

**RETFORD
TOWN CENTRE**
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP

Basic Conditions Statement

Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan



21 November 2023

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1. Introduction

What is the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan for Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Area has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Plan establishes a vision of the future for the Plan area and sets out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change.
- 1.2 The Plan relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning (general) Regulations 2012.

What is the Basic Conditions Statement?

- 1.3 This Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared to accompany the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter the RTCNP). Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that a Neighbourhood Development Plan meets each of the following Basic Conditions¹:
 - I. has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan,
 - II. contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
 - III. is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
 - IV. does not breach and is otherwise compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations,
 - V. does not breach the requirements of chapter 8 part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017,
 - VI. having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that it is made.
- 1.4 This document outlines how the RTCNP meets the Basic Conditions.

2. Key Statements

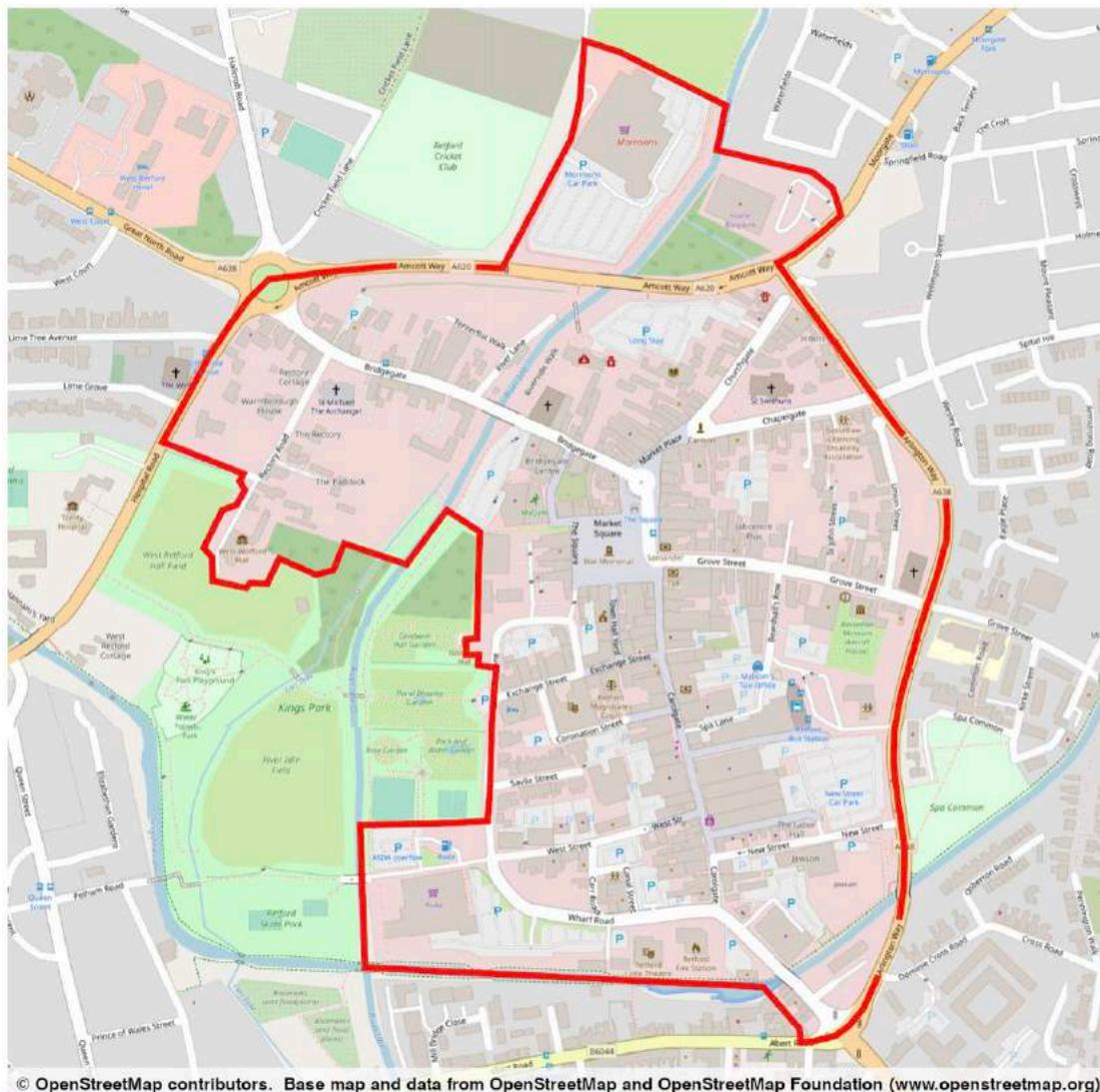
- 1.5 The Plan area covers Retford Town Centre and was designated a neighbourhood plan area on 4th March 2021 alongside the designation of Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group as the associated Neighbourhood Forum for the area. The Neighbourhood Area has been designated as a business area, in recognition of the proportion of business interests. A modification to the

¹ See national planning practice guidance Paragraph: 065 Reference ID: 41-065-20140306

Neighbourhood Area, extending the boundary to incorporate the full extent of Bridgegate and environs, was approved by Bassetlaw District Council on 23 September 2021.

- 1.6 The RTCNP expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land only within the Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Area is shown on the map accompanying the neighbourhood designation application.
- 1.7 The RTCNP covers the period from 2022 to 2038 and is aligned with the Bassetlaw Plan.²
- 1.8 The Plan proposals do not deal with mineral extraction and waste development, nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as 'excluded development'.
- 1.9 The RTCNP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and covers only the designated Retford Town Centre as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan Area



² At time of writing the Bassetlaw Plan was awaiting adoption (November 2023).

- 1.10 There are no other Neighbourhood Plans in place for this area.
- 1.11 The Pre-Submission Draft RTCNP was made available for consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations from 24th July to 8th September 2023. Amendments have been made to the document based on all the comments received and these are summarised in the document entitled 'Consultation Statement'.

3. Conformity with National and District Policy

- 1.12 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to national policies and advice set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³. Paragraphs 28 to 30 and footnote 18 of the NPPF refers to Neighbourhood Plans requiring them to have regard to the policies in the NPPF.
- 1.13 The NPPF provides a framework within which local communities can produce Neighbourhood Development Plans for their area and sets out how planning should help achieve sustainable development (see paragraphs below relating to achieving sustainable development).
- 1.14 The NPPF also refers to the need for Neighbourhood Plans to be in general conformity with strategic policies in any Development Plan that cover the area, here it is the adopted Core Strategy which will be superseded very shortly by the Bassetlaw Plan.
- 1.15 Plan area based studies have been commissioned and are available on the Neighbourhood Plan tab at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnp/supporting-documents>
- Retford Town Centre Design Code AECOM 2022
 - Housing Needs Assessment AECOM 2022
 - Retford Town Centre Masterplan 2022
- 1.16 In addition, the NPG have done their own assessment of Significant Views and Significant Green Areas. This involved a walkabout and discussion with the AECOM consultants as part of the Design Code work and the same with the planning consultant supporting the group to write the neighbourhood plan. The NPG then met with maps to agree the Significant Views and Significant Green Areas based on criteria provided by the planning consultant.
- 1.17 Table 1 sets out how the RTCNP is in general conformity National Policy.

³ All references are to the NPPF 2021

Table 1: Assessment of how each policy in the RTCNP conforms to the NPPF.

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF Ref (para.)	Commentary
1	Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets	189,190,194,197	<p>The NPPF places great importance on the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and that <i>'these assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'</i>.(Para 189)</p> <p>Policy 1 sets out <i>'a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment'</i> in accordance with NPPF para 190.</p> <p>This is the first policy because the heritage value of the Town Centre is seen as its most significant attribute that must be protected as the wider built up area expands.</p>
2	Achieving Well Designed Places	126, 127, 128, 129,	<p>The NPPF supports the production of Design Guides for neighbourhood areas and Policy 2 is underpinned by the Retford Town Centre Design Code.</p> <p>In accordance with NPPF para 127 Policy 2 provides <i>'a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have ... certainty .. about what is likely to be acceptable'</i>.</p> <p>NPPF para 130a) ensures that development <i>'adds to the overall quality'</i> of the Plan Area. The policy is based on the Retford Town Centre Design Code analysis and this provides a strong evidence base as the NPPF para 126 states <i>'Being clear about design expectations and how these will be tested is essential for achieving [good design]'</i>.</p>
3	Protecting Significant Views	130,179, 180	<p>The townscape character of the Plan Area is highly valued by the local community. The NPPF at para 130a requires planning policies to ensure that developments will <i>'function well and add to the overall quality of</i></p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF (para.)	Ref Commentary
			<p><i>the area not just in the short term but over the life time of the development’.</i></p> <p>Policy 3 defines the overall approach to protecting landscape character and provides a framework to show how development should be designed to minimise the impact on these significant views. Policy 3 is based on an understanding and evaluation of the defining characteristics of the Plan Area undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Retford Town Centre Design Code combines an assessment of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting (in accordance with NPPF para 130c). The identification of the significant views contributes to this analysis, providing local input in establishing where the townscape is locally valuable. Based on this detailed analysis Policy 3 provides a framework to identify and protect these significant views.</p>
4a	Improving the Square	86, 92, 93	<p>The NPPF requires planning policies to support the role that Town Centres play at the heart of local communities, to promote social interaction including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other...through street layouts and connections...and well designed clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes ‘.. and ‘plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces’.</p> <p>Policies 4a to 4c provide a framework that highlights the opportunities for improvements to these public spaces at the heart of the Town Centre including seeking ways to give pedestrians and cyclists priority over vehicles.</p>
4b	Improving Canon Square		
4c	Improving Carolgate		
5a and 5b	Acceptable Uses in the Town Centre and Shop Fronts	86	<p>The NPPF requires policies to support the role that Town Centres play at the heart of local communities ensuring that a suitable mix of uses is allowed that reflects their distinctive character. Policies 5a and 5b together ensure that Retford Town Centre remains vibrant having a diverse range of uses, but that the</p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF (para.)	Ref Commentary
			primary retail function is not eroded at ground floor level. The appearance of the shops (especially as they are all in the Conservation Area) should reflect the historic character and be in accordance with BDCs Shop Front guide and the Design Code recommendations.
5c	Improving Mobile and Broadband Connectivity	114	<p>Policy 5c promotes the delivery of full fibre broadband or super-fast fibre to the houses and businesses in the Plan area in accordance with the NPPF recognising that <i>‘high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being’</i>.</p> <p>Given the historic character of the area, Policy 5c requires masts and other associated infrastructure be carefully cited.</p>
6a	Greening the Streets	131, 179, 180, 167	The NPPF para 131 states that <i>‘Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure</i> existing trees are retained wherever possible.
6b	Protecting and enhancing biodiversity		<p>Policy 6a emphasises the importance of the trees and other planting in the Town Centre and development proposals to protect the existing where possible and to include additional planting in landscape schemes.</p> <p>The NPPF at para 179 states that planning policies should <i>‘pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.’</i> (This has been reinforced by the Environment Act that requires at least 10% biodiversity net gain on new development from Autumn 2023.) Policy 6b provides a clear policy framework to show how the impact on biodiversity of development will be assessed, how the uplift will be measured and how it can be mitigated. NPPF para 180 d</p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF (para.)	Ref Commentary
			<p>supports opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around development especially when this can secure measurable net gains.</p> <p>In accordance with para 179, areas of biodiversity value have been identified and Policy 6b protects them.</p> <p>Para 167 of the NPPF requires the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems in all major development. In the context of policy 6b, the use of SuDs is also seen as a way to provide multi benefits by additional planting that increases biodiversity.</p>
7	Improving the Canal and River Corridors	8, 98, 99, 100	<p>The NPPF includes canals and rivers in its definition of open space. A social objective of planning is to provide accessible open spaces as this contributes to strong, vibrant, healthy communities.</p> <p>The Canal and River corridors provide social and environmental value. They play a vital role in preventing the flooding of the Town Centre and are a key attribute in defining the character of the Town (Retford derives from the red bridge that goes over the river.)</p> <p>Protecting and improving these spaces (and the public right of way that is part of the tow path) is an essential function of planning. Policy 7 provides a locally specific framework for development along and nearby the Canal and River.</p>
8	Significant Green Areas	130	<p>The Retford Town Centre Design Code combines an assessment of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting (in accordance with NPPF para 130c). The identification of the significant green areas contributes to this analysis, providing local</p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF Ref (para.)	Commentary
			input in establishing where the townscape is locally valuable. Based on this detailed analysis Policy 8 provides a framework to identify and protect these significant green areas.
9	Extending the footpath and Cycle Routes	92, 104,106	The NPPF supports the promotion of sustainable transport like cycling and walking in planning policies. There is potential to enhance the network of walking and cycling routes through the Plan Area, (especially given the local topography). The Masterplan and local input for cycling groups have identified opportunities for improved connections which are supported. The NPPF sees the enhancement of walking and cycling routes as a way of encouraging healthy, inclusive and safe places.
10a, 10b, 10c	Housing Mix, Housing Tenure, Accommodation for Older People	61,62,63,64,65	<p>Policy 10a supports development that meets local housing need in accordance with district and local analysis from the HNA. The use of up-to-date evidence is in accordance with the NPPF. This creates a policy framework that identifies different house sizes and types and encourages a range of development to meet this need - (see NPPF para 62).</p> <p>Para 61 supports the use of local housing needs assessments to inform policy. The RTCNP is supported by a specific HNA. Para 62 states that where a need is identified (including for affordable housing) this should be reflected in planning policy. Para 63 states that <i>'where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required'</i>.</p> <p>Policy 10b is a response to the HNA findings.</p> <p>The delivery of sufficient homes to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements is a central part of the planning</p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF (para.)	Ref Commentary
			system. The need for housing for older people is identified in the HNA and supported via policy 10c.
11	Renewable Energy, and Low Carbon Technologies	152, 153,154,155	<p>The NPPF para 152 sees the planning system as crucial in supporting the transition to a low carbon future to <i>'shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience'</i>. New development should be planned in ways that <i>'can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design'</i> (para 154).</p> <p>NPPF para 155 notes that <i>'Plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from [renewable] sources.... While ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily including cumulative landscape and visual impacts'</i>.</p> <p>Policy 11 is proactive and encourages the development of low carbon homes and the use of renewable energy reflect statements of government policy. It also provide specific local criteria to ensure that there is a proper balanced assessment so that the local environment is not harmed in the aim to achieve lower carbon emissions.</p>
12	Reducing the Risk of Flooding	153,154,167	<p>50% of the Plan area is in a flood zone so it was important to have a policy in the RTCNP on this. Para 167 of the NPPF is clear that <i>'When determining locations local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere'</i>. Policy 12 reflects the local concern about flood risk . Para 153 notes that plans should take into account the long-term implications for flood risk and that new development should avoid increasing vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change'. Policy 12 provides a policy framework to set out clearly how it should be taken into account. The importance of SuDs, designed to provide an opportunity to achieve net biodiversity gains</p>

NP Policy No.	Policy Title	NPPF (para.)	Ref	Commentary
				and multi benefits is supported in Policy 12 in accordance with best practice.
13a,13b,13c	The Renovation or Redevelopment of Ebsworth Hall, Land between Amcott Way, Bridgegate and River Lane, and the Redevelopment of Goodwin Hall and the Registry Office Buildings	7, 8, 119, 12.36,3 159, 174, 189		<p>Each site-specific policy seeks to encourage sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.</p> <p>The policies allocate some housing with a mix of other community uses but in carefully selected locations in accordance with Para 119 of the NPPF that states '<i>Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment</i>'.</p> <p>Policies 13a-13c sets a policy framework that provides specific criteria based on local knowledge to assist developers in preparing planning applications that constitute sustainable development.</p> <p>The policies require high quality design and that reflects the heritage value of the site, and flood risk in relation to the requirements of Policy 2 (Achieving High Quality Design) and Policy 12 (Reducing the Risk of Flooding).</p> <p>Requirements relating to other site-specific issues are also reflected in accordance with other NP policies and the NPPF.</p>

4. Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Development

1.33 The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF defines sustainable development as having three overarching objectives '*which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)*'.⁴ The RTCNP recognises that this is a balancing act and the objectives of the Plan comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental objectives.

⁴ NPPF para 8

1.34 As this is a business led neighbourhood plan the **economic** goals are central to the RTCNP and relate to ensuring the Town Centre is attractive and functions well to support the existing and growing wider hinterland population. Policies support the retail functions in the Town and the appearance of the public realm to increase dwell time and spend in the Town. Figure 1 in the RTCNP shows how the different policies in the NP combine to provide economic benefits.

Figure 1 from the RTCNP



1.35 The **social** goals are to maintain a thriving community, recognising that the community and its needs change over time. The RTCNP supports the provision of housing that meets local need. The mix of uses including community facilities and health services are vital for social well being. The reuse of Ebsworth Hall and the reuse of the registry Office site are focused on repurposing these buildings for community benefit. The RTCNPG recognises the value people place on the quality of outdoor recreation as well. The RTCNP identifies the contribution of the Canal and River for walking and access to nature.

1.36 The RTCNP has included detailed analysis of the existing design of the area and the RTCNPG has been actively involved in considering the policy framework for new development including the regeneration of key sites (set out in the Masterplan). This ensures that growth is in keeping with the local character and that house types meet local need ensuring that the community remains cohesive as it expands.

1.37 The RTCNP has been prepared on the basis that local people can inform planning policy in their neighbourhood at the pre-application engagement stage (see Key Principle). By enabling people to become more actively involved in the decision-making process the Neighbourhood Plan has assisted in building social capacity.

1.38 The **environmental** goals are to protect the natural and built environment. The Neighbourhood Plan policies ensure that proposals protect, and where possible enhance, Significant Green Areas, Significant Views, and the heritage of the Plan area. The RTCNP provides locally specific policies based

on the Retford Town Centre Design Code to provide clarity to developers on what constitutes sustainable development. The identification of Significant Views based on local analysis is an important part of this process to provide clarity to decision makers and developers about the sensitivity of these spaces within and adjoining the settlement development limits.

- 1.39 Providing local detail based on the Design Code and local analysis, provides greater clarity for development and decision makers about the important historical attributes and extensive heritage assets that contribute to the quality of the Town Centre environment.
- 1.40 Promoting low carbon development and renewable energy (including supporting greater use of roofs for solar panels) will help decision makers get the right balance between protecting heritage assets and reducing carbon emissions in the Town.
- 1.41 A sustainability matrix of the policies in the RTCNP has been produced to assess the policies against sustainability criteria - see Appendix A. The Sustainability Matrix concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan policies would mostly have a positive benefit and occasionally a neutral impact.
- 1.42 There is no legal requirement for neighbourhood plans to have a Sustainability Appraisal. The SEA Screening process identified that one was not required. It is considered that this Sustainability Matrix is adequate in showing how the Neighbourhood Plan policies will deliver sustainable development.

5. Compatibility with Former EU Obligations post Brexit (SEA and HRA Screening)

- 1.43 The European Withdrawal Act 2018 (EUWA) provides a new constitutional framework for the continuity of retained EU law in the UK, replacing the EU treaties that had until that point applied in the UK. Section 7 of the EUWA 2018 states that *'Anything which was immediately before exit day, primary legislation of a particular kind, subordinate legislation of a particular kind or another enactment of a particular kind and continues to be domestic law on and after exit day continues to be domestic law as an enactment of the same kind'*⁵.
- 1.44 The references below are to EU directives and regulations because *'there is no official record of which EU treaty rights were incorporated into UK law'*⁶ but the EUWA accepts that the same environmental standards remain.
- 1.45 *'The EU (Withdrawal) Bill incorporates the existing body of EU environmental law into UK law, making sure the same protections have effect in the UK and laws still function effectively after the UK leaves the EU'*⁷.
- 1.46 On the basis of the foregoing the RTCNP has been assessed in accordance with extant EU regulation that has been incorporated into UK law.

⁵ See <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/16/section/7>

⁶ See <https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/guides/retained-eu-law-uk-after-brexit>

⁷ EU Withdrawal Bill Fact sheet 8 Environmental Principles. EU Withdrawal Bill came into force in January 2020

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening

- 1.47 The environmental assessment of plans with a significant environmental impact is a requirement of the EC Directive on the assessment of plans and programmes on the environment (Directive 2001/42/EC), known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.
- 1.48 A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required where a Neighbourhood Plan is deemed likely to result in significant negative effects on protected European Sites as a result of the Plan's implementation⁸.
- 1.49 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report was undertaken on behalf of the NPG in November/December 2023 to determine whether or not the RTCNP (Submission Draft) required a SEA and HRA. In accordance with regulations Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England were consulted. The Screening Report concluded that neither a full SEA nor a HRA are necessary. The Screening Report is available on BDCs web site⁹.

Other EU obligations

- 1.50 The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to and is compatible with the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the **European Convention on Human Rights**. Whilst an Equality Impact Assessment Report has not been specifically prepared, great care has been taken throughout the preparation and drafting of this Plan to ensure that the views of the whole community were embraced to avoid any unintentional negative impacts on particular groups.
- 1.51 The main issues for planning are the right to family life and in preventing discrimination. The RTCNP makes positive contributions, such as protecting the heritage and landscape of the Plan area, protecting the river and canal corridors, supporting the improvement of walking and cycling routes and promoting housing to meet local needs. The population profile has revealed that there are not significant numbers of people who do not speak English (as a first language) and it has not been necessary to produce consultation material in other languages.
- 1.52 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with extensive input from the community and stakeholders as set out in the accompanying Consultation Statement.¹⁰ There was consultation and engagement early on in the process and businesses residents were encouraged to participate throughout. The draft Neighbourhood Plan has been consulted on as required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012; responses have been recorded and changes have been made as per the schedule set out in the Statement of Consultation. The Consultation Statement has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and meets the requirements set out in Paragraph 15 (2) of the Regulations.

⁸ Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

⁹ See SEA/HRA screening document at <https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-services/neighbourhood-plans/all-neighbourhood-plans/retford-town-centre-neighbourhood-plan/>

¹⁰ See Consultation Statement at <https://www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpng/neighbourhood-plan>

6. General Conformity with Strategic Local Policy

- 1.53 To meet the Basic Conditions, the Neighbourhood Plan is required to demonstrate general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan, here the Core Strategy 2011. The Core Strategy strategic policies provide detailed guidance on where new development can take place and sets out the factors that will be considered by BDC when considering all proposals for development.
- 1.54 The RTCNP has been developed to be in general conformity with these strategic policies. Table 2 provides a summary of how each of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are in general conformity with BDCs strategic policies.

Table 2: Assessment of how the policies in the RTCNP are in general conformity with the Strategic Policies in the Core Strategy

Adopted Strategic Policies in BDCs Core Strategy	How this is reflected in the Retford Town Centre NP
<p>CS3 Retford – Development in Retford will be of a scale necessary to sustain the town’s role as a Core Service Centre. Particular regard will be given to the protection and enhancement of Retford’s character and natural environment. New development will complement the built form of Retford historic Town Centre. Support will be given to Town Centre development that enhances, Retford’s vitality and viability in its role as a service centre and attraction as a visitor, destination. ... Non-retail uses will be resisted in primary frontages at ground floor level .. in the secondary frontages developments that my individually or cumulatively prejudice, the vitality and viability of the Town Centre will not be supported.</p>	<p>Policy 1 protects heritage assets, policy 2 supports design that reflects the character of the area, policy 3 protects significant views, policy 4a,4b,4c improves the public realm (making the Town Centre more attractive), policy 5a,5b and 5c reinforces the retail activity in the primary frontage, supports the mix of Town Centre uses and supports the best telecommunication technology for the businesses in the town.</p>
<p>DM4 Design and Character All Major development proposals will need to demonstrate that they make clear functional and physical links with the existing settlement and surrounding area, enhance the character of the built historic and natural environment, are of a scale appropriative to the existing settlement, provide a qualitative</p>	<p>Policy 2 requires development to reinforce existing character. The Retford Design Code is the basis for the Policy 2. Policy 2, 10a,b,c requires development to make a positive contribution to the quality and quantum of housing, services and facilities. The site allocations have been selected to do provide good links to the existing Town Centre.</p>

<p>improvement to the existing range of houses, services, facilities, open spaces, and economic development opportunities.</p>	
<p>DM5 Housing Mix and Density requires the size and type of housing to be appropriate to the locality and to be informed by BDC's housing strategies and the SHMA.</p> <p>The density of development is expected to reflect the specific characteristics of the site and locality.</p> <p>DM5 sets out general design principals requiring proposals to respect the wider character, be of a high architectural quality and retain historic boundaries (walls and hedgerows).</p> <p>New housing development should not have a detrimental impact on amenity and should minimise CO2 emissions.</p>	<p>Policy 10a requires housing to reflect local as well as the District need and that they should be adaptable to meet the needs of people over their lifetime.</p> <p>Policy 2 requires development to reflect local characteristics and defines what these characteristics are based on the Retford Design Code.</p> <p>Policy 11 supports low carbon construction</p>
<p>DM8 The Historic Environment - support will be given to schemes that protect and enhance the historic environment.</p> <p>D replacement of shop fronts affecting heritage assets will be expected to ensure that traditional ship fronts are retained New shopfronts will be expected to utilise traditional materials, just timber, and the design to respect the special interest of the building and setting.</p>	<p>Policy 1 provides an overarching policy to cover all heritage assets, listed and non-designated, and nominates the Chesterfield Canal as a local heritage asset. The policy is in accordance with DM8 but highlights the heritage assets of local significance in the Plan area and sets a local policy framework that development needs to respond to.</p> <p>Policy 5b identifies the need to retain historic chop fronts and to ensure alterations like the addition of shutters does not harm the character of the town.</p>
<p>DM9 'Green Infrastructure (GI); Biodiversity and Geodiversity; Landscape; Open Space and Sports Facilities' requires development to protect and enhance the District's green infrastructure through the establishment of a network of green corridors. Development is required to provide improvements to the GI where possible and to restore or enhance</p>	<p>The importance of protecting green and blue infrastructure runs throughout the RTCNP policies and is the main focus of Policies 6a, 6b, 7 and 8. Analysis done by the NPG on Significant Views and Significant Green Areas ensure this is an Retford Town Centre specific policy framework.</p> <p>Policy 6a, 6b and 8 focus on enhancing the trees and planting in the town by greening the streets and increasing biodiversity of the green areas. Policy 7</p>

habitats and species and not adversely affect biodiversity. Development is expected to be sensitive to landscape setting and not adversely affect or result in the loss of open space.	focuses on enhancing the canal and river corridors. Policy 6b requires development to achieve a net biodiversity gain based on the Environment Act in accordance with national legislation.
DM10 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy' encourages development that utilises renewable and low carbon energy.	Policy 11 supports the use of renewable materials, and the construction of low carbon development in accordance with DM10. It supports all opportunities to make the move to low carbon technology including the use of roof space for solar panels in the Town.
DM12 'Flood Risk, Sewerage and Drainage' sets out the requirement for development to be in areas that are at the lowest risk of flooding and that development should refer to BDCs SFRA	Policy 12 13a,13b and 13c all reflect the need to address the impact of flooding in any proposal for new development. Development is required to do a site specific flood risk assessment and sequential test in accordance with district policy.
DM13 Sustainable Transport Requires development proposals to minimise the need to travel by car and to provide linkages for develop new footways and cycle paths.	Policy 9 based on the Masterplan analysis and local input identifies opportunities to create better linkages through the town for cyclists. Policy 7 supports the improvement of the Canal and River corridors and highlights their value as walking routes through the Town and supports their enhancement and extension where possible.

The Bassetlaw Plan

1.55 Whilst the RTCNP must be in general conformity with the adopted policies in the Core Strategy, where relevant, it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is also in conformity with the evidence base of the emerging Local Plan 2020-2038. At time of submission of the Neighbourhood Plan the Bassetlaw Plan has been examined and the main modification have been consulted on. The Bassetlaw Plan is expected to be adopted imminently. Table 3 sets out how the Neighbourhood Plan policies are also in conformity with the emerging Bassetlaw Plan.

Table 3: Assessment of how each policy in the RTCNP is in general conformity with the BDC's draft Local Plan August 2021, First and Second Addendum and Main Modifications August 2023

Submission Version Local Plan and main modifications	Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan
ST13 Town Centres, Local Centres, Local Shops and Services	Policy ST13 seeks to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre with them being the principal location for major retail, leisure and entertainment. This is central to the RTCNPs vision by seeking to enhance the public realm, protect the heritage of the town, ensure it continues to provide a mix of Town Centre uses, improve cycling and walking, promote the canal and river corridor, ensure design is

	sensitive to the setting and to regenerate key sites to deliver housing and community uses .
ST14 Management of Town Centres	Policy ST14 supports Class E use on the ground floor with more flexibility for the upper floors where this does not adversely affect ground floor viability. This is in accordance with RTCNP Policy 5a. ST14 also promotes Town Centre Regeneration supporting the delivery of the aspirations in the RTCNP.
Policy 21 Trinity Farm, Policy 22 Milnercroft, Policy 23 Former Elizabethan High School, Policy 24 St Michael's View, Policy 25 Fairygrove, Policy 26 Station Road, Policy 27 Ordsall Road South, Policy 28 Ollerton Road	These site allocations in the Bassetlaw Plan are outside the NP area but will result in 22% increase in the size of Retford built up area. The RTCNP seeks to provide a policy framework that will enable the Town Centre to respond to the growing demand for local shops and services that will result in this increase in population.
ST30 Housing Mix	The RTCNP Policy 10a, 10b and 10c supports housing development that meets local need and requires development to reflect local character (which per se means being in keeping with existing density standards and the built form).
ST35 Design Quality	The RTCNP is supported by the Retford Design Code which provides local detail - an approach supported at para 8.1.11. ST35 provides an overarching comprehensive policy for the District covering local character and settlement form, architectural quality and materials, landscaping, the environment, private amenity space and accessibility. Policy 2 provides the locally specific detail and translates ST35 into a Plan Area specific policy. 'The Council encourages communities preparing neighbourhood plans to consider what the positive features are in their local area and identify them as part of a made Plan and/or design code. Where these local features have been identified as part of a made neighbourhood plan, proposals should demonstrate that they have been incorporated into the design.'
ST37 Landscape Character and ST38 Green Gaps	Para 8.3.7 notes that national policy provides strong support towards protecting valued landscapes. The landscape around Retford Town Centre is "valued" and the RTCNP identifies areas of nature conservation, Significant Views and Significant Green Areas to provide

	<p>a robust evidence base to justify the policy approach taken.</p> <p>The RTCNP takes a similar approach to ST37 but with the Significant Views and Significant Green Areas analysis it provides an understanding of the value of elements of the landscape in the Town Centre.</p>
ST39 Green and Blue Infrastructure, ST40 Biodiversity and Geodiversity. ST 41 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	<p>The RTCNP Policy 6a, 6b and 7 provide a locally specific response highlighting the green and blue infrastructure that needs protecting and opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity (e.g. greening the streets) is outlined. The RTCNP is in conformity with ST39-ST41 as policies 6a, 6b and 7 seek to minimise the harm to the natural environment caused by the location of development and require development to enhance biodiversity. Tree planting as part of enhancing biodiversity is especially supported.</p>
ST42 The Historic Environment and ST43 Heritage Assets	<p>These Local Plan policies seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. RTCNP Policy 1 places the same weight on historic conservation identifying that is the listed buildings and their setting along with the Conservation Area with the public spaces that make the Town Centre uniquely attractive as a destination to shop and visit.</p>
ST51 Reducing Carbon Emissions, Climate Change and Adaption	<p>The RTCNP Policy 11 focuses on energy efficiency in the design of new development and the use of renewable energy. This is in conformity with ST51 which requires all proposals to consider how they will reduce carbon emissions. ST52 (A 1) identifies the opportunities for reducing emissions through design.</p> <p>Policy 11 supports retrofitting subject to locally relevant criteria.</p>

7. Conclusion

- 1.56 It is the view of Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan Group that the foregoing has shown that the Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are considered to be met by the RTCNP and all the policies therein.
- 1.57 The RTCNP has appropriate regard to the NPPF, will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, is in conformity with the

- strategic policies contained in BDCs adopted Core strategy and the emerging Bassetlaw Plan
- meets relevant EU obligations that have been transferred into UK Law.

1.58 On that basis, it is respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the RTCNP complies with Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

8. Appendix A Sustainability Matrix

Policy	Environmental Impact	Economic Impact	Social Impact
Policy 1 Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets	Positive Impact Protecting the historic environment is an important tenet of sustainable development. Policy 1 provides a policy framework to protect heritage assets in accordance with NPPF guidelines	Positive Impact Protecting the historic environment maintains the quality of the Town Centre ensuring the Plan Area remains an attractive economically vibrant place to live and work.	Positive Impact The business community value the historic character of the Town Centre. Policy 1 is locally specific and reinforces the district requirement to protect these assets. This policy gives local reassurance that the protection is central to decision making on future development.
Policy 2 Achieving Well Designed Places	Positive Impact Minimises the impact of development on the environment by setting out design guidelines that ensure development will blend with the existing built form and landscape. Ensures that development will reinforce existing character.	Positive Impact Ensures a high-quality design that will have community support and that will increase the attractiveness of the area as somewhere to live and work.	Positive Impact Ensures that new development integrates with the existing, creating high-quality buildings. Provides existing and future businesses and residents the confidence that future development will be of the highest design quality.
Policy 3 Protecting Significant Views	Positive impact Requires development to protect significant views identified by the NPG. The identification of these views provides clarity for developers and decision makers as these views are a defining characteristic.	Positive Impact The back drop of heritage assets makes the Townscape uniquely attractive making the Town a popular place to live, work and spend leisure time.	Positive impact The quality of the townscape is a valuable attribute. This policy provides assurance that these views will remain largely unchanged for the duration of the Plan period.
Policy 4a Improving the Square Policy 4b Improving Canon Square Policy 4c Improving Carolgate	Positive impact These policies combine to protect and enhance the public realm which is a critical component of what makes the townscape attractive	Positive impact These policies combine to protect and enhance the public realm, which will enhance the dwell time and spend of shoppers.	Positive impact These policies combine to protect and enhance the public realm, social spaces where people can gather and interact.

Policy	Environmental Impact	Economic Impact	Social Impact
Policy 5a Acceptable uses in the Town Centre Policy 5b Shop Fronts Policy 5c Improving Broadband Connectivity	Positive Impact Ensuring uses are combatable with the functioning of the Town Centre and ensuring that shop fronts reinforce the existing historic character ensures the high quality of the environment.	Positive Impact These policies ensure the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.	Positive Impact These policies ensure the Town Centre will continue to provide the services and facilities to meet the need of residents in the wider area.
Policy 6 Greening the Streets Policy 6b Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity	Positive impact Requires development to retain existing trees and have a landscape plan that enhances the greenery along boundaries and within development sites. Highlights the value of the Ecology Study produces for the Plan area to assist developers include the most appropriate plants and trees in landscape schemes. Requires development to make a net contribution to biodiversity.	Positive impact The quality of the natural environment is an attribute that attracts people to live and work in the Town Centre.	Positive impact The biodiversity of the Plan area is a valuable attribute; residents and business owners enjoy the quality and accessibility of nature. This policy provides assurance that these areas will be protected and encourages their enhancement for the duration of the Plan period.
Policy 7 Improving the Canal and River Corridors	Positive impact These corridors play a vital role in improving the biodiversity of the Plan area and this policy seeks their protection.	Positive Impact The canal and river add to the attraction of the Town Centre and may increase dwell time.	Positive impact The canal and river provide leisure and recreation opportunities for business owners and residents.
Policy 8 Significant Green Areas	Positive Impact The identification of the Significant Green Areas highlights the value of these spaces to local people and affords ensures this is taken into account in development proposals.	Positive Impact These green spaces soften the Town centre and make it a more attractive place to visit and may extend dwell time.	Positive Impact These Significant Green Areas have been identified by the NPG and are valuable, they soften the Town Centre and make it a more pleasant place to live and work.
Policy 9 Extending Footpaths and Cycle Routes	Positive Impact Seeks to reduces car use which will improve air quality.	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact Cycling and walking is good for health and will improve the well-being of

Policy	Environmental Impact	Economic Impact	Social Impact
			residents and those who work in the Town centre.
Policy 10a Housing Mix Policy 10b Housing Tenure Policy 10c Accommodation for Older People	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact Additional housing in the Town Centre will add to the demand for local services and facilities	Positive Impact Seeks to provide new houses that will meet local need and the changing needs of people of their lifetime.
Policy 11 Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Technologies	Positive Impact Low carbon development and the use of renewable energy will reduce the use of fossil fuels and reduce the waste of resources.	Positive Impact In the long-term addressing climate change is an economic necessity.	Positive Impact The business community want a lower carbon neighbourhood.
Policy 12 Reducing the Risk of Flooding	Positive Impact Ensures that new development does not increase flood risk in the Plan area protecting the environment.	Positive Impact Floods are very costly to the local economy; this policy seeks to ensure that there will be no increased risk of flooding from future development.	Positive Impact The flooding of homes is costly and stressful. This policy provides reassurance that future development will not increase the risk of flooding in the Plan area.