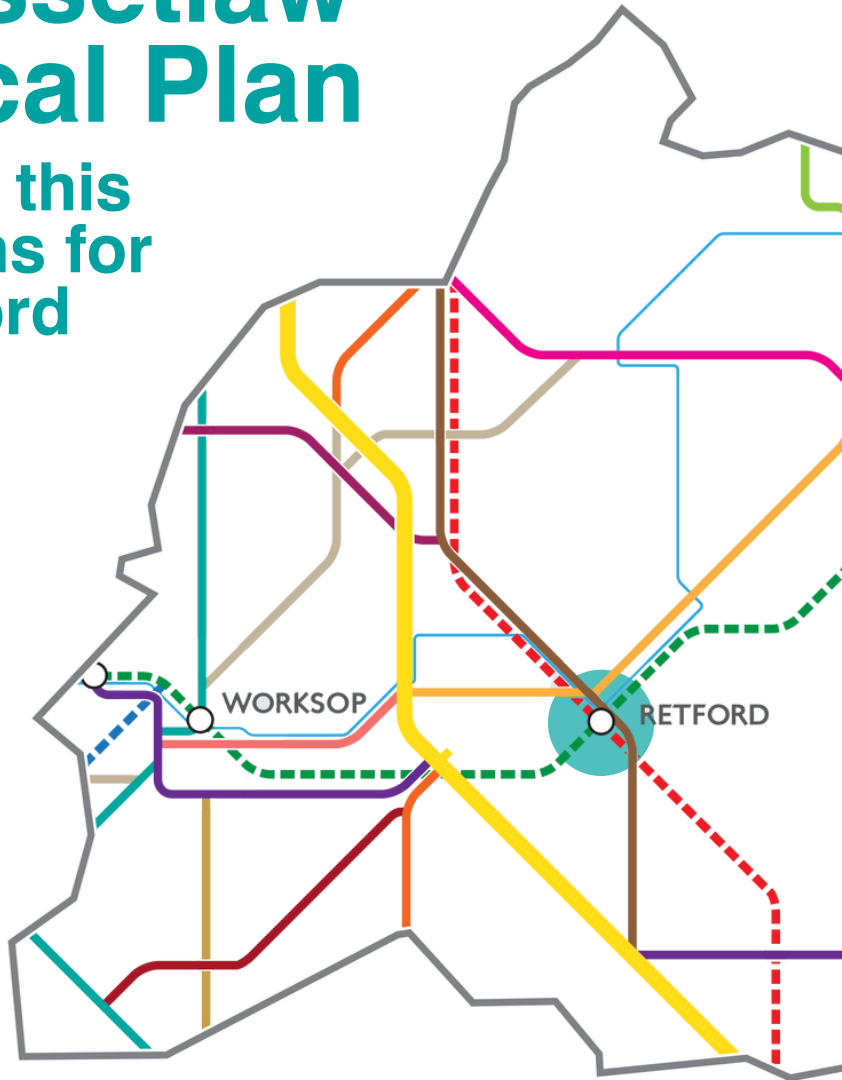


Bassetlaw Local Plan

What this
means for
Retford



Bassetlaw
DISTRICT COUNCIL
— North Nottinghamshire —

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Introduction

What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan sets out how many new homes and businesses Bassetlaw needs in the future, where they should go, and what services like schools, hospitals, doctors, shops and transport will be needed. The Plan lasts for 14 years.

The Local Plan also sets out where other new buildings are allowed to be built in Bassetlaw over this period, and which places like open spaces and wildlife areas should be protected from development.

The Government requires all Councils with responsibility for planning, like Bassetlaw, to have a Local Plan. **Without a Local Plan in place, it is much harder for Councils to control where new building can take place and to make sure the right type and amount of services will be provided.**

The Independent Planning Inspectorate wrote to Bassetlaw District Council on the 21st February 2024 to confirm that following examination, it had found the Local Plan ‘sound’ as long as some changes recommended by the Planning Inspectors (called Main Modifications) are made. This is a normal part of the Plan process. The Government website states that: “In most cases the report will recommend some changes that are necessary to allow the plan to be adopted. These are known as ‘Main Modifications’.”

You can learn more about the Main Modifications for the Bassetlaw Local Plan by reading the Technical Summary (page 4) of the Inspectors’ report.

But what does being ‘sound’ mean?

The law requires all Local Plans to be examined by the Independent Planning Inspectorate to determine if they are ‘sound’ or not. The Planning Inspectors have to check that the Council has prepared the Local Plan in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and that it meets the four tests of soundness:

- **Positively Prepared** – the plan should be based on strategy that meets development and infrastructure requirements, and will achieve sustainable development;
- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable;
- **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in line with National Planning Policy.

By finding the Local Plan ‘sound’, the Inspectors agree that with their changes the Council has met all these tests and that the Plan sets out appropriate, sustainable and deliverable development, supported by new infrastructure across Bassetlaw over the next 14 years.

Why is Retford being chosen for new housing developments?

The Government's National Planning Policy says that the Local Plan needs to provide sustainable development and meet local housing and business needs.

This means that where new building takes place, the area must be able to cope with any impact on local services and facilities, either through existing provision, or through developers paying for new ones.

The most sustainable way to provide new housing and businesses is by using something called a settlement hierarchy. This is a way of ranking settlements such as towns and villages based on the availability and accessibility of a broad range of facilities, such as schools, doctors, parks, shops and public transport.

Settlements that are higher up in the hierarchy list will be more sustainable locations for new development, because residents would be able to access a greater range of services, facilities and public transport more easily.

In Bassetlaw we use this method to allocate housing from the top down: Main Towns takes the most growth, then Large Rural Settlements (bigger villages), then Small Rural Settlements (smaller villages).

Retford is a Main Town because it has a wide range of services including an East Coast Main Line railway station, a bus station, primary and secondary schools, walk-in health centre and doctors surgeries, a park and other open spaces, a leisure centre, supermarkets and other shops and a town hall. It is accessible by a range of bus and rail services. The Independent Planning Inspectors agreed with our evidence that said Retford is a Main Town and that it is appropriate to provide housing in and on the edge of the town.

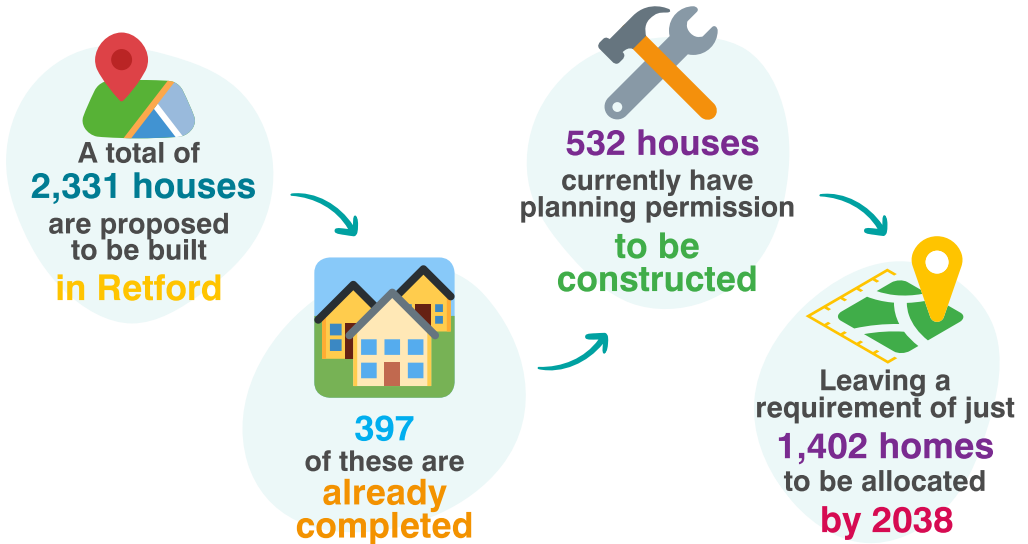
Looking at the Main Towns in the Local Plan, the most housing goes to Worksop (25%) as the district's Principal Town then to Retford (22.6%) which is recognised by its residents as the district's second town, followed by Harworth & Bircotes (21.4%).

Housing in Retford

The Bassetlaw Local Plan calls for a total of **2,331** homes to be built in Retford by 2038. However, because a large number of new homes have either already been built, allocated through other routes such as Neighbourhood Plans or have planning permission, the Local Plan only allocates **1,402** new homes in Retford.

This contributes to the total number of houses to be built across Bassetlaw. The Local Plan calls for **11,195** homes to be built by 2038, which will support the creation of **9,699** new jobs and provide more specialist homes, such as: homes for first time buyers; new affordable housing; wheelchair and accessible housing and housing for older people.

The infographic here illustrates the housing need for Retford.



Employment in Retford

2.7 hectares* at Trinity Farm for businesses with another **8.4 hectares** available for other types of employment;

5 employment sites protected for businesses to operate and grow;

Support for town centre regeneration.

*1 hectare is equivalent to roughly one and a half football fields

Infrastructure and the Local Plan

The Local Plan sets out areas of land where new building or development can take place. This is usually for new housing, new businesses or a mixture of both.

The Local Plan has to take into account the impact that this new development will have on the existing services or infrastructure that people use. For example, a new housing development might mean more cars on the road, more children needing to go to school or more people needing to register at the doctors.

The Local Plan addresses these issues by identifying what new infrastructure will be needed to support the people who will be living or working in these new areas. The Local Plan will then require any developers wishing to build in these areas to either deliver these measures themselves or provide the money for them to be delivered. This could include things like new bus routes, parks, road improvements such as roundabouts and new junctions, new health care facilities and new schools.

There are some things that the Local Plan can't ask for money for. New development in the Plan cannot address existing problems with services. For example, if there are parking problems outside a school at drop off time, developers can't pay to address that problem. In addition, developers' money cannot be used to provide new staff, like nurses or teachers.

The Infrastructure Funding Gap, what is CIL and S106 and why does it matter?

You may have seen or heard about something called the Infrastructure Funding Gap as well as phrases like CIL and S106. But what are they and why do they matter?

Infrastructure is usually funded through money provided by developers to help with the impact of new building. Sometimes the Council will ask for money through Section 106 Agreements (S106). These are payments tied to specific areas, meaning the money has to be spent in the local area. The Council can also use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments to fund infrastructure improvements. These are raised from developers and can be spent across the District. Other sources of funding could include money from Government or the new East Midlands Mayor.

The Local Plan calculates how much money will be needed to deliver infrastructure development in Bassetlaw up to 2038. It also shows where the money will come from. The Infrastructure Funding Gap defines the difference between how much money is needed, and the amount that developers will pay through Section 106 agreements.

Having a funding gap may sound like a bad thing, but without it, we would not be able to raise any money through CIL. By showing this funding gap, the Council is able to demonstrate the need for CIL monies and use them to support the delivery of infrastructure in the Local Plan.

Infrastructure funding gap for Bassetlaw

Let's break it down...



Why doesn't the Local Plan ask for CIL funding for Peaks Hill Farm, Ordsall South and Trinity Farm?

The Local Plan asks for lots of infrastructure to support new building on the Peaks Hill Farm, Ordsall South and Trinity Farm sites. The Council has taken the decision not to ask for CIL funding from these sites. This is because monies are not tied to specific areas or developments and can be spent anywhere in the district.

Instead, we have chosen to fund the necessary infrastructure for these sites through Section 106 Agreements. This means that the Council can ensure that the money provided by the developers is only used in these areas.

Ordsall South Infrastructure Breakdown





Bus and Transport Improvements

Internal road on site including new junction. An appropriate financial contribution to improve highways in the locality. A new bus service from the site to Retford town centre. Pedestrian and cycle links within site.



Primary School

The Local Plan contains safeguarded land for a new primary and nursery school in Ordsall and the money needed to build it.

Nottinghamshire County Council will decide when this school is needed.



Health Hub

The Local Plan will provide funding for a new Health Hub, including a GP satellite surgery and community health facilities.



Shops

Land will be provided for a new small supermarket and other shops or services.



Tree Planting

For every house built on the site, the developer will provide five trees. These can be planted on site or in the local area.



Flood Management

The site will benefit from a Flood Management Scheme (based on a Flood Risk Assessment) and a Surface Water Management Master Plan and Strategy. Development will take place outside the areas at risk of flooding and will include a Sustainable Drainage System, including blue/green infrastructure that manages flood risk, but delivers biodiversity, amenity, water quality and recreation benefits.



Community Park

The Local Plan will provide 23 hectares of open space. Natural woodland areas with a mix of open space, including children's play facilities. Existing residents can use this too. This will be located on the west end of the site.



Community Facilities

Community centre, sports facilities, indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The type of facilities will depend on the people living at the site and what they need.



Accessible and Affordable Housing

25% will be affordable, 1/4 of this will be first time buyers homes. There will also be private sheltered accommodation for older people and extra care. 5% of total will need to be wheelchair accessible. Will also include self-build land.

Trinity Farm Infrastructure Breakdown



Open Space

Flood Management



Affordable and Accessible Housing



Employment



Bus and Transport Improvements



Tree Planting

Health Facilities





Flood Management

The site will benefit from a Flood Management Scheme (based on a Flood Risk Assessment) and a Surface Water Management Master Plan and Strategy. Development will take place outside the areas at risk of flooding and will include a Sustainable Drainage System, including blue/green infrastructure that manages flood risk, but delivers biodiversity, amenity, water quality and recreation benefits.



Open Space

The Local Plan will provide open space and natural woodland area. Existing residents can use this too.



Employment

2.7ha of employment land at Trinity Farm for businesses to develop.



Affordable Housing

25% will be affordable, 1/4 of this will be first time buyers homes. Will also include self-build land.



Tree Planting

For every house built on the site, the developer will provide five trees. These can be planted on site or in the local area.



Bus and Transport Improvements

Contribution to improve public transport and a contribution to improve highways in the locality.



Health Facilities

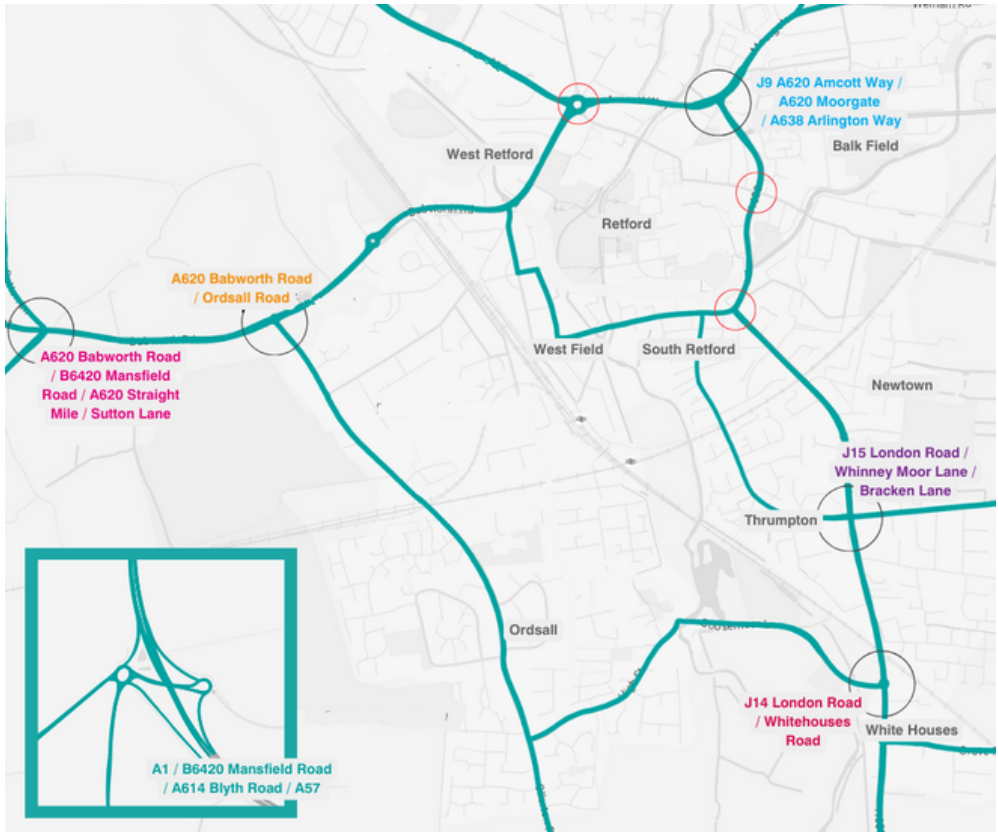
Money to improve doctors surgeries in the local area and money to improve Bassetlaw Hospital.

Retford Transport

The Local Plan requires transport improvements to six junctions in the Retford area.

- **A1 / B6420 Mansfield Road / A614 Blyth Road / A57 – Bottom Corner**
- **A620 Babworth Road / B6420 Mansfield Road / A620 Straight Mile / Sutton Lane**
- **A620 Babworth Road / Ordsall Road**
- **J9 A620 Amcott Way / A620 Moorgate / A638 Arlington Way**
- **J15 London Road / Whinney Moor Lane / Bracken Lane**
- **J14 London Road / Whitehouses Road**

The junctions highlighted by red circles cannot be changed or improved.



Flooding

Does Bassetlaw District Council 'allow' the building of housing developments on floodplains?

The Environment Agency splits the country up into different flood zones (Zone 1 is low probability of flooding, Zone 2 is medium probability, Zone 3a is high probability and Zone 3b is functional floodplain) and these are used by Councils when considering planning applications.

The Council must follow National Planning Policy (NPP) when considering planning applications. NPP requires that all new building should take place in the areas with the lowest risk of flooding.

When submitting planning applications, developers have to show that there are no reasonably available sites at a lower risk of flooding than the ones they want to build on. In Planning Law, this is known as the sequential test.

Because Bassetlaw has enough suitable sites in the Local Plan to meet the demand for new housing, any proposals for residential development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 are unlikely to pass this test.

If the test is passed then the developer will still need to show that the site will be safe for its lifetime, not increase flood risk elsewhere and the benefits of the development outweigh the flood risk. The Council will always carefully consider the advice of the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority in respect of any development in areas of high flood risk.

In Bassetlaw, the percentage of land in Flood Zone 3 that is currently used for housing is 0.09%. There is over 13,000ha of land in Bassetlaw that falls within Flood Zone 3, but 95.7% of this land is undeveloped. (about 12,500 ha.)

The law is very clear when it comes to new development. There must be no increased flood risk as a result of new building. Our local plan has been examined and found sound by the Independent Planning Inspector. The Inspector raised no concerns that development at Ordsall South or other sites in Retford and Bassetlaw would increase the risk of flooding.



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