2)) and adaptability M4(3). Policy 10a below sets a local threshold based on the evidence of need and the need to seek flexible ways to meet that need in the Town centre where sites for bespoke development are limited.

164 In addition, the RTCNPG support the provision of sheltered housing with limited support within the Town centre for older people. The topography of the area and the proximity to local services would make provision of this sort of accommodation within the Town Centre appropriate.

165 Table 6-7 in the HNA provides an estimate of this need.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> See HNA para 291

<sup>33</sup> Derived from HNA table 6-3

<sup>34</sup> See HN A page 74

**Table 6-7: AECOM estimate of specialist needs in Retford Town Centre, 2038**

Type	Affordable	Market	Total
Extra-care	2	5	7
Adaptations, sheltered, or retirement living	2	7	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

166HAPPI3 identifies that 85% of all older people would like to 'age in place'.<sup>35</sup> The Site Assessment indicated that the redevelopment of site NP05 the Land registry Office and NP06 Goodwin Hall either separately or in combination, would be a suitable location for such a use subject to mitigation measure in relation to flood risk<sup>36</sup>. This is covered in more detail in section 21 below, policy 10c supports this use in principle.

#### **Policy 10a Housing Mix**

- 1. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, housing schemes are required to deliver a housing mix that meets local need in accordance with the findings in the most up to date Housing Needs Assessment.**
- 2. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location if major development is not proposing a housing mix and type in accordance with the Housing Needs Assessment, information accompanying the application would need to justify the departure from this policy based on specific character elements or some other demonstration of suitability.**
- 3. To cater for the needs of less mobile occupants including older people and disabled people, and to deliver dwellings which are capable of meeting peoples' changing needs over their lifetimes, proposals for six or more dwellings should be built to M4(2) standards unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unviable or would otherwise result in a form of development that would be harmful to the character of the area.**
- 4. Proposals for dwellings that meet the higher M(4)3 standards of the Approved Document M, Volume 1 will be supported.**

<sup>35</sup> Housing our Ageing Population: Positive Ideas (HAPPI3), All party parliamentary group on housing and care for older people, June 2016 document at <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Housing-our-Ageing-Population-Positive-Ideas-HAPPI-3-Making-retirement-living-a-positive-choice/>

<sup>36</sup> See <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtnpg/supporting-documents>



***Policy 10b Housing Tenure***

**There is a local housing need for affordable home ownership and affordable homes to rent. In addition to providing First Homes, the affordable housing mix may include other forms of discounted market housing, for example shared ownership housing.**

***Policy 10c Accommodation for Older People***

**Proposals for the development of accommodation for older people, particularly sheltered accommodation with limited support, would meet a local housing need and is supported.**

## 21 Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies

167 The government identifies the planning system as having a significant role to play in tackling climate change (NPPF para 152). We must reduce the energy we use to heat and cool our homes as well as shifting to net zero carbon sources of heating and cooling. The design and layout of new development can significantly affect the efficiency of buildings in terms of their energy use and needs. For example, effective passive design maintains thermal comfort by utilising the sun's natural cycles and natural ventilation to reduce the need for activity or cooling systems.

168 Heating in buildings and industry create 32% of total UK emissions<sup>37</sup>. A strategy to reduce carbon to heat buildings is a priority area in the 2021 Joint Recommendations<sup>38</sup>. The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) advocate energy use reduction before the use of renewables, providing evidence that between 19 to 20% of improvement (beyond current building regulations standards) could be delivered entirely through energy efficiency measures including enhanced insulation, glazing and air tightness, high efficiency heating and hot water recovery. For example, a quarter of the heat lost uninsulated home is lost through the roof.<sup>39</sup>

169 Bassetlaw lies within an area of serious water stress concern<sup>40</sup>. The management of water resources is required to ensure that demand for water can be achieved in a sustainable manner. Severn Trent advise that the consumption of water per dwelling should not exceed 110 litres per person per day. Energy efficiency in design should incorporate technology to improve water efficiency. Water efficient design also provides energy efficiency benefits through a reduced need to treat water for consumption and treat wastewater. It also provides savings for managing water within the buildings. Given the issues of drainage in parts of the Plan area, water efficient development would also reduce the impacts that the built environment has on existing infrastructure.

<sup>37</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy/clean-growth-strategy-executive-summary>

<sup>38</sup> See <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CCC-Joint-Recommendations-2021-Report-to-Parliament.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> See <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/roof-and-loft-insulation/>

<sup>40</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-stressed-areas-2021-classification>

- 170 The RTCNPG support initiatives to explore the potential of solar energy on the roofs of buildings, and using this to support the Town Centre itself. This may include creating a community renewable energy scheme. Initial work has been undertaken to identify the feasibility of delivering this step change in energy use within the Plan area.
- 171 Solar powered methods of street lighting and signage illumination will be supported where it's appropriate to do so. This has already provided a beneficial outcome at the Canal Lock where conventional lighting would not be possible but where lighting was needed for safety.
- 172 The NPPF para 155d) notes that *'plans should identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.'*
- 173 Whilst this is an aspiration it has evolved as part of the community engagement on the neighbourhood plan and will be pursued by RTCNPG and partners.
- 174 The RTCNPG supports the transition to low carbon motorised transport. For example, increasing the provision of charging points in the public car parks would encourage the use of zero emission vehicles in the Town Centre. New development (including but not limited to appropriately sized electrical supplies to developments and also sufficient numbers of charge points) to enable the charging of electric vehicles. This does not require planning permission but will be strongly encouraged as part of the pre application discussions with developers. Similarly, the RTCNPG also encourage the provision of electric vehicles for residents in the Town Centre and the provision of lamppost charging facilities for residents with on street parking.

***Policy 11 Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Technologies***

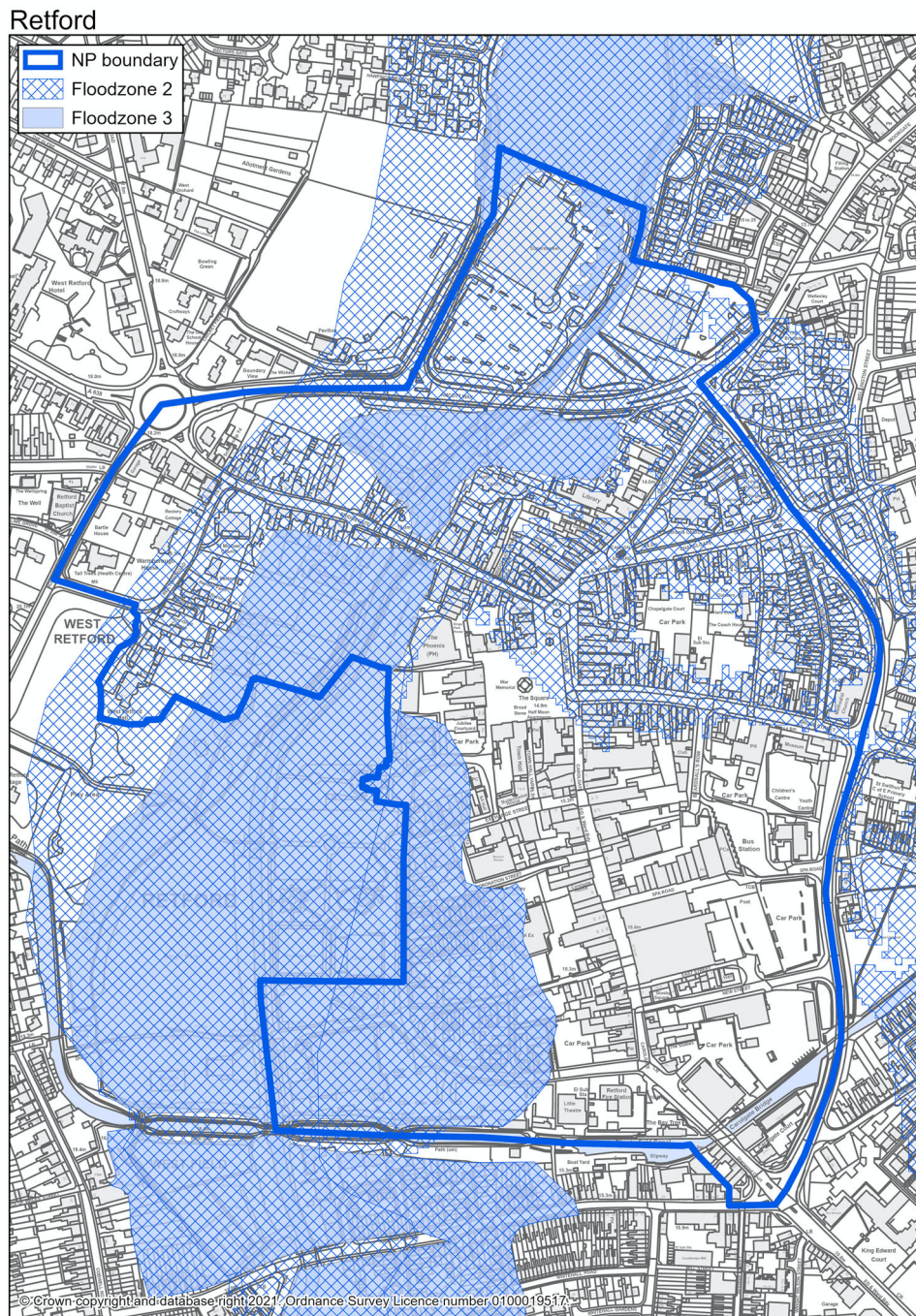
- 1. New development should incorporate sustainable design features to maximise energy efficiency due to the importance of this in meeting national climate targets.**
- 2. Innovative approaches to low carbon buildings and construction which demonstrates sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency levels will be supported where the resultant-built form respects the character of the setting. Examples include, but would not be limited to;**
  - a) the use of alternative heat sources to natural gas,
  - b) siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain,
  - c) passive design principles (where appropriate)
  - d) the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials,
  - e) installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double/triple glazing,
  - f) meeting the EPC B target set out by the Committee on Climate Change for all new non-domestic buildings,
  - g) maximizing the installation of solar panels including building integrated panel technology on roofs of all orientations except due north,
  - h) the installation of electrical vehicle, bike and scooter charging points,
  - i) the installation of cycle parking facilities,
  - j) maximizing water efficiency,
  - k) the use of solar power for lighting and other facilities that require power in public spaces.
- 3. The retrofitting of energy efficiency measures is supported, including the retrofitting of listed buildings, provided that it safeguards the historic characteristics of these heritage assets.**

**4. Developments should demonstrate that they are water efficient, where possible incorporating innovative water efficiency and water re-use measures.**

## 22 Reducing the Risk of Flooding

175 Over 50% of the Plan area is in Flood Zone 2 or 3. The Map shows the extent and location of the Flood Zones.

**Map 12 Flood Risk in the Plan Area**



- 176 The NPPF requires all plans to apply a sequential risk-based approach to the location of development taking into account the current and future impacts of climate change. The Exception Test provides a method of managing flood risk while still allowing necessary development to occur. The Exception Test is only appropriate for use when there are large areas in Flood Zones 2 and 3, where the Sequential Test alone cannot deliver acceptable sites, but where some continuing development is necessary for wider sustainable development reasons, taking into account the need to avoid social or economic blight.
- 177 BDC will require applicants to undertake site specific flood risk assessment for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In accordance with the NPPF para 167, development in Flood Zone 2 and 3 must be '*appropriately flood resistant and resilient and incorporate sustainable drainage systems*'.
- 178 Liaison with the Environment Agency (EA) as part of the preparation of the RTCNP identified that the Flood Map for Planning that identifies the flood zones 2 and 3 has not yet been updated with the outputs of the River Idle 2021 (EA) flood risk model. The flood map for planning in relation to the River Idle may therefore change in the coming months as these updates are implemented. In the meantime, it is recommended that interested parties contact the Environment Agency to request flood risk data for the sites/areas proposed for development.
- 179 The EA also advises that a further modelling project is planned to be complete next summer (2024) which will update the flood zone 3b/functional floodplain map nationally. Later in 2023 the EA will also plan to update the Flood Map for Planning with new flood model data for the Retford Beck.
- 180 Over the Plan period EA also advises that there are potentially opportunities outside the Plan area for the creation of online storage or conveyance improvements here could have the potential to reduce flood risk from the River Idle in Retford town centre. Whilst the EA have not undertaken an appraisal of such measures, such provision could change the assessment of flood risk in the Town.<sup>41</sup>
- 181 Sustainable drainage systems in the context of Retford Town Centre, will include increasing the amount of permeable surface, allowing water to soak away. These can be specifically designed (e.g., rain gardens and using geopaving), but simply increasing the planting of shrubs and trees and increasing areas that are grassed rather than paved, will provide ways to capture the water and let it soak into the ground.
- 182 SuDs can only be required as part of major planning applications however, implementing Neighbourhood Plan Policy 6a Greening the Streets and Policy 6b Improving Biodiversity will help to alleviate the extent of surface water run off as well improving landscape character and biodiversity.
- 183 Given the extent of flood risk in the Plan area and the expectation that there will be major development of around 2000 dwellings in the wider Retford area, Policy 12 provides a framework for addressing flood risk.

#### ***Policy 12 Reducing the Risk of Flooding***

- 1. Development must follow a sequential approach to flood risk management using the most up to date mapping information. For development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, the exception test will be applied in accordance with Table 3 of national planning practice guidance.**

<sup>41</sup> Based on email correspondence 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 from EA to BDC in relation to the preparation of the RTCNP



2. **Proposals for flood management or other infrastructure offering improvements that lower the risk of flooding will be supported subject to the proposal not resulting in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.**
3. **Surface water management should be undertaken through the utilisation of appropriate techniques which mimic natural drainage patterns and where appropriate achieve net gains for nature including through green infrastructure provision such as the planting of native trees and bushes.**

## 23 Regeneration and Site allocations

184 There are a number of sites within the Town Centre that have been identified as opportunities for future regeneration in the Masterplan (see map on page 39). These are not necessarily potential development sites. Two sites are not available for development at present (5 and 6) but may be brought forward in the future by the landowners.

185 The Masterplan forms part of the evidence base for this Neighbourhood Plan, but an additional site assessment process identified further potential sites that would also see underused sites in the Plan area regenerated.

186 The RTCNPG organised a Call for Sites in 2022. In addition, sites put forward in the Bassetlaw Land Availability Assessment (LAA) 2022, were also included. From these two sources six sites were identified within the Neighbourhood Area and assessed by AECOM<sup>42</sup> using a standard site assessment approach. The Site Assessment Report explains the methodology and shows the site assessment for all the sites.

187 The AECOM site assessment work was supplemented by consultation on the six sites with Bassetlaw District Council's Planning Policy and Conservation Teams, and Nottinghamshire County Council's Highways Team. Detailed technical comments were supplied by all three parties.

188 All of the site assessment material assembled was then the subject of public consultation between 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023, including three consultation events, hosted in Retford Town Hall. Consultees were invited to make comments on the sites, alongside a series of sites under consideration as Local Green Spaces. On conclusion of the consultation, eight responses had been received, and these were factored into consideration of if and how each of the sites should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

189 Two of the six sites were ultimately discounted. At the time of assessment, a significant portion of Site NP01 (Land west of Moorgate and north of Amcott Way) was the subject of a planning application for extension of the existing building and car park, associated with the continuation of the current retail use. The site was accordingly discounted by AECOM, on the basis that it no longer appeared available for consideration.

190 Site NP04 (Land to the rear of 27 – 37 Bridgegate) was scored amber by AECOM, recognising some development potential, but also a number of constraints that would need to be overcome, including flood risk, access, impact on heritage assets, and impact on green infrastructure. Subsequent consultation with the District Council and County Council, and the public, substantiated the noted constraints, and heightened concerns about the likely impact of development. The site was accordingly discounted, given the limitations on potential options.

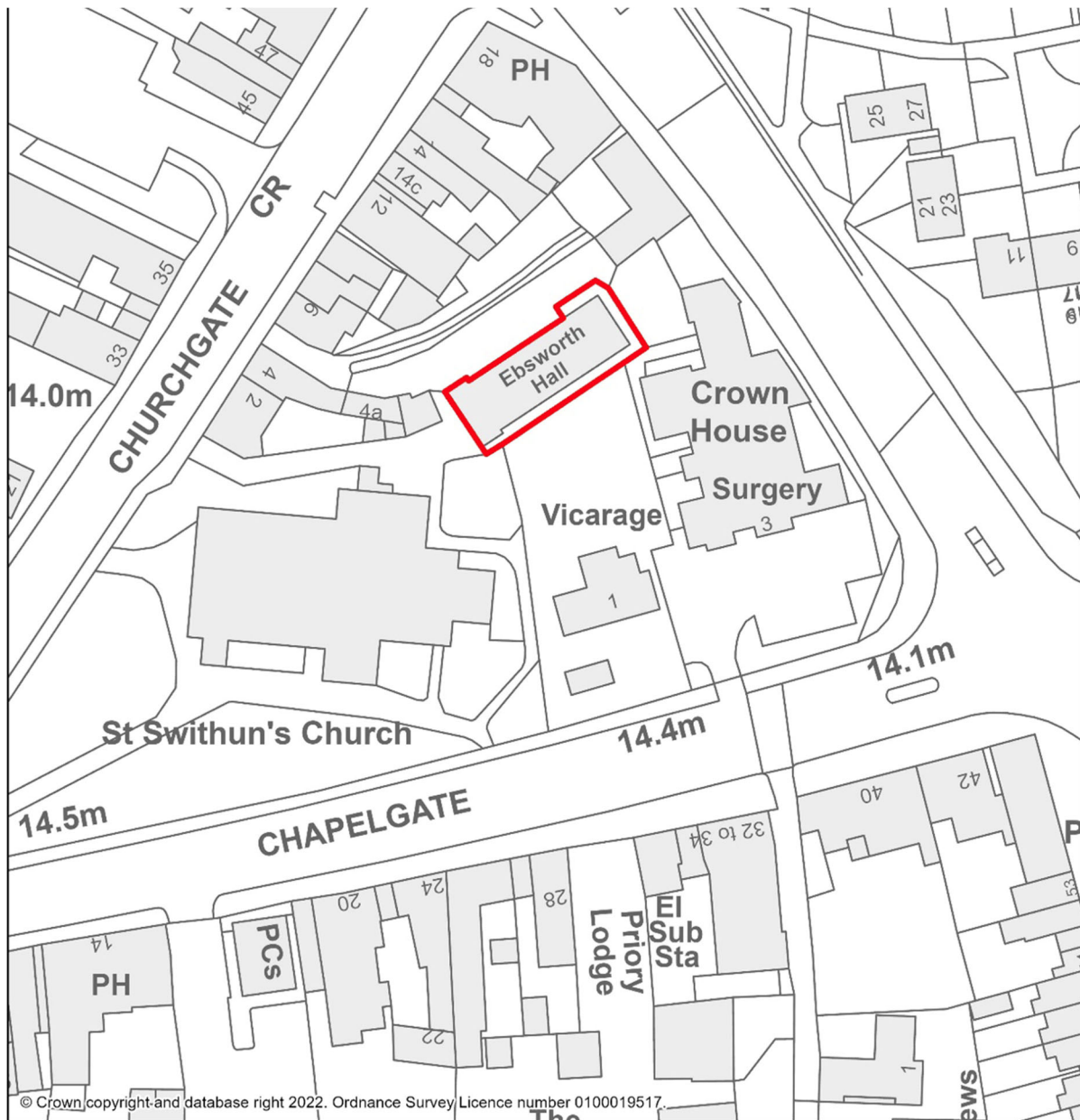
191 The Neighbourhood Plan proposes that the four remaining sites are allocated in order to manage their future development potential, as detailed in Policies 13a, 13b and 13c.

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<sup>42</sup> AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited is a multinational consultancy all technical support packages for neighbourhood planning are delivered by AECOM.

## Redevelopment of Ebsworth Hall

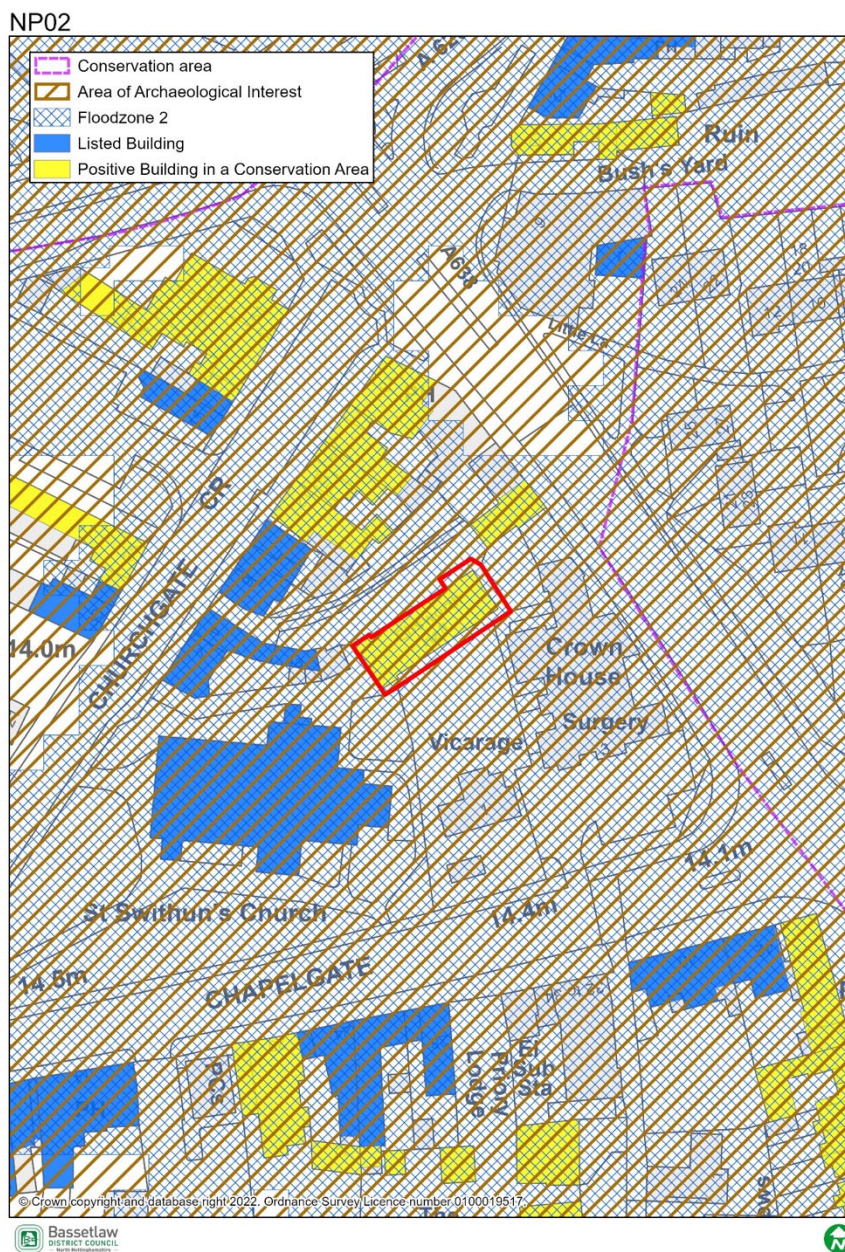
### Site Plan



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## Constraints Map



192 The building was opened in 1923 as a memorial to the late Canon Ebsworth, who had been vicar of St Swithun's for 32 years. The building is owned by the Church, was last used for associated purposes, and is on Church land. It is considered listed by curtilage association to the Grade II\* listed Church.

193 The building is vacant and in disrepair. BDC's Conservation Officer has identified the feature entrance porch, roof-mounted vent, front gable oval-shaped vent and foundation stone as being of architectural and historic interest.

194 The Church are keen to redevelop the site to provide a building for community use for young people.

195 The site scored amber in the AECOM site assessment (Jan 2023).



196 The building is in Character Area 4 of the Retford Design Code (see Section 3 page 30 – 33). The Design Codes for the Plan Area that apply to the site are 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs, and 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing.

197 The RTCNPG supports the creative redevelopment of the building for community use, valuing the provision of an additional community facility in the Town Centre so long as any proposal protects the identified historic features.

198 Given that the site is within the Retford Conservation Area and within the curtilage of a listed building, any new building will need to reflect the prevailing historic character in its use of materials, scale, and design.

199 BDC have also advised that the building is in flood zone 2 and a sequential flood risk test would be required.

200 Access to the building is down a single width access road and vehicular access would only be suitable for service vehicles, there could be no on-site parking. However, there is on street parking and public car parks in the vicinity.

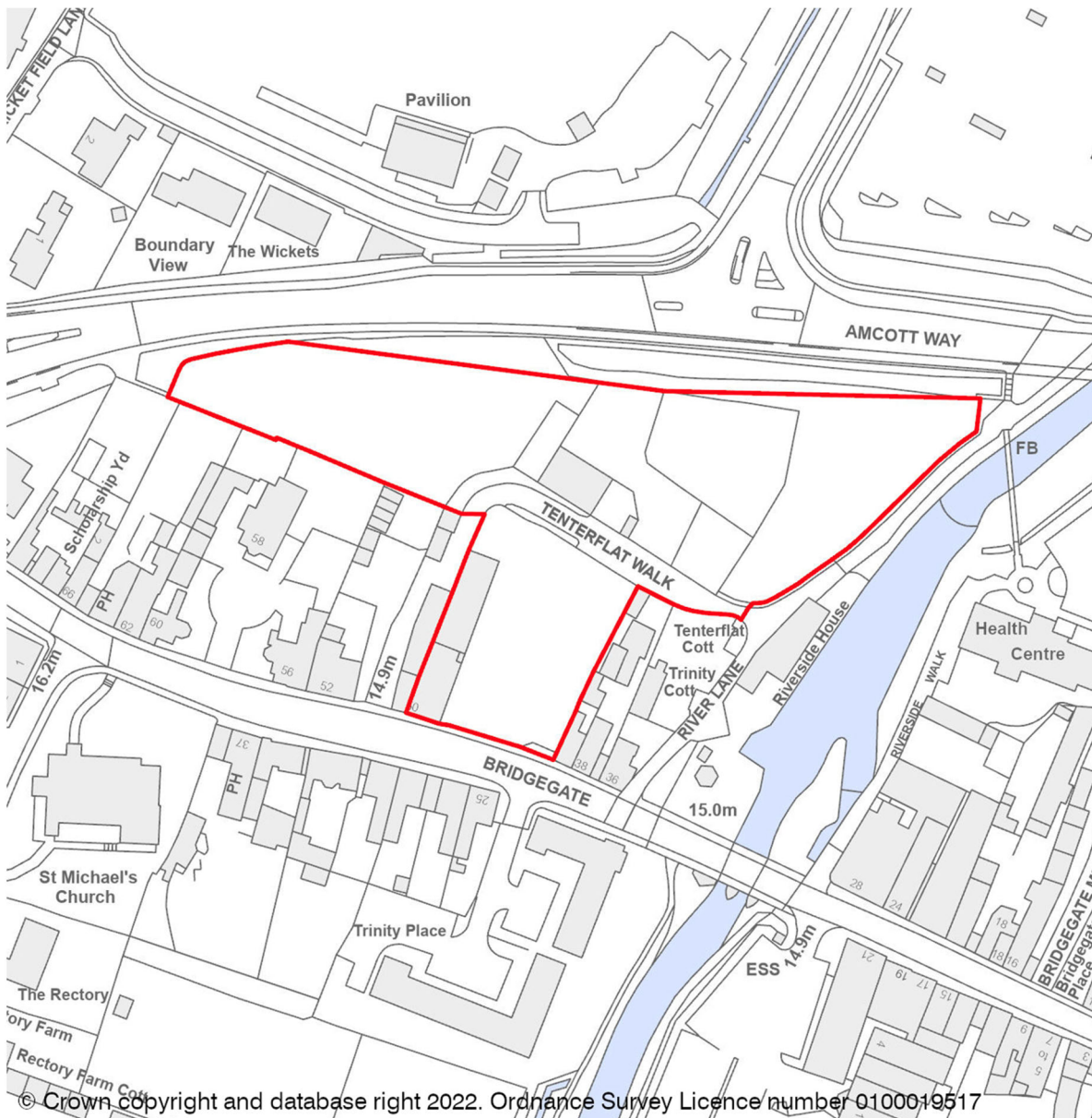
#### ***Policy 13a The Redevelopment of Ebsworth Hall***

- 1. The redevelopment of Ebsworth Hall for community uses is supported where the proposal;**
  - a) retains the entrance porch, the roof-mounted vent, front gable oval-shaped vent and foundation stone as integral parts of the design,**
  - b) demonstrates how it has taken into account the guidance for Character Area 4, particularly the Design Codes 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs and 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing, in the Retford Design Guidance and Codes.**
- 2. The design should reflect the building's location within the curtilage of St Swithun's Grade II\* listed Church.**
- 3. Vehicular access will be for service vehicles only.**
- 4. The use of the most up to date flood mapping and a site-specific flood risk assessment will be required to demonstrate the suitability of the site for the proposed use.**



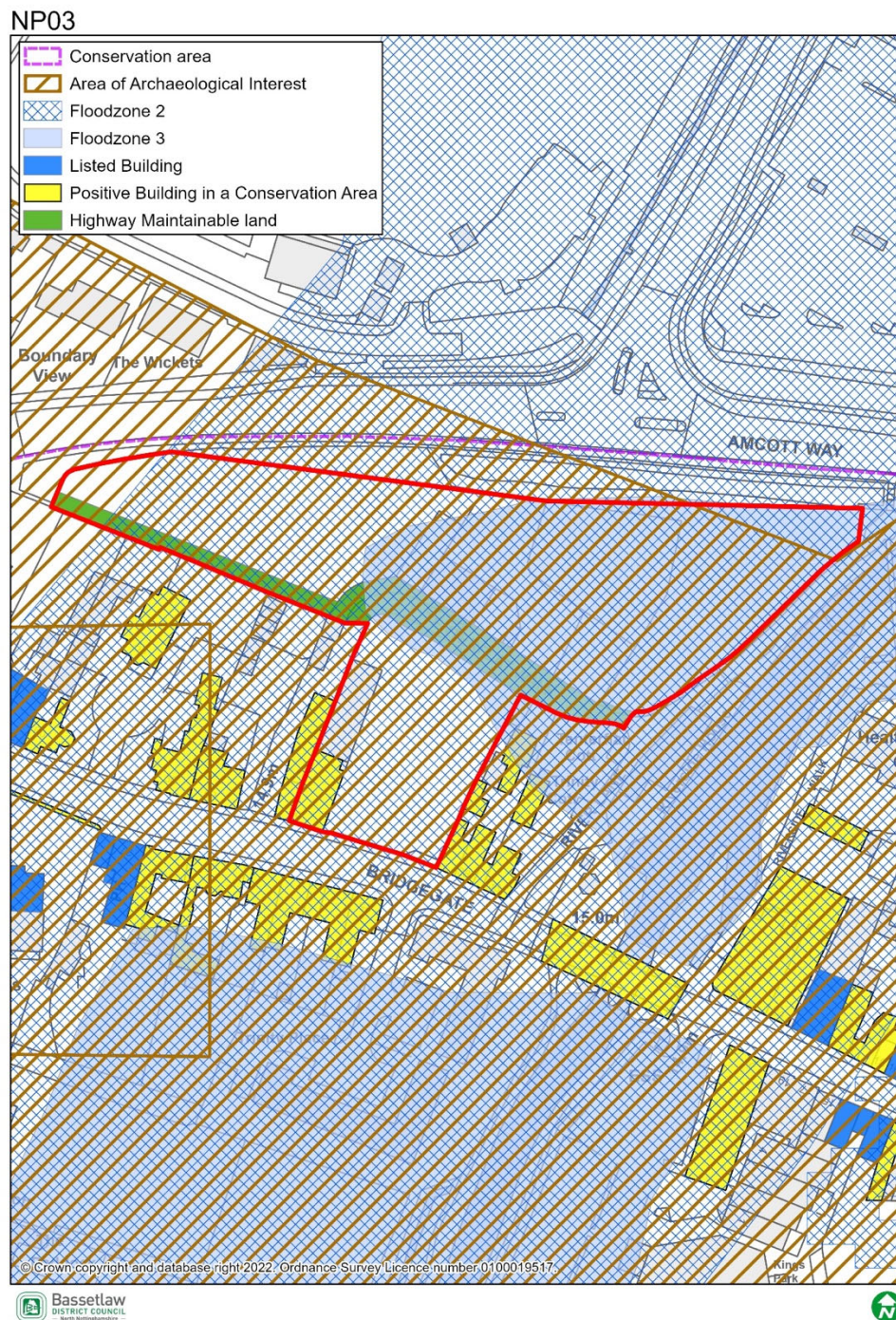
### Land between Amcott Way, Bridgegate and River Lane

#### Site Plan





**Constraints Map**



201 This 0.96 hectare site comprises a former (now demolished) commercial garage and an overgrown area to the north. The area shown as green on the map above is Tenterflat Walk and is still identified as highway maintainable land. Tenterflat Walk provides a connection from the north west to the east of the site, although at present the north western part is not publicly accessible. Tenterflat Walk connects to River Lane which in turn provides access north or south along the River.

202 The Neighbourhood Plan Ecology Survey identifies the site as providing habitat for small mammals especially given its location adjacent to the River Idle.

- 203 The entire site is within the Conservation Area and there are a number of listed buildings and undesignated heritage assets on Bridgegate, which runs along the southern boundary of the site. BDCs Conservation Team advise that a 2019 approval (19/00194/FUL) for the part of the site that abuts Bridgegate, is used as a basis for future proposals, especially for the Bridgegate frontage which is considered the most heritage-sensitive part of the site.
- 204 The entire site is at risk of flooding (Flood Zones 2 and 3), and a site-specific flood risk assessment is likely to be required to support proposals for development, as are on-site flood mitigation measures. The northeast (undeveloped) part of the site is in Flood Zone 3 and if there were alternative sites for housing the sequential test would not be met, but it could be allocated for other less vulnerable uses (e.g. retail, commercial or leisure uses).
- 205 There is potential for noise and atmospheric pollution from Amcott Way to the north, which could be addressed through a landscaped buffer and siting of new development away from the northern boundary.
- 206 BDC have commented that a sequential test would be required.
- 207 The site scored amber in the AECOM site assessment (Jan 2023).
- 208 The site is in Character Area 2 of the Retford Design Code (see page 24). The Design Codes for the Plan Area that apply to the site are 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs, 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing, 4.2.4<sup>43</sup> Frontages and Boundaries and 4.2.6 Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity
- 209 The RTCNP consider that the sensitive development of this site for a mixed use could provide a valuable contribution to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Town. However, the scheme would need to demonstrate that it has responded positively to the various challenges of the site.

***Policy 13b Land between Amcott Way, Bridgegate and River Lane***

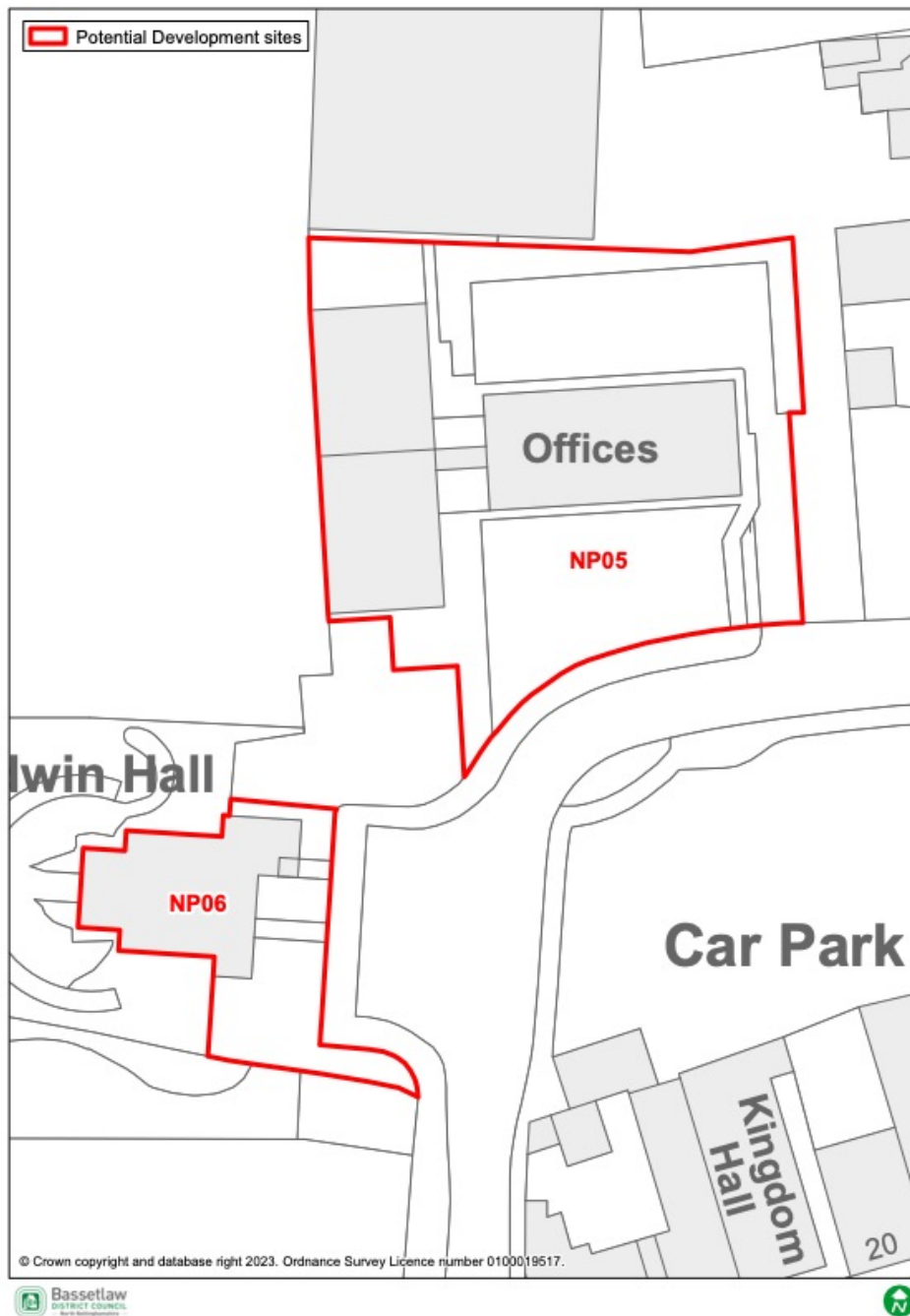
- 1. The development of land between Amcott Way, Bridgegate and River Lane for a mixed-use scheme (housing and commercial uses) is supported subject to the provision of a site-specific flood risk assessment and sequential test, using the most up to date flood mapping information to demonstrate the suitability of the sites in combination or separately, for the uses proposed.**
- 2. Subject to the above, development proposals will be supported where;**
  - a) they demonstrate how it has taken into account the guidance for Character Area 2 and, particularly the Design Codes 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs, 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing, 4.2.4 Frontages and Boundaries and 4.2.6 Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity, in the Retford Design Guidance and Codes.**
  - b) they reflect (in terms of design, appearance and scale) the site's location within the Retford Conservation Area especially that part of the site that abuts Bridgegate,**
  - c) they reinstate the through route of Tenterflat Lane for pedestrians and cyclists from Amcott Way to River Lane,**
  - d) the biodiversity value of the site is reflected in the retention of existing trees where possible,**
  - e) they secure a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain,**
  - f) a landscape scheme (including a buffer) and the location of housing (away from the northern boundary) should demonstrate that any issues of noise and air pollution have been mitigated.**

<sup>43</sup> Note there is no 4.2.3

### Redevelopment of Goodwin Hall and the Registry Office

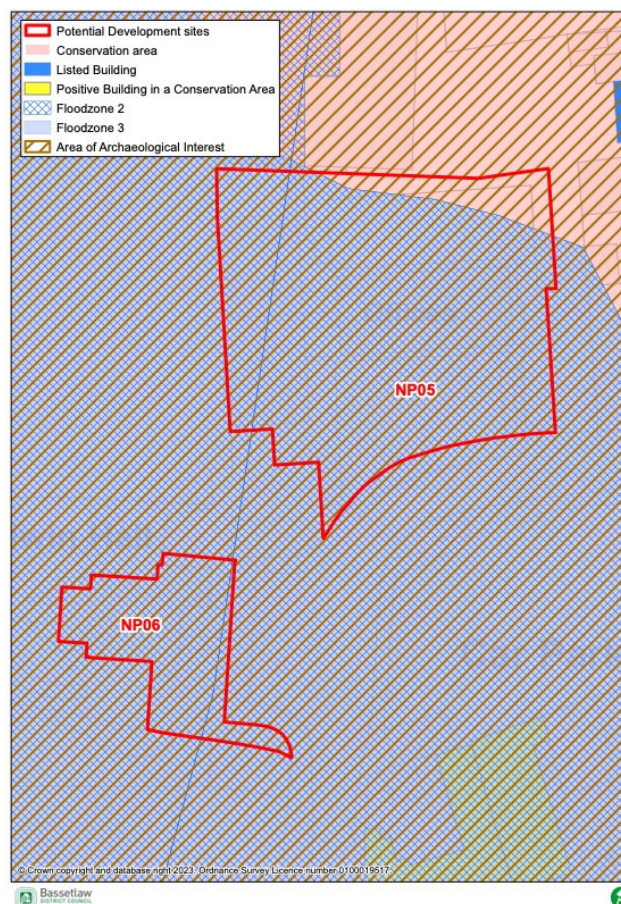
210 Goodwin Hall is a well-used community asset, although the fabric of the building (timber clad, single story flat roof) is coming to the end of its useful life. The Registry Office building and car park at the rear formally housed the Registry Office and other County Council Services. It is now largely vacant.

Site Plan showing NP05 the Registry Office and Car Park and NP06 Goodwin Hall





## Constraints Map



211 Both buildings are situated close to King's Park, an Unregistered Park and Garden. EA advise that Goodwin Hall is entirely in Flood Zone 3b (a functional floodplain) so there will be limits on the types of development which can take place in this location in accordance with National Planning Policy. More vulnerable uses such as residential development will not be appropriate. No extensions will be permissible and no increase in the building footprint or ground raising, to preserve floodplain storage in this location.

212 The Registry Office site scored amber in the AECOM site assessment (Jan 2023). EA advise that the Registry Office is in flood zone 3a and there should therefore be no extensions, new buildings or ground raising which would occupy floodplain storage.

213 The redevelopment on NP05 or NP06 would be subject to a sequential and exception test. Site-specific flood risk assessment would be required along with on-site mitigation measures. Sensitive/vulnerable uses should be kept off the ground floor to minimise risk to future occupiers.

214 Whilst flood risk is a significant constraint for Goodwin Hall and the Registry Office, the EA also advised that the Flood Map for Planning (which shows the flood zones) has not been updated with the outputs of the River Idle 2021 flood risk model and that further modelling was planned for 2024 which will update the floodplain map nationally.<sup>44</sup>

215 In addition (and outside the Plan area but in the vicinity of Retford Town Centre) the EA advise there is land that could be used for online storage or conveyance improvements that in the long term could reduce the flood risk in Retford Town Centre.

<sup>44</sup> Based on the email to BDC from EA on 8<sup>th</sup> June as part of the preparation of this Plan

- 216 As both buildings are in a good location between the Market Square and Kings Park, and that Goodwin Hall remains a highly valued community asset, whilst the future of the Registry Office remains uncertain, it was considered appropriate to include them in AECOMs site assessment.
- 217 For the Registry Office, the site assessment noted that there was potential for the existing office block to be converted to residential/mixed-use, with additional storeys adding that demolition of the buildings may increase the cost of development. However, the Registry Office (and Goodwin Hall) are a 1960's design. BDCs Conservation Officer's comments confirmed that the Registry Office and Goodwin Hall contributes little to the historic appearance of this part of the Conservation Area and setting of nearby Listed Buildings. The Conservation Officer supports the replacement, redevelopment of these buildings (subject to the scheme being appropriate in scale, materials, layout and design.)
- 218 The redevelopment of the Registry Office site would provide the opportunity for a new building of a high design quality that reinforces the historic landscape character. It also provides the opportunity to complement or combine the function of Goodwin Hall with uses on the Registry Office site.
- 219 The AECOM site assessment notes the intervisibility of Goodwin Hall with Kings Park given its proximity to the same and that only single-story development would be suitable given this location. The Goodwin Hall building is also in a poor condition. The combination of the two sites would allow for a creative solution to be found that sees the provision of social space and level access living accommodation that would be suitable for older people.
- 220 The HNA identified a need for housing for older people with limited support within the Town Centre and Policy 10c of the RTCNP supports this provision.
- 221 The site assessment also noted the potential benefit of delivering a building that combines the uses of these two buildings. 'Subject to appropriate flood risk mitigation, the site is potentially suitable for residential uses, including specialist or older people's accommodation. It is adjacent to Site NP06 (Goodwin Hall) which is in the same ownership, and there is potential for a comprehensive redevelopment of the two sites, with the existing community use on Site NP06 either being retained in its current location or relocated onto Site NP05.'<sup>45</sup>
- 222 In spite of the above, it is important to note that the Site Assessment Report was completed prior to the more detailed advice on flood zones being provided by the EA. The latter places a particular emphasis on the need to ensure that flood risk is considered as the primary determinant of the suitability of development and / or types of development.
- 223 The sites are in Character Area 1 of the Retford Design Code (see page 20). The Design Codes for the Plan Area that apply to the site are 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs, 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing, 4.2.4<sup>46</sup>, Frontages and Boundaries, 4.2.5 Public Realm and 4.2.6 Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity.
- 224 Both sites are within the Retford Conservation Area and there are several Listed Buildings in close proximity, including the Grade II listed 18 and 18a The Square, immediately to the east. Any new development on the site would need to be sensitively designed to minimise impact on the historic environment and enhance the existing heritage assets.
- 225 Comments from NCC highways with regard to Goodwin Hall indicate that the large apron in front of the site which is marked on the ground as parking for the Hall is public highway. This area may require stopping-up as part of the proposal. The existing footway would then require replacing to

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<sup>45</sup> See Site Assessment page 24

<sup>46</sup> Note there is no 4.2.3

the side of the carriageway. This will in effect make the site larger than indicated on the submitted plan.

226 It is noted that Policy 13c reflects a longer-term aspiration, the wider ambition of which may not be deliverable until later in the Plan period due to the current constraints based on existing flood mapping.

#### ***Policy 13c Redevelopment of Goodwin Hall and Registry Office Buildings***

- 1. The redevelopment of both the Registry Office Building and Goodwin Hall for a mixed-use scheme (housing and community uses) is supported subject to the provision of a site-specific flood risk assessment and sequential test, using the most up to date flood mapping information to demonstrate the suitability of the sites in combination or separately, for the uses proposed.**
- 2. Subject to the above, development proposals will be supported where they;**
  - a) Demonstrate how they have taken into account the guidance for Character Area 1 and, particularly the Design Codes 4.2.1 Building Heights and Roofs, 4.2.2 Building Materials and Detailing, 4.2.4 Frontages and Boundaries, 4.2.5 Public Realm and 4.2.6 Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity, in the Retford Design Guidance and Codes,**
  - b) reflect (in terms of design, appearance and scale) the site's location within the Retford Conservation Area and adjacent to Kings Park (an Unregistered Park and Garden),**
  - c) provide the equivalent space and facilities indoors and outside (or better) for older and disabled people as is provided in the existing Goodwin Hall, in accordance with the original purpose of the Hall,**
  - d) show how the biodiversity value of the Goodwin Hall site is reflected in a landscaping scheme that provides a soft boundary to Kings Park and secures a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain,**
  - e) provide level access homes for older people with limited support needs, to meet a locally identified need identified in the most up to date Housing Needs Assessment and in accordance with policy 10c,**
  - f) reconfigure the highway and footpaths in front of Goodwin Hall to ensure safe and direct access along Chancery Lane and into Kings Park.**

## **24 Implementation**

227 The policies in this plan will be implemented by Bassetlaw District Council as part of their development management process. Where applicable the RTCNPG will also be actively involved, for example as part of the pre-application process as outlined in the Key Principle. Whilst Bassetlaw District Council will be responsible for development management, the RTCNPG will use this Neighbourhood Plan to frame their representations on submitted planning applications.

228 There are several areas of activity which will affect delivery and each is important in shaping the Plan area in the months and years ahead. These comprise:

- a) The statutory planning process; this Neighbourhood Plan will direct and shape developer and investor interest in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, this is also in the context of the wider Bassetlaw District Council planning policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.



- b) Investment in and active management of public services and community assets, together with other measures to support local services for the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.
- c) The voluntary and community (third) sector will have a strong role to play particularly in terms of local community infrastructure, events and Town Centre life. This sector may play a stronger role in the future.
- d) The role of the RTCNPG in delivering the projects that have been identified as part of this Neighbourhood Planning process.
- e) The Neighbourhood Plan will become part of a hierarchy of planning documents. The RTCNPG will also look to District and County Council investment programmes where a policy can be shown to be delivering District and County objectives.

## **25 Monitoring and Review**

229 The impact Neighbourhood Plan policies have on influencing the shape and direction of development across the Plan area during the Plan period will be monitored by the RTCNPG Council.

230 If it is apparent that any policy in the Plan has unintended consequences or is ineffective it will be reviewed. It is the expectation of the RTCNPG that there will be a review of the Plan 5 years after it has been made.

231 Any amendments to the Plan will only be made following consultation with Bassetlaw District Council, local residents and other statutory stake holders as required by legislation.

## Appendix A Community Aspirations

This separate annex contains a number of community aspirations. Some take the form of projects which will be pursued by the Parish Council, others take the form of actions where the Parish Council will seek to work alongside other organisations and landowners whilst some are expressions of the local community’s vision and ambitions for the future of the Parish.

All of the community aspirations have resulted from work carried out during the production of the RTCNP but are not subject to planning policies. This annex therefore does not form part of the statutory development plan, but nevertheless is an important element for the community in achieving the Vision set out in the RTCNP.

<p><b>Aspiration 1 Maintaining Visual Coherence</b></p> <p>The design of street furniture impacts on the character of the place. In the Plan area the street bins and lighting should add to the character and not detract from it. The NPG consider that the current style and colour of the street furniture and the use of a grey and burgundy colour palette is incompatible with the Georgian townscape.</p> <p>For the visual coherence of the Town Centre it is important that the colour palette and materials reflect the heritage of the place. Roller shutters and remedial work to shop fronts can have a cumulative effect of eroding this character.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 1 Maintaining Visual Coherence</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The RTCNPG or its successor will seek to work with owners to secure appropriately sensitive remedial works to ensure there is no further erosion of these heritage assets and to encourage suitable alternative uses to protect these assets.</b></li> <li><b>2. The RTCNPG or its successor will work with BDC to review the design and colour of street furniture.</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Aspiration 2 Balancing pedestrian and vehicular movement in the Square</b></p> <p>Whilst highway matters are not within the purview of a neighbourhood plan, an aspiration is that the RTCNPG will work with NCC and BDC to seek a creative solution to the conflict between traffic and people in the eastern and northern part of the Square.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 2 Balancing pedestrian and vehicular movement in the Square</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. RTCNPG or its successor to work with NCC and BDC to seek a design solution that enables a better balance of vehicular and pedestrian movement through the eastern and northern part of the Square.</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Aspiration 3 Reduce the visual impact of vehicles around Canon Square</b></p> <p>Whilst highway matters are not within the purview of a neighbourhood plan, an aspiration is that the RTCNPG will</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 3 Vehicular movement around Canon Square</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The RTCNPG or its successor to work with partners (NCC and BDC) to seek ways to</b></li> </ol>

<p>work with NCC and BDC to seek ways to reduce the visual impact of vehicular movements around Canon Square.</p>	<p><b>reduce the visual impact of vehicular movements around Canon Square.</b></p>
<p><b>Aspiration 4 Using and improving the Public Areas</b></p> <p>The Business and Planning Act 2020 streamlined the process to secure a pavement licence to enable bars, cafes and restaurants to put furniture outside to serve their food and drink. The pavement licences extend to September 2022. The RTCNPG support this relaxation of regulations as it has enabled local cafes to continue to trade during covid restrictions. This has been especially beneficial for businesses on the pedestrian area of Carolgate and has improved the sense of vitality where people can safely meet outdoors.</p> <p>There are other small public areas across the Town Centre that could be improved with planting or better maintenance. There are also opportunities to provide more Retford appropriate styles or colours of lamp standards, signage and bins etc. This will not require planning permission but will be an important aspiration for the RTCNPG.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 4 Using and Improving the Public Areas</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The RTCNPG or its successor to work with BDC to seek ways to support businesses who want to continue to offer space outside at the front of their premises for the consumption of food and drink.</b></li> <li><b>2. The RTCNPG or its successor to work with partners to produce a strategy for the Town Centre that uses more Retford appropriate street furniture and that identifies small environmental enhancements on grass verges and pockets of public underused land.</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Aspiration 5 Supporting Independent Businesses</b></p> <p>The RTCNPG is committed to encouraging independent businesses to locate and thrive in the Plan area. Schemes to encourage the use of local and independent business are a crucial element of the RTCNPG's vision for the Town Centre. Such an initiative falls outside the planning system and so is included under this aspiration.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 5 Supporting Independent Businesses</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The RTCNPG supports the role of new and existing independent business within the Town Centre and will work with local business owners to continue to devise campaigns, events and activities that promote locally owned businesses.</b></li> <li><b>2. The RTCNPG or its successor to work with BDCs economic development officers to continue to investigate ways of supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses to the Town centre.</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Aspiration 6 Supporting the Creative Industries</b></p> <p>There are murals around the Town that depict the history of the place and create visual interest that have been</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 6 Supporting the Creative Industries</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The RTCNPG is supportive of local artists of all sorts who provide community activities as well as being local businesses attracting</b></li> </ol>

<p>painted by local artists. The RTCNPG support the use of murals as they both generate interest in the history of the Town and enliven blank walls and contribute to the tourist offer in the Town. They need to be sensitively located so as not to harm the historic character of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The Town Centre should be a place to foster creativity including the performing arts.</p>	<p><b>visitors to the Town. The provision of an outdoor space for performing artists is supported where this does not erode the historic character of the Town Centre.</b></p> <p><b>2. The use of murals creates interest and activity in the Town and is supported. The RTCNPG or its successor will work with landlords and artists to protect the existing murals and will support new murals where they do not harm the historic character of the Town Centre.</b></p>
<p><b>Aspiration 6 Improving the Ecology of the Plan Area</b></p> <p>Both the Ecology Assessment and Ecology Study Report identified numerous opportunities to improve the biodiversity within the Plan area. These will require funding and maintenance and will require partnership working.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 6 Improving the Ecology of the Plan Area</i></b></p> <p><b>1. The RTCNPG or its successor will work with partners (e.g., BDC, Notts Wildlife Trust, landowners and local community groups) and to seek funding to deliver some of the ecology schemes identified in the Ecology Assessment and the Ecology Study Report.</b></p>
<p><b>Aspiration 7 Solar Energy Potential on roofs</b></p> <p>Roofs present an ideal place to install solar panels that will reduce the energy costs for residents and businesses and will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions.</p>	<p><b><i>Aspiration 7 Solar Energy Potential on roofs</i></b></p> <p><b>1. The RTCNPG or its successor to work with partners to promote solar energy use in the Town Centre.</b></p> <p><b>2. The RTCNPG or its successor to encourage the take up of solar panels by homes and businesses and to explore the creation of a community renewable energy scheme that uses the power from solar panels on the roofs in the Town Centre to provide power to support Town Centre residents and businesses.</b></p>



**Appendix B Reports commissioned for the RTCNP**

*Retford Design Code 2022*

*Housing Needs Assessment 2022*

*Masterplan 2022*

*Site Options and Assessment*

*Ecology Assessment 2022*

*Ecology Study Report 2022*

These are all separate files due to their size and can be found on the neighbourhood plan tab at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnp>

Appendix C Key Views (see Map 3)



KV 1a Looking west along Bridgegate important route into and out of the Town Centre shows the historic character of the Town and sense of enclosure.



KV 1b Looking east along Bridgegate important route into and out of the Town Centre shows the historic character of the Town with a sense of enclosure and a terminated view of a neoclassical building



KV 2 Looking north east along Rectory Road to St Michael the Archangel – a key landmark building Grade 2\*



KV 3a Bridgegate looking north east along the River Idle – a main corridor for wildlife with mature trees that planting – a green ribbon that runs north south and is a backdrop of the urban area



KV 3b Bridgegate looking south west along the River Idle – a main corridor for wildlife with mature trees that planting – a green ribbon that runs north south and is a backdrop of the urban area



KV4 looking south west from the boundary of the Plan area sense of enclosure across the historic streets towards St Swithuns



KV5 looking south east across Amcott Way and Churchgate Car park long view to St Swithuns





KV6a looking north east from the junction of Market Place and Bridgegate towards the market place – Georgian buildings framing an important gateway to the market place.



KV6b looking north east across canon square towards St Swithuns



KV7 intimate view looking north down Dyers Court important and well used access route from the main shopping area to Chapelgate Car Park, framed by St Swithuns in the distance



KV7a view beyond the narrow alleyway above opens up with a mural showing women working in the textile industry on the blank wall and St Withuns beyond





KV8 looking south west across the market place to the listed Town Hall – square framed by Georgian buildings



KV9a looking west along Grove Street important historic route into the centre of Town



KV10 looking east along Grove Street traditional shops with the imposing Grove Street Methodist church on the left and Bassetlaw Museum on the right.



KV11 view looking west down Grove Street with the historic buildings providing a sense of enclosure terminated with the view of a neoclassical building in Market Square.



KV12 looking north along Town Hall Yard  
Photo to be replaced with better on from nearer the end of the yard





KV13 Exchange Street looking West away from the Town Centre terminated view of mature trees in Kings Park award winning park outside the Plan area.



KV14 looking north from bridge on West Street over the River Idle as it runs through Kings Park shows the contrast of the lush mature vegetation in close proximity to the Georgian red brick urban landscape.



KV15a looking west along the tow path of the Chesterfield Canal renovated? Canal building long view shows the dominance of water as a boundary to the Town Centre.

KV15b looking east along the Chesterfield Canal long view shows the dominance of water as a boundary to the Town Centre.



KV16a looking south along Carolgate with a long view to the buildings bounding the Market Place.



KV16b looking north along Carolgate sense of enclosure and traditional buildings immediate change of scale after leaving the openness the Market Place.