

# Babworth Neighbourhood Plan

2022-2038

Pre-submission Version: June 2024

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# Foreword

Within the Localism Act introduced in 2011, there is provision for communities to shape their own future at a local level through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. During 2020, Babworth Parish Council made the decision to take up this opportunity and on 24 September 2020, Bassetlaw District Council approved the Parish as a Designated Area for the purposes of undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan. The Coronavirus Pandemic delayed the start of the process and the first Parish Council meeting that progressed the Neighbourhood Plan met on 31 May 2022.

As well as time spent gathering evidence through the analysis of strategic documents, the Parish Council, through two Theme Groups of Parish Councillors and residents has gathered together evidence and consulted with the community. This work has resulted in a Plan which you are now invited to read, and which sets out a vision for the Parish which will help to ensure that it continues to develop as a vibrant community whilst retaining its rural character for future generations.

It is appropriate to record thanks to all of those who contributed many hours in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, including consultants, Yourlocale, and Officers of Bassetlaw District Council who provided support as the Neighbourhood Plan evolved.

Once the Plan has been 'made' following a favourable referendum, the Babworth Neighbourhood Plan will take its place alongside the Bassetlaw Local Plan as the reference point for the determination of planning applications. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2020 – 2038, in line with the Bassetlaw Local Plan.

As well as the built environment, the Plan also considers environmental issues, community facilities and services, as well as transport and employment, all of which are important to the quality of life in Babworth Parish during the years up to 2038 and beyond.

The Parish of Babworth is an attractive and popular place in which to live and work, and the contribution from people who care about their community and want to make it better for generations to come is greatly appreciated.

**Robert Ashton**

**Chair, Babworth Parish Council**

# 1 About this Neighbourhood Plan

## Background

As a key part of the Government's Localism agenda, a Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes and businesses should be built; what new buildings and extensions should look like, and which areas of land should be protected from development.

As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, "Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live".

This Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of the Parish of Babworth including Ranby and the hamlets of Great Morton, Little Morton and Morton Grange. It sets out a long-term approach for the development of the Parish and sets out clear development-related policies to realise this.

In preparing a Neighbourhood Plan a community is not working from a blank piece of paper. Legislation requires that the Plan, and the policies it contains, must be prepared in a prescribed manner; in particular, the policies must be in general conformity with relevant national and local planning authority-wide (i.e. Bassetlaw District Council) approved strategic planning policies.

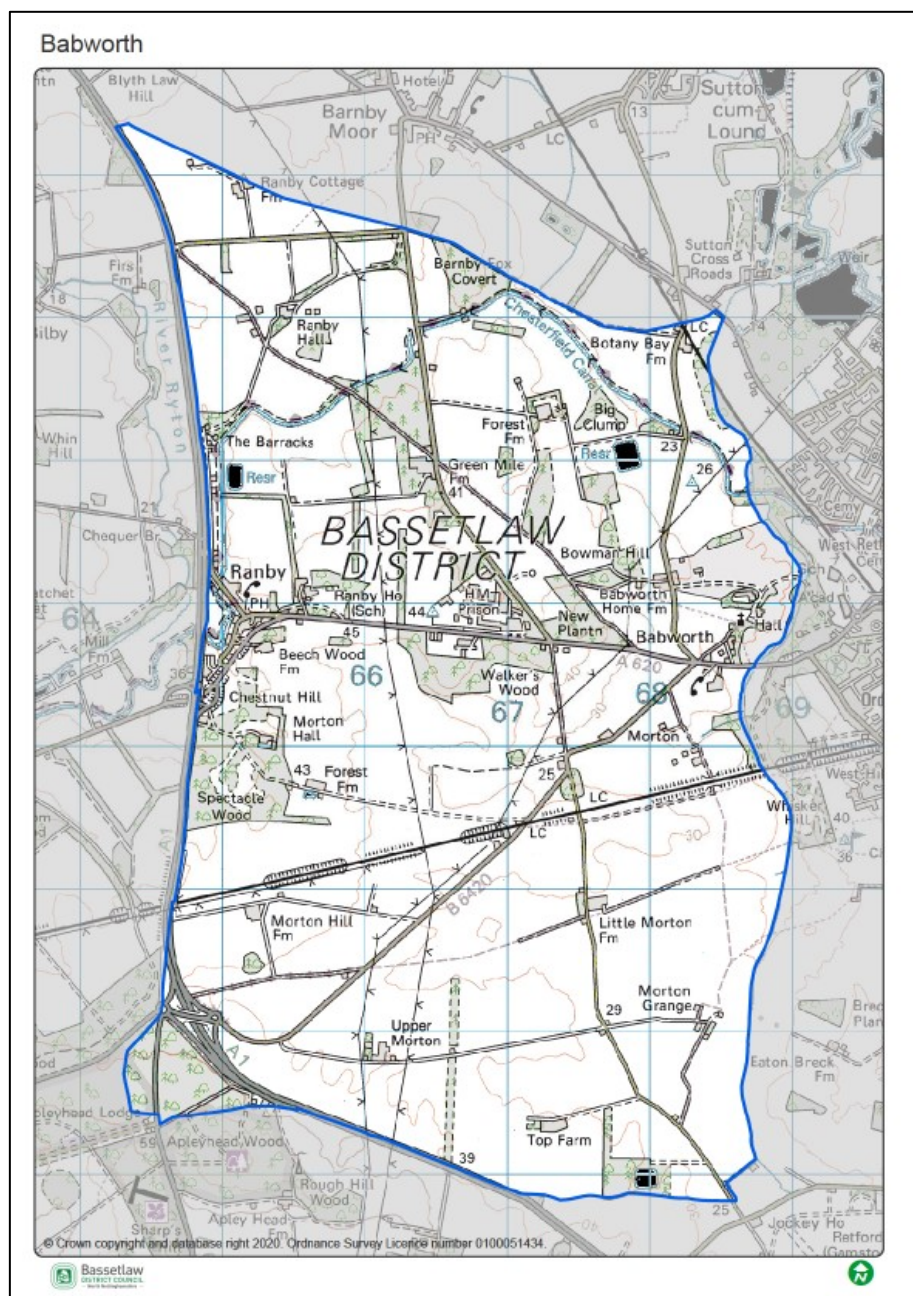
The Plan is now ready for pre-submission consultation at which it will be sent to statutory and local consultees as well as being made available to the local community. All comments received will be considered and the Plan changed where appropriate prior to being formally submitted to Bassetlaw District Council who will undertake a further round of consultation.

Having successfully passed this stage, it will then be sent to an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it meets a number of tests called the 'basic conditions', primarily making sure that the Plan meets statutory requirement relating to conformity with the Local Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Once the examiner's recommendations have been accepted, the Plan will be put forward to referendum. Those on the electoral register in the Babworth Parish will be invited to vote

on whether or not they support it. Over 50% of those voting must approve it for the Plan to become a Made statutory planning document.

Whilst planning applications will still be determined by Bassetlaw District Council, the production of a Neighbourhood Plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect the Babworth Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater control over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

Figure 1 Designated area



# Neighbourhood Plan Theme Groups

Two Theme Groups of local volunteers were formed through the process of delivering the Neighbourhood Plan to draw up policies that will inform and guide the future development within the Parish. The first meeting of the Theme Groups took place on 21 July 2022. They focussed on the following Themes:

- Housing and the Built Environment
- The Natural and Historic Environment

The groups were guided by facilitators provided by YourLocale. They reported back to the Parish Council, met regularly and gathered information to support the formation of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies. Much of the information, which supported the decisions and provided evidence bases, has been gleaned from the extensive research, consultation and local knowledge of the group members.

## Babworth Parish history

Babworth is a rural Parish with Ranby as its main village, in the Bassetlaw district of Nottinghamshire, England, about 1½ miles west of Retford. According to the 2001 census the parish had a population of 1,329, including Ranby and rising to 1,687 at the 2011 Census.

Babworth Parish is well known for its connection with the Pilgrim Fathers – the early settlers of the Plymouth Colony in present-day Massachusetts, USA. Richard Clyfton was Parson here between 1586 and 1605. Two of his friends were William Brewster and William Bradford, both passengers aboard The Mayflower. The church contains many interesting items recalling the Pilgrim Fathers including the chalice used by Richard Clyfton for communion services. Bones were discovered in a vault under the north aisle in 1951. Among them was the chalice that Clyfton had used. It is thought it may have been hidden here to save it from being stolen or melted down – possibly at the time of the English Civil War in the mid-17th century.

In the early 20th century Babworth Parish maintained its connections with early American heritage when the Rector was Frank Wilberforce who was the great grandson of William Wilberforce who led the campaign to abolish slavery.

Babworth Parish Church, All Saints, is quintessentially English and is surrounded by greenery. The church is around 900 years old. It is a small structure with a tower steeple with three old bells, (to which were added three newly cast bells in the late 1950s) and a clock, a nave, chancel and a porch. Most of the building dates from the 15th century, with several 18th century memorials and 19th century-stained glass by Charles Eamer Kempe. The chancel and sanctuary contain furniture by Robert (Mousey) Thompson, featuring his trademark mouse carvings. In early spring the church is surrounded by a spectacular display of snowdrops, which the public is free to visit.

The History of Retford in The County of Nottingham by John Shadrach Piercy, (1828) Piercy describes Babworth Parish in the early 19th century as follows:

"The parish, which contains the hamlets of Great, and Little Morton, Morton Grange, and Ranby, contains nearly 6000 acres of excellent forest land, mostly inclosed. The whole of the land in Babworth Parish is the property of the Hon. J. B. Simpson, which he has in his own occupation, and upon which he has erected a steward's house, and farming buildings, upon a large scale. Babworth Hall, the seat of the Hon. John Bridgeman Simpson, (brother to the late Earl of Bradford,) is pleasantly situated on an eminence, a short distance from the Retford and Worksop road, about a mile and a quarter from the former place. Its vicinity contains some of the finest scenery in this part of the county, for which, it is, in a great measure, indebted to its present possessor, who, has lately increased the beauty and interest of the place by a fine piece of water, a swiss cottage, etc. Near the church, is the charming little sequestered residence of the Rev. Archdeacon Eyre, the rector, in which, comfort and elegance are blended; and to whose worthy possessor, added to the kind patronage of the Simpson's family, the parish is much indebted for its internal prosperity."

## Census information

The 2021 Census indicates a population of 1,488 for the Parish, a decline of 199 from the 2011 Census which recorded 1,687 residents, with 596 of these individuals living in households. It is therefore assumed that the remaining 1,091 living in a communal establishment are mainly residents of HMP Ranby, with some potentially boarding at the school. The Housing Needs Assessment is focussed on the household population.

The Advisory Committee have noted that this estimated population decline is greater than reflected locally. 2021 Census data shows that there were 257 households, an increase of 14 households since

2011. This is the most accurate way of determining growth in the household population.

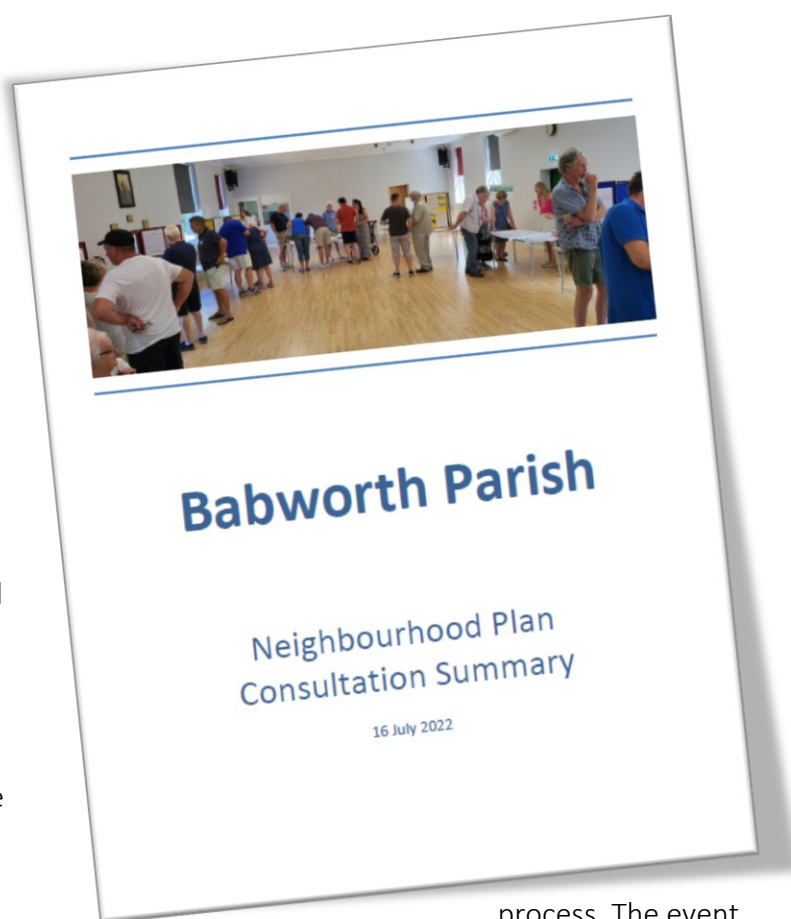
There has been some development in Babworth Parish since 2011, with Bassetlaw District Council providing completions data from 2011 to present which showed the development of 6 dwellings, none of which were delivered as Affordable Housing. The total quantity of dwellings in the Neighbourhood Area is therefore estimated to be 267.

## 2 The Consultation Process

The Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee's mandate was to drive the process, consult with the local community, gather evidence to support emerging policies and prepare the Plan for consideration and ultimately approval by Babworth Parish Council. A detailed chronology of the approach to consultation and the outcomes is contained within the Consultation Statement that will be included in the documentation with the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

An Open Event was held at the Ranby Village Hall on 16 July 2022 attended by 42 people, with 2 signing up to become involved in the

The Advisory Committee also gathered statistical information about the parish from a range of sources to provide a body of evidence on which to base the Plan's emerging Policies.



process. The event

was very successful with a lot of discussion taking place and comments shared about the priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan.



From July 2022 onwards, Theme Groups were formed of members of the Advisory Committee along with other residents and stakeholders. The groups met over the following 6 months or so and gathered the evidence needed to progress ideas and to formulate policies.

The Neighbourhood Plan was developed from these discussions, from all the other consultations and interviews conducted by members of the Advisory Committee and from research and evidence collected. A further Open Event was undertaken on September 23, 2023 to share the emerging policies with the community.



A total of 30 people attended the event and there was strong support for each of the policies except for the settlement boundary and renewable energy.

As a result of the comments received, both policies were amended.

### 3. A Plan for Babworth Parish

The policies of the Babworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan are set within the context of the plan-making framework for England. The scope and content of the Babworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been shaped by the priorities and aspirations of the local community, led by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Committee. This Plan covers the period up to 2038.

In drawing up this Plan, the following vision and objectives have been prepared:

#### A Vision for 2031

A vision statement has been prepared by the Parish Council.

The vision for Babworth Parish is that by 2038, the very large, rural and predominantly agricultural Parish is characterised by attractive, green open and accessible countryside. Its features will be complimented by small and diverse settlements characterised by high quality buildings, appropriate local services and a range of employment opportunities which will help Babworth Parish retain its independent rural identity and locality distinct from adjoining urban areas.

We have established a series of objectives to help deliver this vision.

- To provide a balanced range of housing choices which meet the diverse needs of all generations, by increasing the supply of smaller homes and homes for elderly down-sizers;
- To encourage high-quality design reflecting the rural character of the village;
- To protect and enhance the provision of current facilities and assets which contribute to a vibrant community spirit;
- To promote the development of new community facilities which enhance and enrich community life;
- To safeguard the most valued and special open spaces in the parish from inappropriate development;
- To enhance the biodiversity characteristics of the parish;
- To promote development that is safe and that respects the character of neighbouring properties and preserves the rural aspect of the village providing a strong sense of place;
- To improve broadband to support village employment opportunities;

- To ensure that all listed buildings and any identified community or environmental heritage assets are protected and improved;
- To ensure development is compliant within the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the strategic policies in the Bassetlaw Local Plan (2022-2038) and target growth identified by Bassetlaw District Council.

## Planning Context

The procedure for the making of a Neighbourhood Plan is prescribed within the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Regulations have informed the preparation of policies for the Babworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan, in particular ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Bassetlaw Local Plan (2022-2038) and has regard for the policies contained within the NPPF (2023), as well as meeting a range of EU obligations, now incorporated into UK law.

## Sustainable Development

A definition of sustainable development is provided within the NPPF. It describes three dimensions to sustainable development and that these dimensions give rise to the need for planning to perform a number of roles:

### An economic role

Contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

The community of Babworth Parish is primarily residential, but there is a strong desire to safeguard its employment locations, including the farming community. We therefore wish to retain the current level of employment and develop it further where possible and appropriate in line with the Bassetlaw Local Plan (2022-2038).

## A social role

Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by promoting the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations through support for the strategic planning policies contained in the Bassetlaw Local Plan (2022-2038) and by maintaining a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

The Babworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan does not anticipate more than limited residential development outside of the allocations over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## An environmental role

Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. As part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including supporting the move to a low carbon economy. In order to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, we are seeking to ensure that:

- Special open spaces within the Neighbourhood Area are protected from development, to protect the Parish identity and retain the rural nature of its surroundings;
- Development preserves and contributes to the attractive local countryside including replacement of any natural boundaries lost, improvement of existing hedging and encouraging new planting.
- Development recognises the need to protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats and includes adding hedging to boundaries of new developments.

## 4. Policies

### A. Housing and the Built Environment

The purpose of the UK Planning System as set out in the NPPF (2023) is to achieve sustainable development. This means ensuring that providing for the needs of the current generation does not make life worse for future generations.

This Neighbourhood Plan has the need to secure sustainable development at its heart. This includes how much new development is required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should best go and how it should be designed, both for now and in the future. This encompasses all proposals for development from the very smallest, such as a minor extension to a house, to major housing and employment developments.

The Parish Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that contribute to sustainable development and meet the policies identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. This includes working with the District Council and other partners to encourage the formulation of development proposals, which clearly demonstrate how sustainable development has been considered and addressed.

The Local Plan (2022-2038) includes a spatial strategy which specifies a gross housing requirement of 10,638 dwellings for the Plan period up to 2038.

Within the Local Plan (2022-2038), a hierarchy of settlements is established to help to determine the most appropriate locations for development. Within this hierarchy, Ranby, within Babworth Parish, is defined as a small rural settlement (alongside 33 other similarly sized parishes) which collectively are required to deliver 1,715 dwellings. The remainder of the Parish is classed as countryside. The housing requirement for Ranby is 13, minus existing commitments and completions which stand at four leaving a net requirement of 9.

The Local Plan (2022-2038) is clear that once the housing requirement is met, 'additional housing development will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it has the support of the community and Council through the preparation, or review, of a neighbourhood plan'.

## Settlement Boundary

In historical terms, rural villages like Ranby have often been protected by the designation of a settlement boundary adopted in a statutory Local Plan. With a settlement boundary in place, development is only permitted inside of the envelope or outside of it in carefully controlled circumstances (for example to provide affordable housing or to meet the needs of the rural community). The purpose of the newly drawn settlement boundary is to ensure that sufficient land is identified to meet residential need and that this is available in the most sustainable locations.

Settlement boundaries were originally established by Bassetlaw District Council in order to clarify where all new development activity is best located. They have been used to define the extent of a built-up part of a settlement and to distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development would be acceptable in principle, such as in the main settlements, and where it would not be acceptable, generally in the least sustainable locations such as in the open countryside. Such unfettered and/or unsustainable growth would risk ribbon or piecemeal development and the merging of distinct settlements to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of the built-up area.

The Local Plan (2022-2038) does not include a settlement boundary for Ranby or any other settlement in the Parish, leaving this to the Neighbourhood Plan to address.

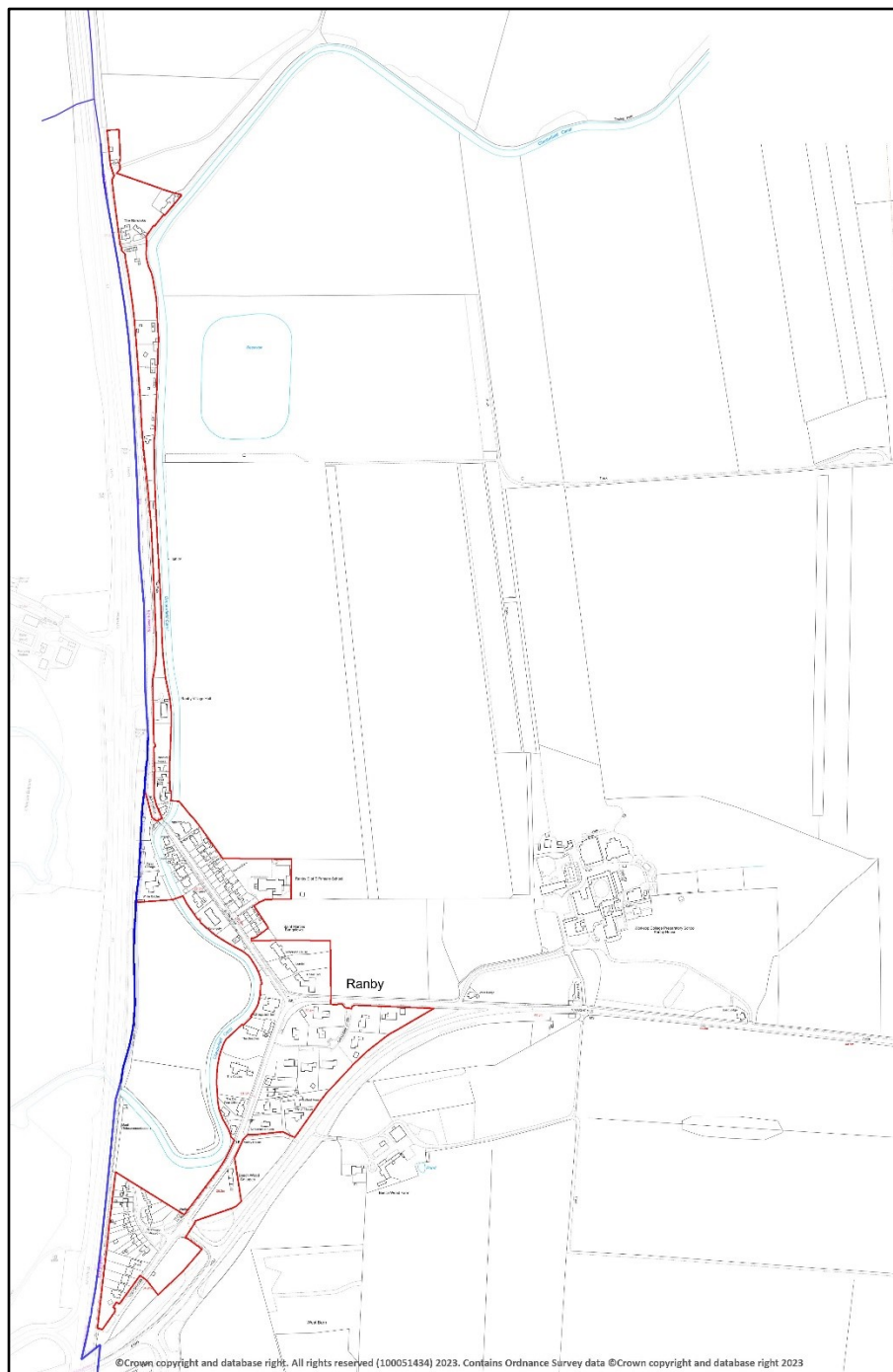
In statutory planning terms, land outside a defined settlement boundary, including any individual or small groups of buildings and/or small settlements, is defined as open countryside. It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Recognising “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside” is identified as an important principle in the NPPF (2023, para 170 b). This approach is also supported by the Neighbourhood Plan because it will help ensure that development is focused on more sustainable settlements with a greater range of services and facilities and infrastructure that has capacity for expansion, as well as helping to maintain the special landscape character of the Plan area and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

The updated settlement boundary for Ranby has been determined as follows:

- Recent approvals and existing commitments by virtue of an extant planning permission for residential development on the fringes of the settlement have been incorporated;

- Clearly defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows and roads have been followed;
- The residential development site allocated within the Neighbourhood plan has been included within the settlement boundary;
- Non - residential land which relates better to the countryside, including agricultural land, paddock, meadow, woodland and/or other green-field land has been excluded.

**Figure 2 – Settlement boundary for Ranby**



**POLICY HBE 1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY** - development proposals within the Settlement Boundary in figure 2 above will be supported where they comply with all relevant policies contained in this Plan.

Land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully managed in line with this Plan and other local and national strategic planning policies.

## Housing Allocation

Neighbourhood plans can allocate residential development sites to help meet a local need and to contribute to a housing requirement. Plans which choose to do this receive additional powers – the Plan will remain active if it allocates a site for residential development in circumstances where Bassetlaw falls below its required land supply over a 5-year period.

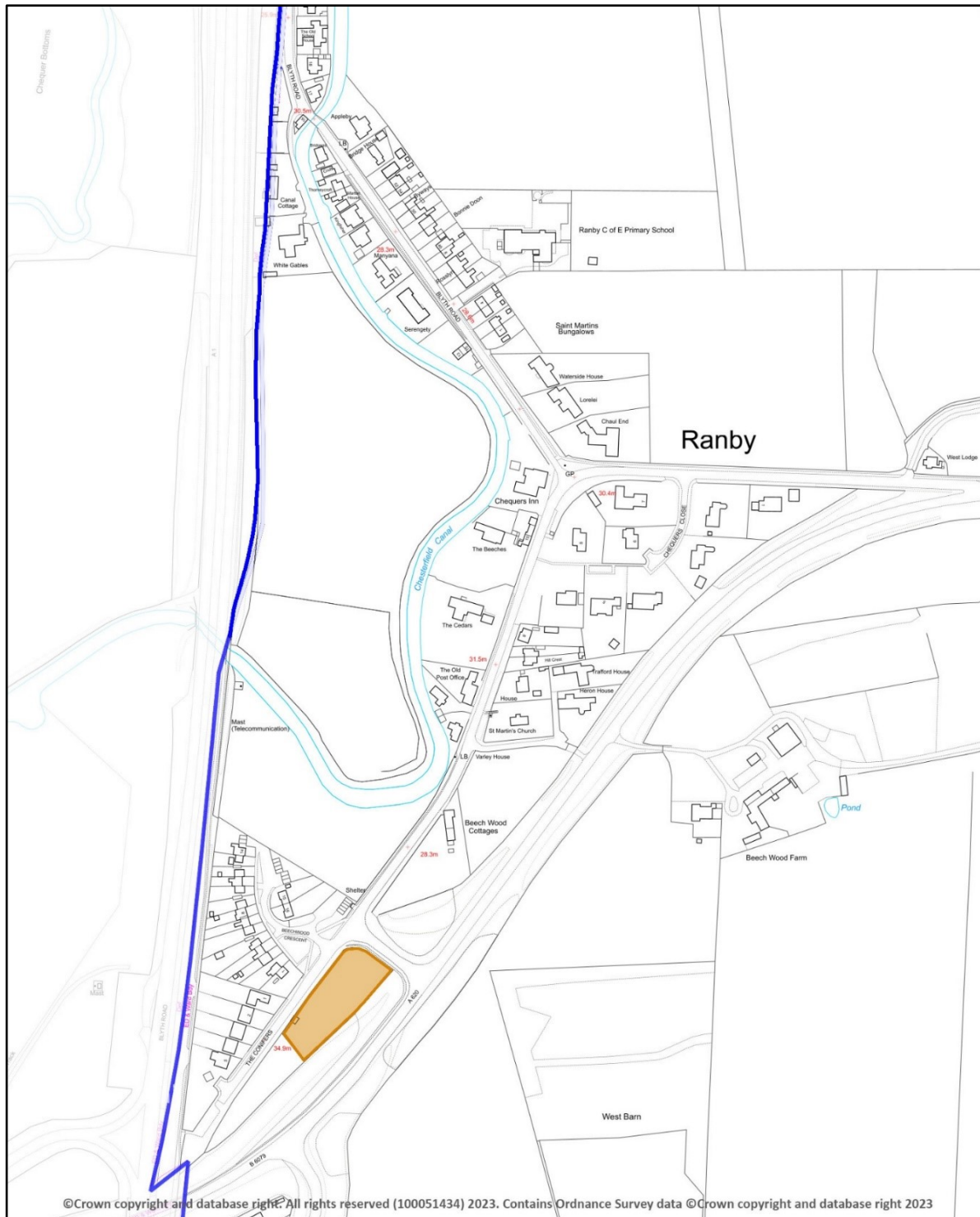
To meet the District Council's housing requirement for the Plan area, the Parish Council has taken a positive approach to securing sustainable development in the Parish by considering allocating a site for residential development to help meet a local need for housing and to secure the full range of powers available to neighbourhood plans. It has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of potential residential development sites to determine the most locally appropriate site for residential development. The process undertaken is detailed in Appendix 2. This allocation, along with a modest assumption of 3 windfall developments over the Plan period exceeds the District Council's housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area. The outcome of this exercise is that a single site is allocated for residential development as follows:

**POLICY HBE 2: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION** - The plan makes provision for about 9 new dwellings in Babworth Parish between 2021 and 2038. This is met by land being allocated for residential development at land to the south of the Conifers in Ranby, as shown in figure 3. Development of this site will be supported subject to:

- a) The mature trees to the north, east and south of the site being retained;
- b) Landscaping being provided to screen the site from Retford Road and Blyth Road;
- c) Vehicular access being provided from The Conifers;
- d) The housing mix shall comprise 3x2 bed bungalows; 3x3 bed and 3x2 bed dwellings;
- e) An Ecological Impact Assessment and landscape statement will be provided because of the proximity of the site to the Chesterfield Canal; and

- f) Design features will need to be in line with the design guide and codes (Policy HBE 6) and there will need to be consideration given to the potential impact on the Grade II Listed Ranby War Memorial.

Figure 3 allocated site



## Housing Mix

The housing needs survey (2023) revealed that in both 2011 and 2021, semi-detached and detached dwellings were the most common dwelling types in Babworth Parish. Bungalows were also common in 2021, at 21.9% of the stock. The proportion of terraced dwellings and flats, both of which were very low in 2011, remained similar in 2021. The Neighbourhood Area has a significantly higher proportion of bungalows than both Bassetlaw and England. Conversely, the proportion of terraced dwellings is significantly below the two comparator areas. The proportion of semi-detached dwellings is relatively in line with nationally, although lower than Bassetlaw, with detached dwellings the highest of all areas.

In terms of dwelling size, in 2011 the greatest proportion of dwellings were 3-bedroom, at almost 50% of the stock. This was followed by larger 4-bedroom dwellings at 18.1%. There were notably very few 1-bedroom dwellings. Completion data provided by Bassetlaw District Council shows there have been 6 completions in the last decade, all of which were 3-bedroom. There is a significantly smaller proportion of smaller 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom dwellings in the Neighbourhood Area than in Bassetlaw as a whole and across England. The proportion of larger dwellings, especially the largest 5+ bedroom dwellings, is well above levels for the comparator areas.

Based on the housing needs survey, in 2011, the largest proportion of the population in the Neighbourhood Area (excluding the prison population) were aged 0-15, at 23.7% of the population, indicating that there was likely a large proportion of families in the Neighbourhood Area. This reduces significantly by 2020, perhaps indicating families moving from the area, or that the majority of these children were towards the upper end of the bracket and a decade later are now within the 21-29 age category, which increased significantly between 2011 and 2020. The proportion of the population aged 60+ has also increased significantly, indicating an aging population.

Population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with households with a household reference person aged 65 and over expected to grow by 67% between 2011 and 2038. This would mean that households in this category would account for 36.5% of households in 2038 compared to 25.5% in 2011.

In 2011 there were significantly fewer single person households in the Neighbourhood Area than both Bassetlaw and England. The proportion of family households, at 73.3% in Babworth Parish, was well above both Bassetlaw (67.1%) and England (61.8%). Within family households, there was a greater proportion of older households in Babworth Parish than the comparator areas, as well as a greater proportion of households with no children and with dependent children.

Under-occupancy is relatively common in Babworth Parish, with 89.3% of households living in a household with at least one extra bedroom.

This is most common in two household types: families aged 65+ and families under 65 with no children, suggesting that larger housing in the NA is not being occupied by households with the most family members, but by the people with the most wealth, or by older people who have not chosen or been able to move to smaller properties.

This may therefore indicate a need for smaller dwellings for older persons to downsize.

From the neighbourhood plan open event, of the 10 comments on housing development 3 respondents were in favour of affordable homes, bungalows, family homes and homes for all age groups.

The Housing Needs Assessment concluded 'it is recommended that priority is given to smaller homes but that this is done to a degree that aligns with the wider objectives of the community and does not limit choice or threaten viability.'

The Housing Needs Assessment also highlighted the need for housing in the Parish to meet national standards for accessibility and adaptability (Category M4(2)). It identified a need for 3 wheelchair accessible dwellings in the Parish. This is in part referenced by an identified future predicted increase of 67% between 2011 and 2038 in households that include over 65s.

Bassetlaw Local Plan (2022-2038) Policy ST28 promotes an appropriate mix of housing to help create sustainable and inclusive communities.

A Housing Needs Assessment was undertaken by AECOM in 2023.

POLICY HBE 3: HOUSING MIX - New Housing development proposals must demonstrate how the proposal will meet the current and future housing needs of the Parish as evidenced in the Babworth Parish Housing Needs Assessment, January 2023 (Appendix 1) and the Bassetlaw Housing and Employment Development Needs Report 2020 or any more recent document updating either of these reports.

Priority should be given to dwellings of 2 and 3 bedrooms for smaller families and to accessible housing for those with mobility issues and the ageing population.

There will be a presumption against larger homes (4 or more bedrooms) unless there is a demonstrable local housing need.

## Affordable Housing

The NPPF (2023) defines Affordable Housing as ‘housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market’.

The latest housing affordability data for England and Wales shows that on average, full-time workers could expect to pay an estimated 7.8 times their annual workplace-based earnings on purchasing a home in 2019. This is a significant improvement from the previous year when the ratio was 8.0.

The housing affordability gap continues to widen between the most and least affordable areas. The ratio of median house price to earnings in the Bassetlaw district is below the national average but the latest data show the gap has continued to widen rising from 5.38 to 5.64 in 2019 and is up from 4.77 in 2009.

Overall, between 2012 and 2021, median house prices increased by 111.9% to £550,000 whilst lower quartile house prices increased even more significantly, by 229.7% to £459,981. This is compared to a 2020 median house price of £180,050 and a lower quartile house price of £120,000. This affordability gap impacts negatively on the ability of low households to purchase homes in the Neighbourhood Area.

Local Plan (2022-2038) Policy ST27 requires 20% Affordable Housing provision on brownfield sites (for affordable home ownership) and 25% on greenfield sites, of which 25% should be for First Homes; 25% should be for affordable housing for rent and 50% should be for affordable home ownership.

However, a housing needs assessment undertaken by AECOM (2023, Appendix 1) recommended an indicative mix for Affordable Housing in 60% social/affordable rent and 40% affordable home ownership. When looking specifically at the split of affordable home ownership products, it is recommended that 25% of Affordable Housing is delivered as First Homes, at a 30% discount, and the remaining 15% delivered as shared ownership dwellings. This is the housing balance that is proposed in Policy HBE4.

**Policy HBE 4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING - Where affordable housing is to be provided as part of a development, it should be designed and delivered to be indistinguishable from market housing and be distributed evenly through the development as a whole.**

The provision of smaller homes, especially for young families and young people and for older people who wish to downsize, will be supported, as is the provision of affordable housing for people with a local connection.

The following mix of tenures is supported:

- 60% social/affordable rent
- 40% affordable home ownership, where:
  - 25% are First Homes (at a discount rate of 30%, subject to viability), and
  - 15% shared ownership.

To meet identified needs within the community, the provision of high-quality affordable housing through an exception site will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a) The site adjoins the Settlement Boundary;
- b) The type and scale of affordable housing is justified by evidence of need from a local housing needs survey;
- c) Planning obligations are used to ensure that the affordable housing is available in perpetuity for people with a local connection to the Plan area; and
- d) The development consists entirely of affordable housing or is for a mixed-tenure scheme where an element of market housing is essential to the delivery of the affordable housing. The market housing must be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable and be of a type and size that will meet a specific locally identified housing need for low-cost market housing.

## Windfall development

A windfall site is defined in the NPPF (2023) as one which has not been specifically identified as available through the local or neighbourhood plan process. Sites often comprise previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available.

The Local Plan (2020-2038) defines Windfall similarly as ‘sites not specifically identified in the development plan (where it has not been allocated for housing through a plan’ document).

To help protect the character of the Neighbourhood Area, development beyond the housing allocation in the be restricted to windfall sites as described in policy HBE5.

**POLICY HBE 5: WINDFALL SITES - Development proposals for infill (individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings) will be supported where:**

- a) The site is within the Settlement Boundary;
- b) It helps to meet an identified housing need;
- c) The site retains existing important natural boundaries such as gardens, trees, hedges and streams;
- d) The site provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site and off-street parking in line with Highways standards; and
- e) The site does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours.

## Design

Design, including the scale and positioning of new buildings (and changes to existing buildings), materials and detailing, is key to making sure that development preserves and enhance the character, appearance and integrity of the area.

Local Plan (2020-2038) Policy ST33 promotes high quality design and sets broad development principles.

The NPPF (2023) notes that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies.

A design guide and codes was commissioned as part of the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and is available as appendix 3.

The consultation showed people valued the built environment and wished to avoid insensitively located or designed development.

The built form of Ranby boasts an interesting mix of architectural styles, some of it historic. This adds to the settlement's vibrancy and informs its distinctive character.

It is important that new building in Ranby and across the Parish benefits from high-quality design so that it makes a positive contribution to enhancing this distinctive character. It should take inspiration from the rich heritage of Ranby. This includes ensuring that it would not lead to a significant adverse impact on key heritage assets (both nationally and locally designated).

In addition, the Plan encourages the use of materials and design that promotes sustainable development that is in keeping with the character of the area. It is crucial for its future success that development embraces the need for sustainability and that it becomes a prime consideration in design proposals, for its economic value to residents as well as environmental benefits.

To ensure this, new development will be assessed against the criteria in Policy HBE6. This is in line with national planning policy which promotes good quality design. Policy HBE6 also provides further detail to accompany emerging planning policy to promote design housing quality in the Local Plan (2020-2038) through Policy ST33 which promotes high quality design and sets broad development principles.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment of the Neighbourhood Area is maintained and enhanced. New designs should respond in a positive way to the local character through careful and appropriate use of high-quality materials and detail. Proposals should also demonstrate consideration of height, scale and massing, to ensure that new development delivers a positive contribution to the street scene and adds value to the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area.

**POLICY HBE 6: DESIGN – All development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and use of materials which make a positive contribution to the special character of the Neighbourhood Area.**

Any new development application should make specific reference to how the design guide and codes (Appendix 3) has been taken into account in the design proposals. Any deviation from the design guide and codes should be justified.

New development should consider the prevailing character area in which the proposal resides and seek to contribute to and enhance the existing character.

# B The Natural, Historical and Social Environment

## Introduction

This chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with the *environmental* agenda of *sustainable* development, together with open spaces of community value in the social agenda, as described in the NPPF (2023), page 5. The chapter aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan Area against the value of environmental and other features that are both *special* – appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people – and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of biodiversity, mitigating flood risk, planning for resilience to climate change, and locally supported approaches to renewable energy generation.

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan’s lifetime. Approximately 11.5% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the parish is protected through the Neighbourhood Plan’s policies, and the planning system generally, from potential environmentally damaging development:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Plan Area	c.2589 ha
2. Open and undeveloped land	c.57ha
3. Area designated or recognised in this Plan for <i>environmental</i> protection	c.293ha

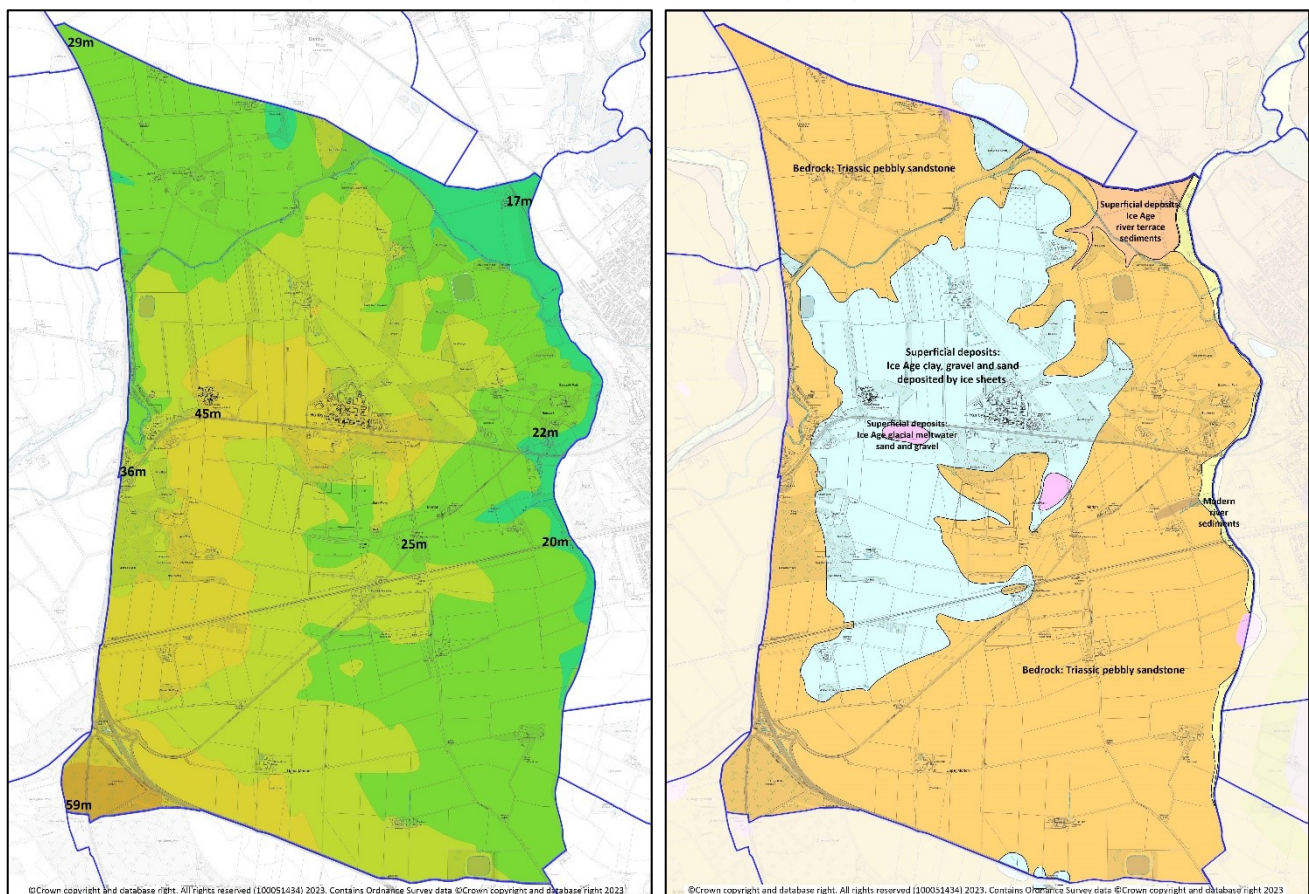
## Landscape, geology and setting.

The large parish of Babworth (which coincides with the Neighbourhood Plan Area) is located on a gently lobe of modestly elevated land connected on its west with the historical Sherwood Forest and Dukeries and bounded on its south and east by the valleys of the rivers Poulter and Idle. The Chesterfield Canal, also at low elevation, runs across the northern part of the Area, and the old Great North Road (an important boundary for some two thousand years) defines the parish’s western edge. The highest point, in the southwest corner, is at 59 metres while the lowest (17 metres) is at the opposite, northeast, corner. Ranby village lies at 45 metres, while Babworth stands on a promontory overlooking the low ground around Retford; both their locations provide views across open countryside whose

picturesqueness was first recorded as long ago as 1796. The Chesterfield Canal is also an attractive landscape feature with tourism value.

Geologically, the Plan Area is underlain by Sherwood Sandstone of Triassic age, while the higher ground between Ranby and Babworth has a superficial covering of Quaternary (Ice Age) stony clay, sand and gravel. The soil derived from these rocks is relatively light but fertile, almost all is grade 3 (moderate and good quality agricultural land, meaning that some of it is of, or close to, best and most versatile (BMV) quality); most is under intensive and productive arable cultivation but there are areas of also quite intensive livestock production, and a long-established, farm scale tree nursery. Among the farmland there are a number of scattered 19<sup>th</sup> century woodlands, a small area of parkland around Ranby church and the site of Ranby Hall and a larger area of plantations and historical woodlands associated with Clumber Park in the southwest corner. Despite the traffic on the A1 road and the presence of HMP Ranby and its associated housing, the Plan Area is very much a rural, farming community.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2: Topography (left) and geology of the Plan Area



## Historical environment

Although archaeological finds show that people were here in the late prehistoric and Roman periods (and no doubt in the dark ages that followed the end of Roman occupation), placenames demonstrate a likely 7<sup>th</sup> century foundation of Babworth, with Ranby as probably 8<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Babworth**

'Babba's enclosure' **pers.n.** (Old English) + **worð** (Old English) an enclosure

### **Ranby**

'Hrani's homestead' **pers.n.** (Old Danish) + **by** (Old Norse) a homestead, settlement

At the Domesday survey (1086) Babworth was under-populated, with only three households. It consisted of three ploughlands (open arable fields), meadow, areas of pasture and woodpasture (used for grazing), and woodland. The whole area became a post-Conquest manor consisting of Babworth, Ranby, two 11<sup>th</sup> century hamlets (Great and Little Morton) and outlying Morton Grange. It lay on the northeast edge of the medieval (and older) Sherwood Forest – the part emparked in 1707 as Clumber Park just enters the southwest corner of the Plan Area.

## Natural environment

The history of land use in the Plan Area – except for the small area of Sherwood Forest, it has been cleared and more or less managed by its human inhabitants for at least 1200 years – means that all 'natural' environment is actually *semi-natural* (as classified by Natural England). This does not imply, however, an absence of wildlife, because animals and plants have adapted and evolved, even moved in, to occupy the landscape features created by human occupation and use. While the Plan Area has no recorded nationally important wildlife sites it does have a number of local features and habitat areas whose ecological value makes a vital contribution to English biodiversity (Policy ENV 5). They include watercourses and wetlands, woodland and plantations, hedgerows, historic parkland, gardens, arable field margins and other re-wilded places, in all of which remnants of the natural environment survive.

## Existing environmental designations

The Plan Area is located in National Character Area (NCA) 49 *Sherwood*. NCAs are landscape areas defined by Natural England for planning purposes. Bassetlaw Council has used the published *Profile* and the datasets for this NCA to assess Babworth Parish's landscape character in more detail and to establish relevant strategic and delivery policies.

In the natural environment there are 28 sites with *Priority Habitats* (Natural England designation) and 20 more in the national *Forest Inventory*. In addition (some are also priority habitat sites), five *Local Wildlife Sites* have been designated by the Nottinghamshire Biological records Centre and Bassetlaw District Council.

In the historical environment, Historic England has designated 21 Listed Buildings at grades I, II and II\*, and one site in the *historic parks and gardens* category. The Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) includes more than 50 sites, although some of them are findspots or cropmark records from aerial photographic surveys (see policy ENV 5).

The Neighbourhood Plan adds *local detail* to these national and regional designations by identifying and mapping all sites and features of local (and greater) significance in the Plan Area to which Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) and this Neighbourhood Plan's policies should be applied.

## Local Green Spaces

All undeveloped open spaces with demonstrable community value in the Plan Area were identified, surveyed and assessed as candidates for Local Green Space designation using the criteria outlined in National Planning Policy Framework (2023) paragraphs 105 and 106, as follows:

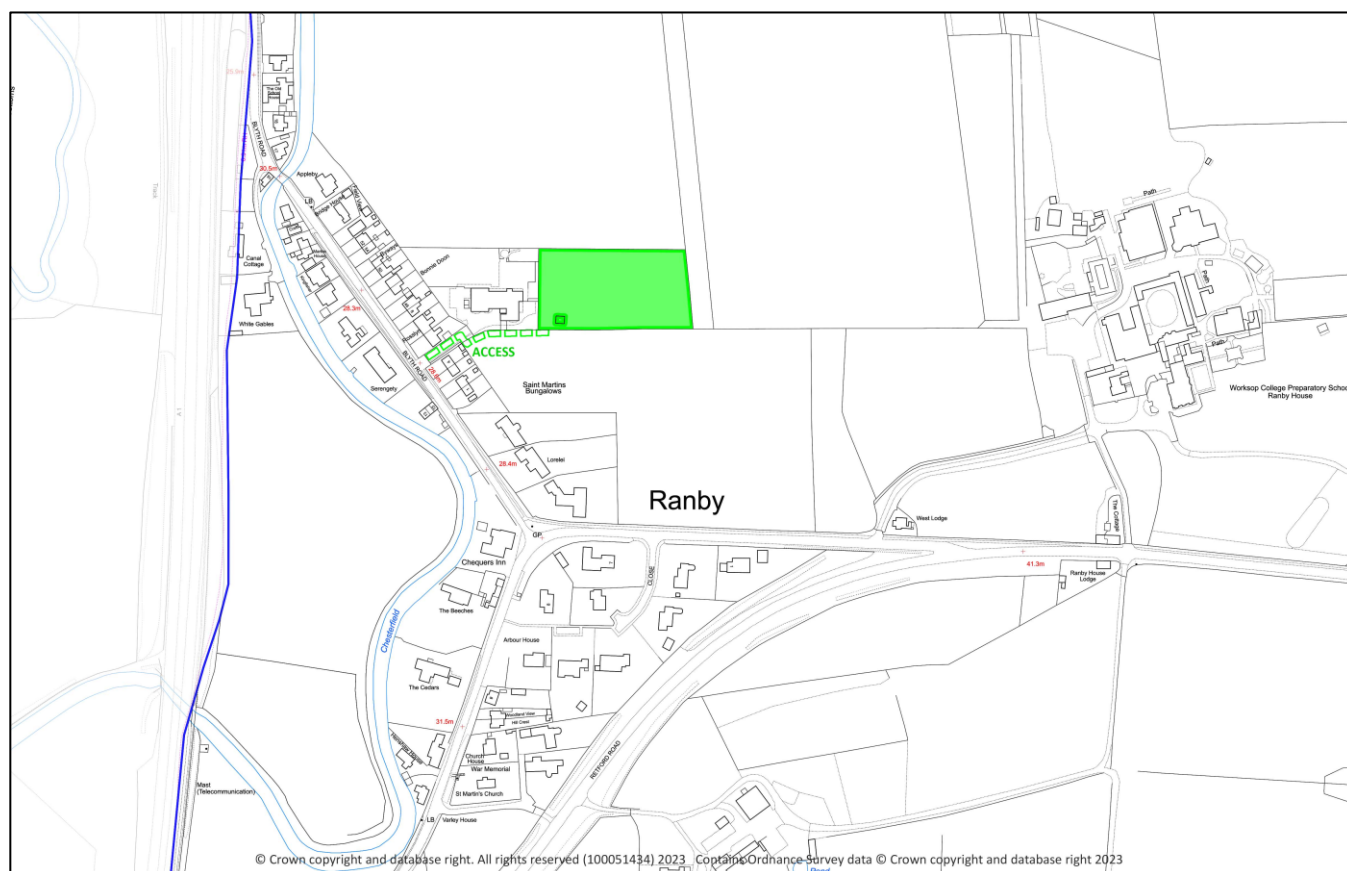
*The Local Green Space designation should only be used when the green space is:*

- *In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves*
- *Demonstrably special to the local community – e.g. beauty, recreational value, tranquillity*
- *Holds a particular local significance – e.g. historical significance, richness of wildlife*
- *Local in character, not an extensive tract of land*

This exercise assessed nine sites; of these one is judged to warrant the statutory protection afforded by LGS designation and Policy ENV 1, thus protecting it and its values for future generations.

**POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, Ranby Fun Field Local Green Space (details Appendix 5; locations figure 5) will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.**

Figure 5: Local Green Space



## Important Open Spaces

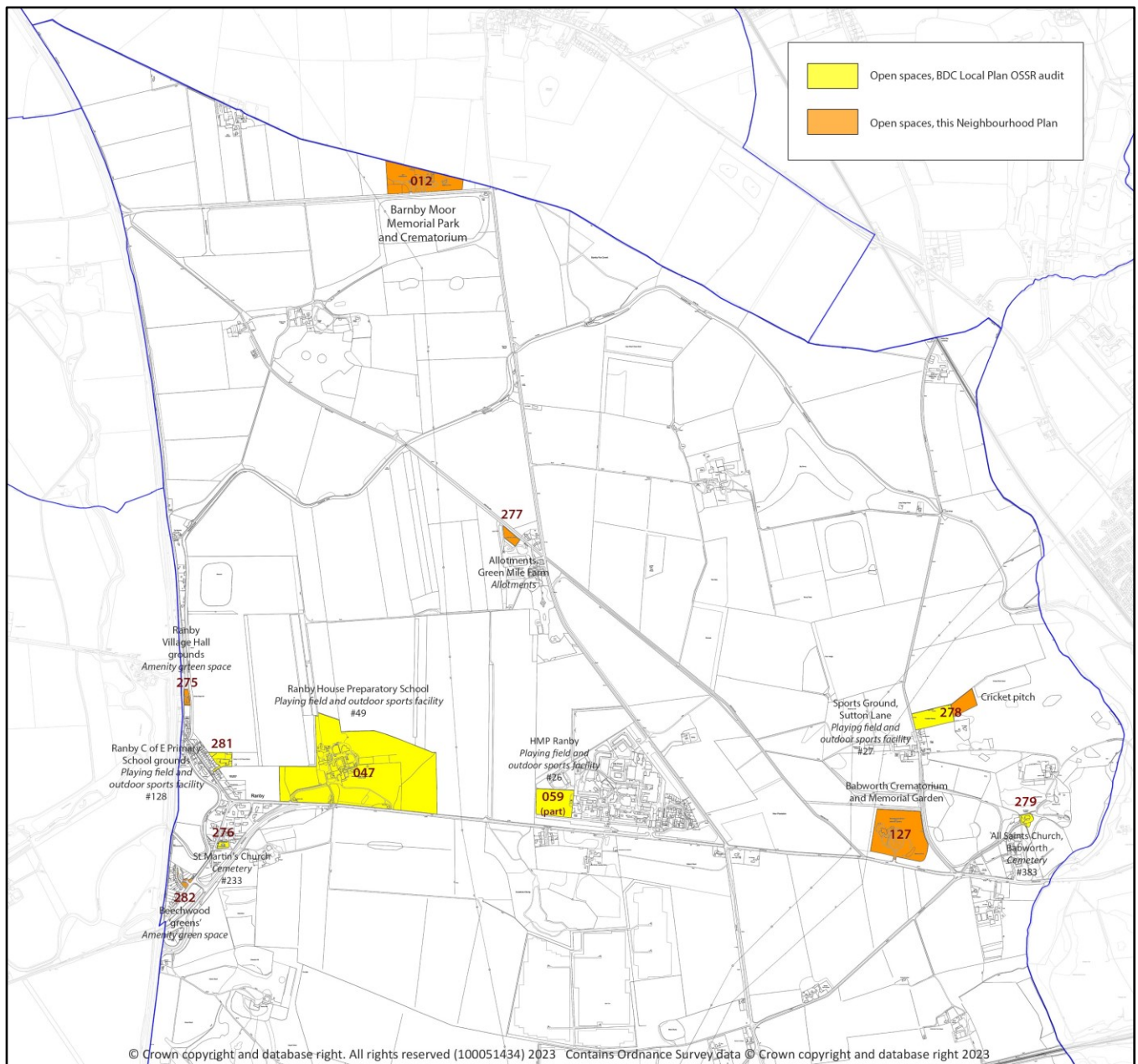
A group of sites has significant community value as open space for amenity, sport & recreation, children's play, etc., as allotments, churchyards or memorial gardens, or for their natural environment or village landscape value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; six are already recognised as Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites in the Bassetlaw DC *Open Space Assessment update 2020* and are shown on the 2021 Policies Map for the Local Plan (2020-2038). Details are in Appendix 4.

These sites' values as open space and/or their actual/potential value as community resources are recognised in Policy ENV 2. Which is in conformity with and adds local detail to Local Plan (2020-2038) policies ST44 and ST45.

**POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES** - The following open spaces (locations, figure 6) are of high local value for recreation, beauty, amenity, or tranquillity. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is

replaced by at least equivalent provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community.

Figure 6: Important Open Spaces



### Open spaces in BDC OSSR audit (2021-38 Local Plan *Open Space Assessment Update November 2020*)

St Martin's churchyard, Ranby (Inventory reference 276): BDC OSSR ref 233 as *Churchyard* and *Amenity greenspace*

All Saints churchyard, Babworth (279): BCD OSSR ref 383 as *Churchyard*

Ranby C of E Primary School grounds (281) BDC OSSR ref 128 as *Playing field* and *outdoor sports facility*

Sports field, Sutton Lane (278): BDC OSSR ref 27 as *Playing field and outdoor sports facility*

Grounds of Worksop College Preparatory School, Ranby House (047); BDC OSSR ref 49 as *Playing field and outdoor sports facility*

Sports field in HMP Ranby (059, part): BDC OSSR ref 26 as *Playing field and outdoor sports facility*

### Open spaces recognised in this Neighbourhood Plan

Allotments, Green Mile Farm (277) *Allotments*

Ranby village hall (parish hall) grounds (275) *Amenity green space*

Babworth crematorium and memorial garden (127) *Parks and gardens and Cemeteries*

Barnby Moor Memorial Park and Crematorium (012) *Parks and gardens and Cemeteries*

Beechwood greens (282) *Amenity green space*

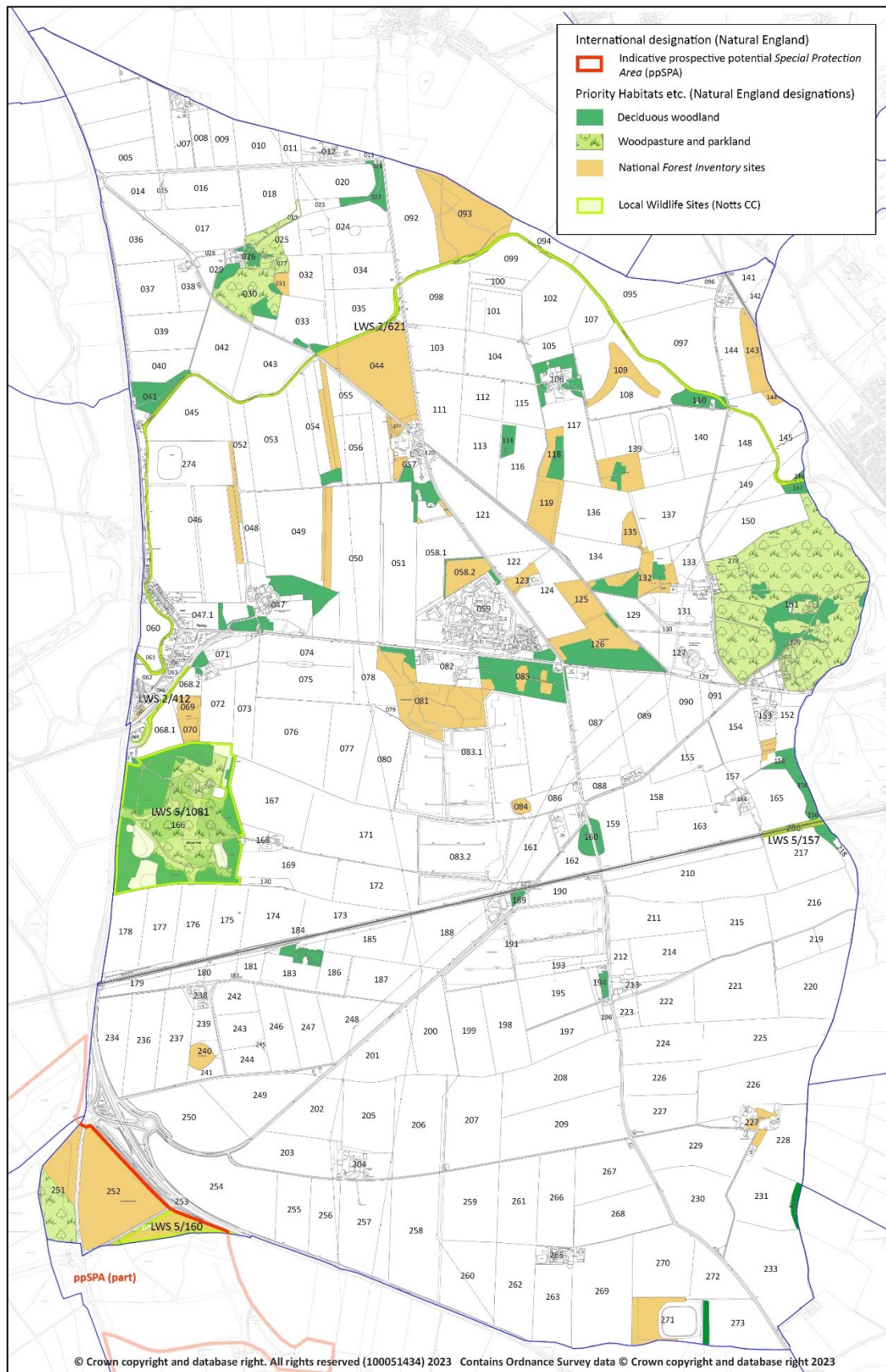
Some of the open spaces covered by Policy ENV 2 provide non-commercial, fully publicly accessible amenities and facilities. The community notes that their maintenance is essential for ongoing safe use, and necessary for continuation of their functions, amenities, facilities and values.

## Sites and features of Natural Environment significance

A number of sites in Babworth are important for wildlife (biodiversity). The features and designations for which they have been identified comprise a) a statutorily protected site (part of the Sherwood Forest *Special Protection Area*), b) those where *priority habitats* and *National Forest Inventory* sites occur (Natural England mapping) or where several *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded; and c) sites identified as ecologically significant by Nottinghamshire County Council, including Local Wildlife Sites. The map (figure 7) shows their locations.

Policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with Policy ST38 in the Local Plan (2020-2038), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019, and the UK Environment Act 2021. It has regard for National Planning Policy Framework 2023 policies 185 and 186. It also refers to the DEFRA *Guidance* of July 7, 2021, in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach for assessing the wildlife value of development sites and delivering biodiversity net gain.

Figure 7: Sites and features of Natural Environment significance



POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites and features mapped in figure 7 have been identified as being of local or higher significance for the natural

environment. They are ecologically important in their own right and are locally valued. The significance of the species, habitats or features present should be balanced against the benefit of any development that would adversely affect them. Development proposals on the identified sites will not be supported unless they include evidence-based, measurable proposals for delivering *biodiversity net gain* at a minimum 10%.

If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated by net gain as above, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused, as specified in paragraph 186(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023.

Any proposal that may impact on the Sherwood Forest Special Protection Area will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effects on its integrity, unless there are no alternative solutions and the proposal is justified on 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' assessment under the Habitats Regulations. Any scheme within the 5km buffer of the Sherwood Forest SPA will require a project level 'shadow level' Habitats Regulations Assessment.

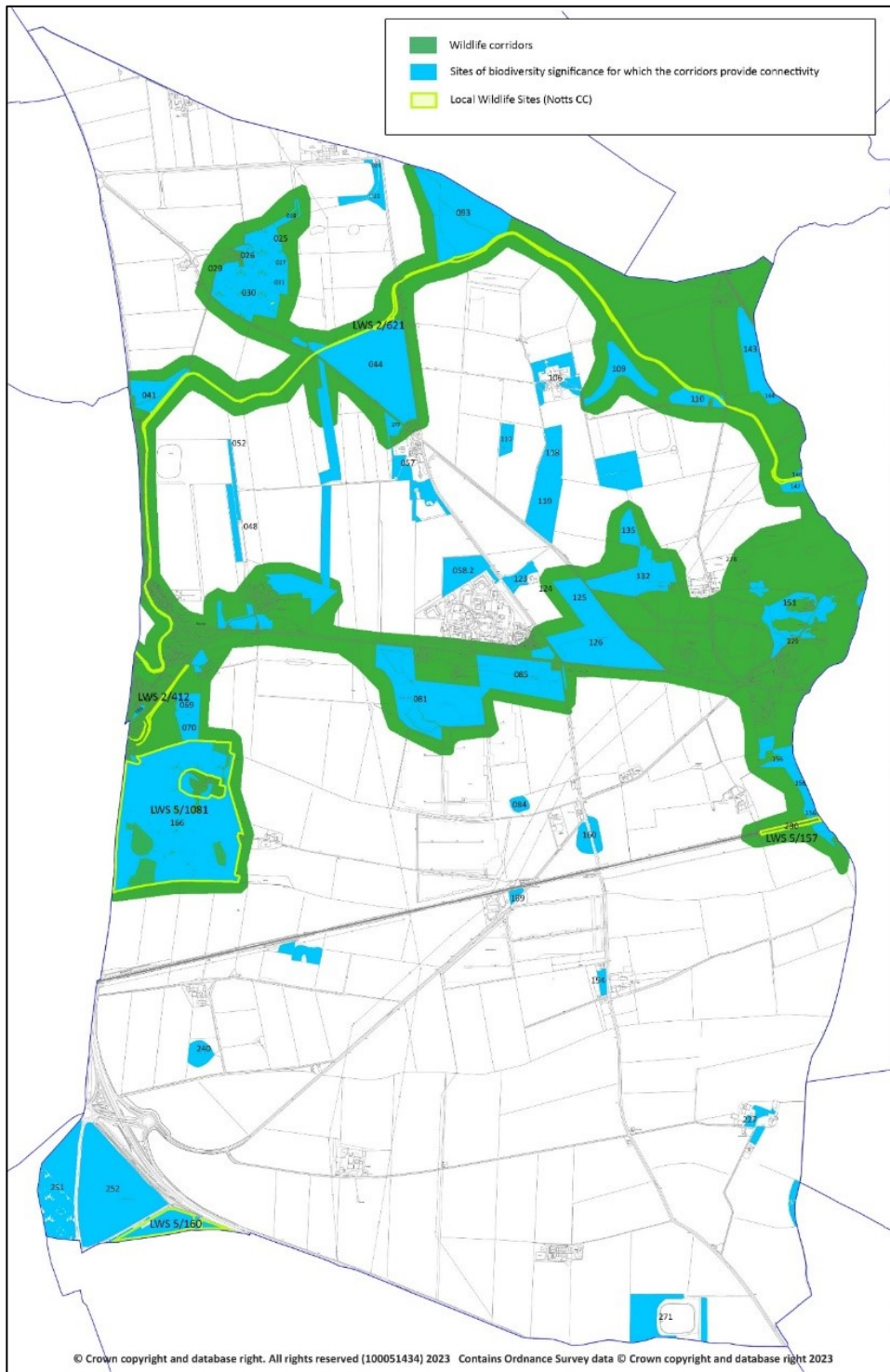
## Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

From the point of view of the natural environment, it might be said that Babworth Parish is a 'typical' area of North Nottinghamshire because it has no nationally important wildlife hotspots, and thus that it has little or no biodiversity significance to be taken into account in the Planning system. This would be a misunderstanding of the concept of biodiversity. England's biodiversity is entirely and only the sum of the wildlife in all of its individual parishes: Babworth Plan Area is as important in this regard as every other parish, and residents want it to play its essential part in protecting what remains of England's threatened and diminishing biodiversity.

Ranby village is close to an area of woodland and wood pasture parkland of regional importance and is connected to the north and east of the Plan Area by the Chesterfield Canal, a Local Wildlife Site of County level importance. The areas around HMP Ranby and Babworth are also well-wooded, with another area of wood pasture surrounding the parish church. While much of the Plan Area is productive farmland, the remaining non-agricultural or less intensively managed sites are an essential and integral part of local biodiversity. Connectivity is an essential component of biodiversity. Isolated populations of animals and plants are at risk of destruction or of simply dying out. Wildlife corridors re-connect populations and habitats within parishes and more widely. A wildlife corridor along the canal (itself a

natural green corridor and designated Local Wildlife Site) to the Idle valley, through Babworth and back to Ranby, provides connectivity between the main groups of biodiversity sites in the Plan Area, as mapped in figure 8. It should be taken into account in the planning system.

Figure 8: wildlife corridors



While policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant Bassetlaw District Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural

Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019 and the UK Environment Act 2021, this policy (ENV 4) does the same for strategic planning and future development proposals across the Plan Area. It also refers to the DEFRA *Guidance* of July 7, 2021 in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach to assessing the value of a development site to wildlife. The policy is explicitly supported by NPPF (December 2023) paragraphs 185 and 186(a), on which this policy's wording is partly based. The community also expects all planning strategies, proposals and decisions affecting Anstey to comply with the requirements of the *Climate Change Act* 2008, to follow the spirit of the *Paris Agreement* (UK ratification 2017) and the UK's *25 year environment plan (2018)*, and to plan for *biodiversity net gain* through the mechanisms described in the *Environment Act 2021*.

**POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY**– All new development proposals will be expected to safeguard habitats and species, including those of local significance, and to deliver biodiversity net gain. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or dealt with through onsite or offsite enhancement (via biodiversity net gain at 10%) or compensation, planning permission should be refused, in conformity with paragraph 186a of the NPPF (December 2023).

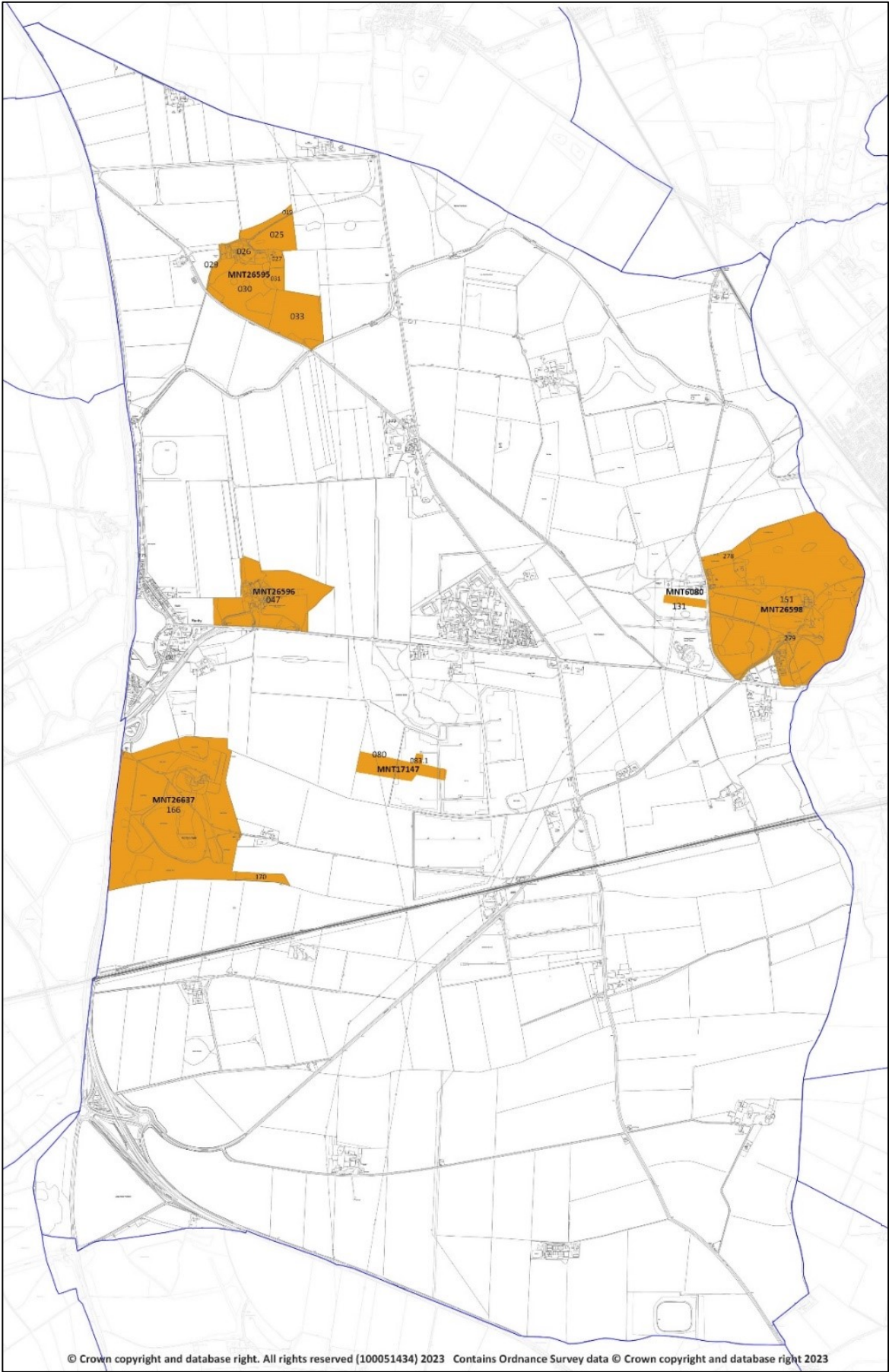
Development proposals should not adversely affect the habitat connectivity provided by the wildlife corridor identified in figure 8.

When fulfilment of biodiversity net gain involves trees and hedges, compensatory plantings should be of native or suitable exotic/ornamental species and should take account of current best practice regarding plant disease control and aftercare.

## Sites and features of Historical Environment significance

Several sites in the Plan Area are important for (at least local) heritage and history. They comprise sites with visible features and/or proven buried archaeology in the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and Historic England databases of relevance to Bassetlaw DC Local Plan (2020-2038) and Babworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan policies. The map (figure 8.1) shows their locations. Protection of these known archaeological and historical sites and features is dealt with by policy ENV6 para 1.

Figure 8.1: Sites and features of Historical Environment significance

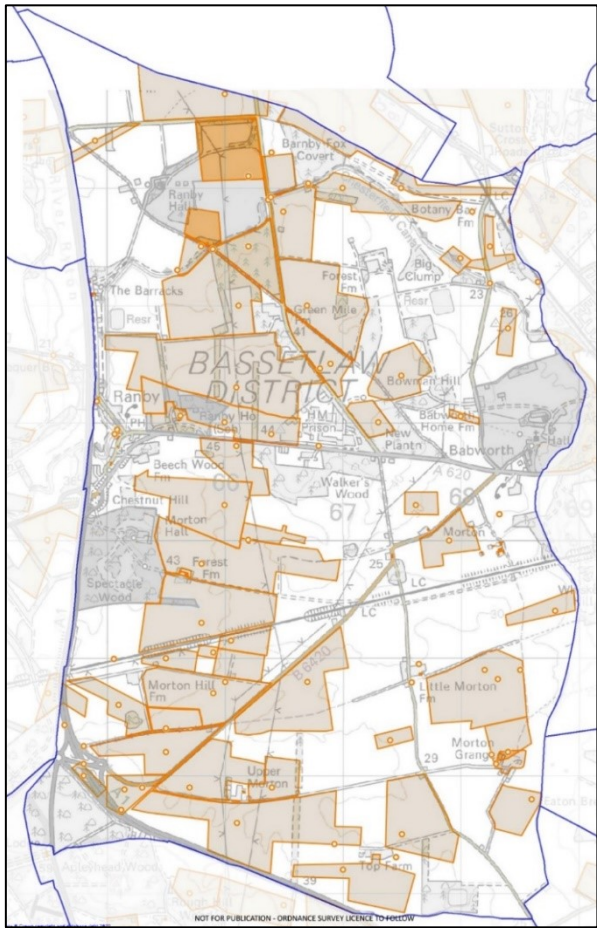


The Nottinghamshire HER data also includes the results of analysis of aerial photographs and LIDAR surveys (figure 8.2.1) revealing extensive cropmarks and other evidence for potential sub-surface archaeological features (figure 8.2.2). Although primarily used by Natural England to produce SHINE (Selected Heritage Inventory Natural England) data for use in, e.g. HEFER (Historic Environment Farm Environment Record mapping, mainly for Countryside Stewardship mid-tier agreements), this mapped data should also be taken into account for strategic plan-making (SHLAAs, Local Plan (2020-2038) development site allocations, etc.) and when individual planning applications come forward and are under consideration. Lack of visible surface features and proven buried structures or objects is not proof of absence; it appears that the Plan Area was quite extensively occupied in prehistoric and Roman times, and unchecked new development could destroy significant evidence. Policy ENV6 para 2 deals with this.

Figure 8.2.1 Surface height model from LIDAR (APGB, via Parish Online)



Figure 8.2.2 Areas mapped (from aerial imagery) in the Nottinghamshire HER as having potential archaeological significance.



**POLICY ENV 5: SITES OF HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE** - The sites mapped in figure 8.1 (details in Appendix 4) are of at least local significance for their historical features. The features are extant and have visible expression or there is proven buried archaeology on the site, and they are locally valued. The significance of the features present should be balanced against the benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.

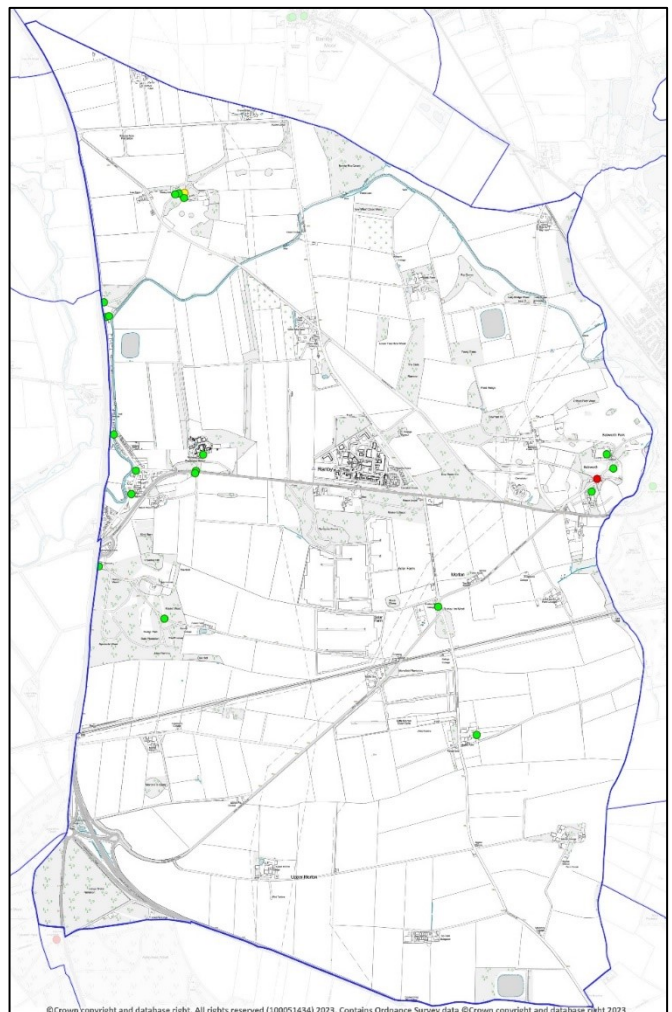
In view of the evidence for extensive prehistoric and historic occupation and other potential archaeological features (figure 8.2), all development proposals throughout the Plan Area should ensure that the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record is consulted and that any recommendations are complied with.

## Statutorily protected Heritage Assets

Eighteen buildings and structures in the Plan Area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade I, II\* or II.

All new development proposals will be required to take into account their *settings*, as defined on a case-by-case basis by Historic England.

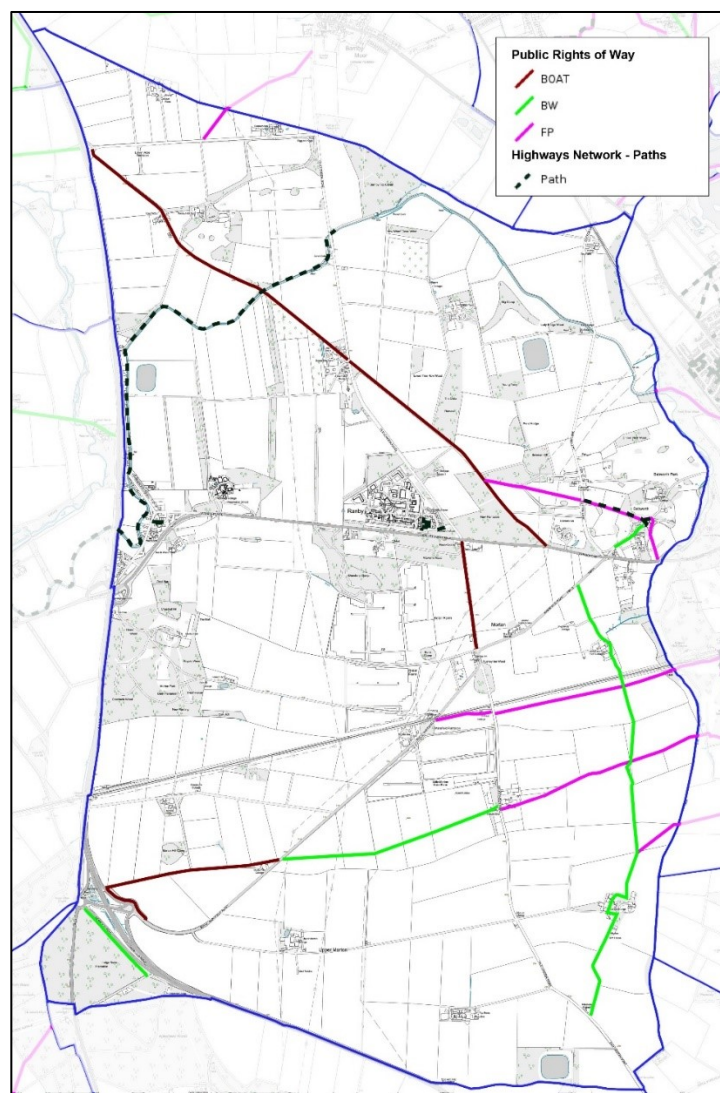
Figure 9: Statutorily Protected Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings): Historic England mapping



## Footpaths and other walking routes

Public footpaths and bridleways in England are mostly historic rights of way, remnants of the network of 'ways' established by use, over perhaps 14 centuries, as people walked or rode to the fields, to neighbouring villages or to local markets. This is especially so in Babworth Parish, several of whose footpaths appear to follow routes established in antiquity. Because of this history, including the creation of parks by large landowners and the Enclosure of the open fields, the Plan Area has only a moderately extensive surviving network, and there are only a few opportunities for circular walks that do not include sections of road. Despite this, the network is well-used, and residents regard it as important for its recreational value (as a contribution to physical and mental health and wellbeing) and for its intrinsic socio-historical value. Recognition of the value of walking routes for health and wellbeing means that any reduction of the existing network's extent and character will be resisted.

Figure 10: Footpaths and other walking routes (Nottinghamshire CC mapping)



**POLICY ENV 6: FOOTPATHS AND OTHER WALKING ROUTES** - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths (figure 11) will not be supported without appropriate mitigation.

## Flood risk resilience and climate change

Even if international cooperation and national strategies and policies eventually succeed in halting the human and industrial contributions towards climate change, the effects of recent and current warming on weather events will likely persist for decades. It is therefore desirable to plan for at least a medium-term future, in which weather events will continue to become more extreme, by putting in place measures that manage the effects of climate change on flooding for the lifetime of this Plan and beyond. This objective is explicitly supported by the Environment Agency (EA) draft *National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England* (2019), in which the strategic emphasis shifts from mitigation to resilience; in other words from requiring new development to reduce its adverse effects on flood risk and to avoiding creating or adding to flood risk at all.

In light of this, it is particularly important that the location and technical standards of all new development proposals in the Plan Area should in future be judged on their likely contribution to flooding in a climate change world. To complement this objective, the community will support proposals to improve the infrastructure within the built-up areas for managing flooding from rivers and watercourses, and from surface water run-off events, providing this is not unduly detrimental to the historic built environment, biodiversity sites, or open and green spaces.

This policy is in general conformity with Bassetlaw DC Local Plan (2020-2038) Policy 50.

**POLICY ENV 7: FLOOD RISK RESILIENCE** – Development proposals within the areas indicated in Figure 11 will be required, where appropriate, to demonstrate that the benefit of development outweighs the harm in relation to its adverse impact on climate change targets, and on the likelihood of it conflicting with locally applicable flood mitigation strategies and infrastructure.

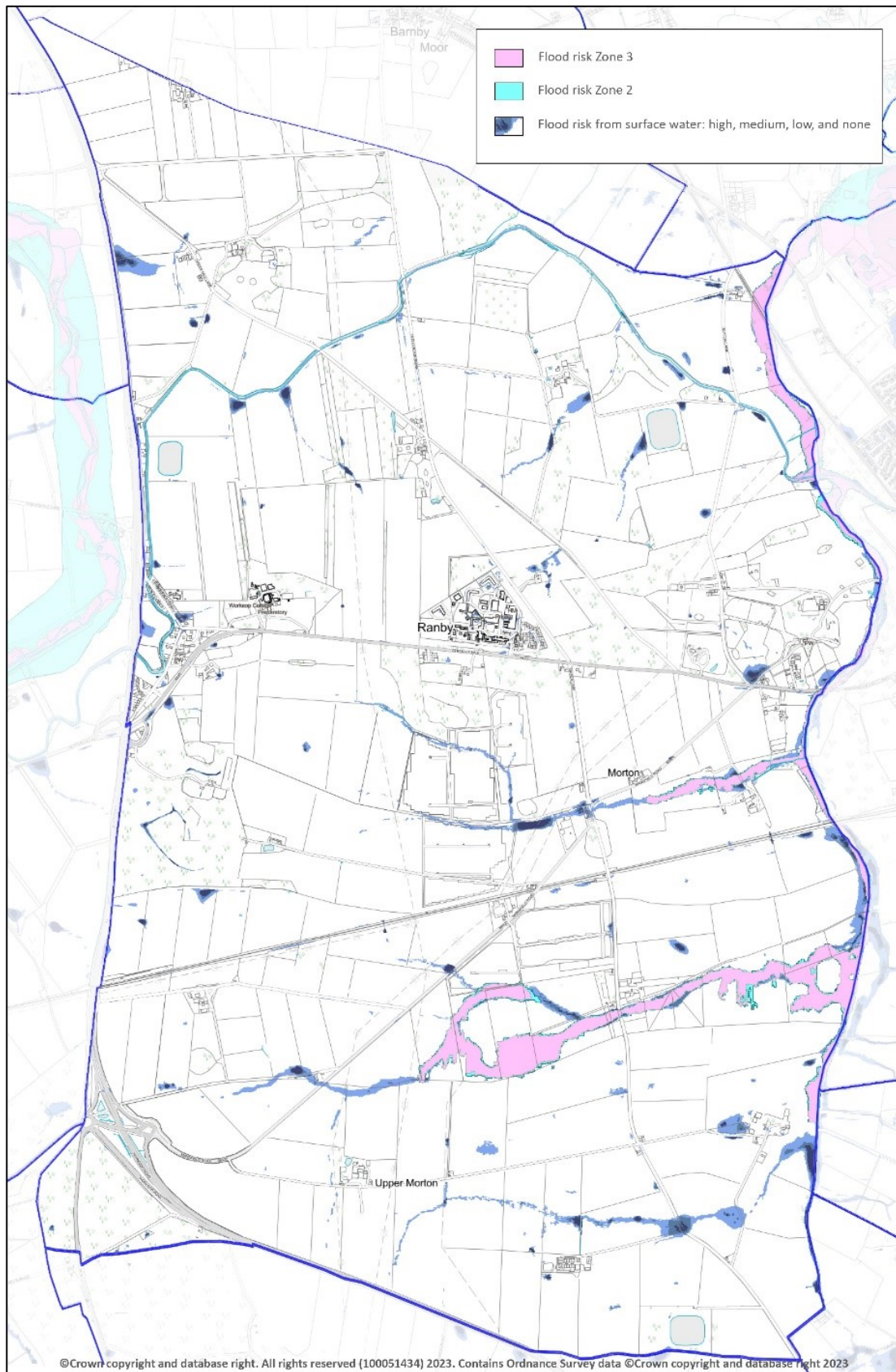
Proposals to construct new (or modify existing) floodwater management infrastructure (ditches, roadside gullies, retention pools, etc.), including within or close to the built-up area, will be supported, provided they do not adversely affect sites and features of natural or historical environment significance.

Development proposals of one or more dwellings and/or for employment or agricultural development should demonstrate that:

- if in a location susceptible to flooding from rivers or surface water, no alternative site to meet the local residential development need is available;
- its location and design respect the geology, flood risk and natural drainage characteristics of the immediate area and is accompanied by a hydrological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction;
- it includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, including allowing for climate change effects, that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff, and that the development will not threaten other natural habitats and water systems;
- its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with ongoing maintenance provision, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
- proposed SuDs infrastructure includes, where practicable, habitat creation comprising e.g. landscaping, access and egress for aquatic and terrestrial animals, and native species planting;
- it does not increase the risk of flooding to third parties; and
- it takes the effects of climate change into account.

Figure 11: Risk of flooding from rivers and surface water

Composite map from Environment Agency mapping



## Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure

The open, fairly flat, topography of the Plan Area and the distribution of woodland, shelter belts, hedgerows, the structures associated with HMP Ranby, and modern agricultural buildings, means that views east from Ranby and the higher western edge across the parish and from the surroundings of Babworth church in the east are not particularly extensive. The most important views have therefore been identified (policy ENV6) and landscape sensitivity in the Plan Area can be effectively mapped to help define areas suitable and unsuitable for medium- and large-scale renewables infrastructure. The location and scale of the existing solar arrays (c.78 ha) on previously arable farmland in the middle of the Plan Area has become an accepted part of the local landscape.

Mapping of areas that are *technically* suitable (aspect, exposure, prevailing wind, connection to the grid) for renewables development is beyond the scope of this Plan.

NPPF 2023 paragraphs 152-154 make it clear that all communities are responsible for reducing emissions as part of the necessary approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Residents of Babworth Parish wish to play their part, but at a scale appropriate to the landscape sensitivity of the Plan Area. The impact of wind generation infrastructure on communities has been recognised by the government: a Ministerial Statement (18 June 2015) says that suitable areas for wind energy development must be identified in local plans and that any such developments must have the support of local communities. The current Local Plan's supporting documentation included a *Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study* (2010), but this may now be out of date because of subsequent developments and technological advances, while at the time of writing (July 2023) the Local Plan (2020-2038) intentionally does not refer to any evidence-based documentation identifying and mapping areas suitable for turbine (or solar PV) infrastructure developments across the District or, specifically, in Babworth Parish.

This Neighbourhood Plan's Policy ENV 9 is in general conformity with Bassetlaw District Council's current Local Plan Policy DM10, but in the absence of up-to-date BDC landscape sensitivity or renewables suitability assessments it takes its guidance on site-specific wind and solar energy generation infrastructure sensitivity/suitability and therefore on locally-acceptable locations from the 2010 *Study* and from the descriptions and assessments of the adverse effects of drivers of change in the Natural England *National Character Area Profile 49 Sherwood*.

POLICY ENV 9: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INFRASTRUCTURE – Proposals for wind and solar generation infrastructure of up to five turbines, maximum tip height 50m, and/or one solar array up to 40 ha will be supported, subject to avoidance or mitigation of harmful effects on environment and amenity, including views, footpaths, biodiversity, historic environment and noise.

Proposals for renewable energy generation infrastructure larger than specified above (number, height or area) will not be supported.

## C Sustainability

This chapter looks at aspects of village life including: - Community facilities; Traffic management & road safety (including parking); and Business & employment.

### 1. Community facilities and amenities

Community facilities and amenities provide important infrastructure for the residents of Babworth Parish, supporting and enhancing the quality of daily life and contributing to the vitality of the village.

Some of these facilities and amenities offer local employment opportunities whilst others provide a focal point for social interaction and support important services; thereby reducing the need to travel, which is particularly important for those who do not have access to a car.

Babworth Parish has a limited range of facilities and amenities including the Village Hall, the Chequers Inn and Schools and Churches. This increases the need to travel, often by car, to nearby settlements. The need to travel outside the Parish to access basic services is one of the main reasons for the high levels of car ownership in the Parish (7% of households have no car or van compared to 20% across the district according to the 2011 Census). It also creates challenges for those residents without access to a car.

The community facilities and amenities in Babworth Parish include the following:

#### Ranby Village Hall

Originally known as Ranby Club, the hall was built in 1927 by Sir Albert Bingham, as a sports and social club for use by the residents of Ranby and the surrounding area. You had to be a member and pay a fee, and over the next 30 years it provided facilities for snooker, darts, bowls and tennis.

In 1960 the hall was given to the village by the estate of Sir Albert Bingham, to be run by a committee.

In 1963 it became a charity and was renamed Ranby Village Hall with the trustees being appointed from local organisations.

By this time the various sports facilities had declined and disappeared, and the hall could be hired by any group that wished to hold a function.

By 2010 it was recognised that the building needed considerable work carrying out if it was to continue to provide a service to the community.

Money was raised, grants obtained, designs agreed and after extensive refurbishment work, one of Ranby's oldest residents, Mrs Mavis Wollerton, BEM, cut the ribbon to declare Ranby Village Hall "open for business" in May 2017.

Extensive works have been undertaken to ensure the hall can be enjoyed by future generations of local people. The hall is an important focal point for the local community, who use it for a wide variety of activities.

## The Chequers Inn

The Chequers Inn is a quaint village pub, situated in Ranby sat at the side of Chesterfield canal. It reopened on 19th February 2016 following an extensive quarter-of-a-million-pound refurbishment completed by the Pub People Company.

The pub has been transformed both inside and outside and also introduced a brand new menu as the fifth pub under the company's Fresh and Local brand. So far proving extremely successful in and around the East Midlands the concept is to deliver a range of quality and value meals all freshly prepared on site using the freshest ingredients sourced, wherever possible, from local suppliers.

## St Martins Church Ranby

A school room was built in Ranby by John Rogers, a local landowner. The Archbishop of York licensed it for divine worship and the building opened in October 1835. It is recorded in the Religious Census of 1851 as the 'Ranby Licensed School Room' with a congregation of 58 in the afternoons and 24 Sunday scholars.



The iron church, c.1910

In 1898 a mission church was built on the Retford to Worksop road. The site was given by William Walker of Morton and the building itself was funded by W. H. Mason of Morton Hall. It was dedicated by the Bishop of Derby on 8 March 1898. The iron church was capable of accommodating 150 people and the interior was described by the *Sheffield Independent*:

The furnishing is of an elaborate description. There is a large and beautiful canopy behind the altar, with artistic hangings at the east end whilst the walls are covered with rich tapestry. The heating is carried out by means of two slow combination stoves, and the lighting by lamps suspended from the roof.

Plans to build a new church to replace the tin tabernacle started around 1950 soon after the Reverend E. F. Jessup became rector of Babworth All Saints.

The church itself was erected in 1959 a short distance to the south of the mission room. The architect was A C Bishop of Retford.

It was dedicated in February 1960 in a service led by the Bishop of Southwell. The Archdeacon of Newark and the Rural Dean-Designate of Retford were also present. Both the new brick church and the old tin tabernacle were crowded, the service being relayed between the two buildings. The Bishop was reported as saying that the building of the church 'was evidence of initiative and enterprise on the part of a local community which was still largely rural'.

At its opening, St Martin's could seat around 75 people.

Interestingly, the oak altar of the church came from the [Mausoleum at West Markham](#) which was built as a burial place for the Dukes of Newcastle. The altar cross and candlesticks were from the house chapel at nearby Morton Hall. The pews installed a short time after the opening of the church were originally in use at St Bees' Priory in Cumberland. The portable silver font was a gift from the father of the Reverend Jessup. It had been used for many years at a church in Canada.

In 1971 many of the worshippers lived outside the parish but chose to attend St Martin's because of the continued use of the Book of Common Prayer.

## All Saints' Church Babworth

All Saints is one of the key landmarks in the story of the Pilgrim Fathers who left England to form English settlements in what was to become America.

Located in Babworth, a small village close to Retford, the church dates back to the 15th century. In 1586, the congregation formed a Separatist movement under the leadership of Parson Richard Clyfton. While other Puritan groups maintained some of their links with the Church of England, the Separatists followed their own style of worship.

The Pilgrims made the decision to leave England and they crossed the Atlantic on the Mayflower. After the first passengers landed in 1620, they began to form the first communities.

William Brewster, who lived at nearby Scrooby Manor, and William Bradford, who were both passengers on the Mayflower. Clyfton died in Amsterdam in 1616

This stone church is around 900 years old. It is a small but handsome structure with a tower steeple with three bells and a clock, a nave, chancel and a handsome porch. Most of the building dates from the 15th century, with several 18th century memorials and 19th century stained glass by Kempe. The chancel and sanctuary contain furniture by Robert 'Mousey' Thompson, featuring his trademark mouse carvings. In early spring the church is surrounded by a spectacular display of snowdrops, which the public is free to visit.

### Ranby House Preparatory School

Ranby House School is situated in 60 acres of beautiful North Nottinghamshire countryside, the private school provides children with the natural space and resources they need to thrive and flourish. The School has highly qualified teachers, subject specialists and sports coaches who work with all children, from 3 to 11 years of age, in small classes, to ensure tailored teaching and learning. Using the very best examples of learning from around the world, they provide their children with a rich and vibrant curriculum – a curriculum that's unique to their school. Central to this is their school's Learner Profile and the development of resilience, adaptability and independence. These are embedded in everything they do. In addition to providing state-of-the art teaching facilities for their young learners, their school also offers families excellent value-for-money, with fully inclusive fees that cover all aspects of a Ranby House education.

The loss and threatened closure of facilities and services is, however, a common dilemma for rural communities. The viability of many rural services is likely to be challenged further in future as a consequence of squeezed local authority budgets and more car owning residents commuting to work, driving to retail centres and accessing leisure facilities and other amenities further afield.

The Open Event in July 2022 asked how important a range of community facilities were to residents. There were 6 comments generated by this section. All saw room for improvement in terms of the parish's potential and existing amenities, for example the potential for a village shop, the creation of canal and village hall seating, the need for the current facilities infrastructure to be updated, and improvement to the existing bus service.

The Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) seeks to protect and enhance community facilities through Policy ST43.

**POLICY CF1: THE RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES** - Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility or amenity will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that any of the following apply:

- a) There is no longer any proven need or demand for the existing community facility;
- b) The existing community facility is no longer economically viable and there are no alternative uses for the building that meet a community need; or
- c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Small scale proposals to enhance the provision of community facilities to meet an identified local need will be supported subject to the proposals demonstrating that they will not generate unacceptable disturbance in respect of, noise, fumes, smell or traffic; have appropriate off-road parking; that they will respect and be compatible with the local character and surrounding uses; and that they will, where appropriate, protect residential amenity.

## 2. Employment

### Existing and new employment opportunities

The strength of the local economy and of the community go hand in hand. Supporting the growth of a stronger local economy is recognised as an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020-2038, adopted in May 2024, supports employment development in rural areas through Policy ST11 where the scale of the proposal is appropriate to location, landscape character and heritage quality.

Babworth Parish has a number of established businesses which are run from home-based facilities within the village. In 2011 only 2.6% of people living in the parish (aged 16-74) worked from home compared to 3.2% (across Bassetlaw) but with continuing changing employment patterns nationally, particularly in light of the Coronavirus Pandemic, pattern is likely to increase. Businesses based around a diverse farming sector represent much of the economic activity locally.

For the majority of workers resident in the parish the lack of significant local employment opportunity means that their only option is to work away from the area, commuting increasingly greater distances

to secure employment. According to the 2011 Census, Babworth Parish has a high proportion of economically inactive residents (60% compared to 32% across Bassetlaw, although this is largely explained as a consequence of the Prison population). 56.6% of residents go to work by car (2021 Census).

Where there are buildings dedicated to business use in the parish it is important that they are protected against being lost to other uses. It should be clearly demonstrated that there is little prospect of existing building or land generating employment before allowing demolition or redevelopment.

Meanwhile, new employment initiatives in the right location can greatly help to boost and diversify the local economy and to provide more local employment opportunities overall, maintaining the rural nature of the parish strongly mitigates against any larger scale business development.

Any new employment initiatives should be sensitive to the character of the parish. Employment proposals should only be seen as acceptable if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important such as air quality, green spaces, increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

There is, however, a need to recognise and support the increasing numbers of people who conduct their businesses from home. The Neighbourhood Plan reflects this in its proposals to provide a wider range of housing and to both support conversion of redundant commercial buildings and the development of local business premises where appropriate.

The Open Event from August 2022 asked for people's thoughts about business development. There were 3 comments received, and potential businesses were cited: a local shop, dog walking and cottage industries.

**POLICY E1: EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT - Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, an existing employment use will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the site or building is no longer suitable for employment use.**

**Proposals for employment-related development (for new and/or expansion of employment uses) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the development will not generate unacceptable disturbance, noise, fumes, smell or traffic; has appropriate off-road parking; that it will respect and be compatible with the local character and surrounding uses; and that it will, where appropriate, protect residential amenity.**

## Farm diversification

There are 6 working farms in the Parish. The conversion of former agricultural buildings enables farm diversification, leads to the sustainable reuse of vacant buildings and provides opportunities for the establishment and development of small businesses which generate income and employment opportunities for local people. This is a national trend, which the Parish Council would like to encourage within the Plan area to maintain a balanced and vibrant community, subject to the proper consideration of residential amenity for nearby houses, visual impact on the countryside and highway safety issues. New business development in the countryside is covered in Policy E1.

To help maintain the rural economy and protect the open countryside from inappropriate development, the Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise through the development and where appropriate conversion of existing farm buildings in the countryside. Specifically, this is intended to: Promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in the neighbourhood area and the diversification of rural businesses; encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract both visitors and tourists to the parish and maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural lands.

The change of use of some rural buildings to new uses is already permitted under the General Permitted Development Orders. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014 allows, under certain circumstances, the change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and change of use of agricultural buildings to registered nurseries providing childcare or state-funded schools, under the prior approval system. The policy allows for circumstances where planning permission is required.

**POLICY E3: REUSE OF AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS - The reuse, conversion and adaptation of rural buildings for small businesses, recreation, or tourism purposes will be supported where:**

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the character of the surrounding area;
- c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d) The local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site; and

- e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

#### Tourism

Babworth Parish is attractive as a destination for rural leisure activities which include cycling and walking as well as less strenuous pastimes and just relaxing in pleasant surroundings.

The Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) recognises the importance of tourism in Policy ST12: Visitor Economy.

**POLICY E4: TOURISM** - Support will be given to facilities that enhance and promote tourism where:

- a) They are of a scale appropriate to the nature of the Parish;
- b) They do not have a detrimental effect on the distinctive rural character of the Parish;
- c) They do not adversely affect the surrounding infrastructure, particularly local road networks, water supply and sewerage;
- d) They benefit the local community through, for instance, provision of local employment opportunities and improvements to local service provision appropriate in scale to their location;
- e) They involve the reuse of existing buildings; or
- f) They form part of farm diversification.

#### Broadband

The Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) recognises the importance of the Digital Infrastructure in Policy ST57. This neighbourhood plan recognises the fundamental importance of ultra-fast broadband to the development of the local economy and that rural communities must not be disadvantaged with a poor communication infrastructure. Such facilities are particularly important for promoting and developing homeworking as outlined in policy E2.

**POLICY E5: BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE** - Proposals to provide improved access to faster broadband for businesses and households in Babworth Parish will be supported; this includes suitable connectivity for future generations of mobile technology.

Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that serves businesses and households within the Parish will be supported. If a new mast is installed, this should be shared, where possible, by more than one provider.

Any infrastructure improvements requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the local area, and not be visually intrusive in open landscapes.

### 3. Traffic

The Open Event from July 2022 received 12 comments from residents about traffic management.

In the event of development, half of respondents highlighted the need to provide more traffic calming, and traffic management/maintenance in general. The other half cited the need for the parish's footpaths to be better maintained and updated. It is noted that Ranby is adjacent to an A road which has an impact on the village.

The Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) promotes sustainable transport and active travel through Policy ST55 which supports 'development that contributes towards a sustainable, safe, active transport network and offers a range of public transport and active travel choices.'

**POLICY T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT** - With particular regard to the rural highway network of the parish and the need to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic, all new housing and commercial development must:

- a) Be designed to minimize additional traffic generation and movement through the village and on single-track roads;
- b) Avoid additional on-street parking and to ensure provision is made for cycle storage, development proposals will be assessed against Nottinghamshire Parking Standards (2016)
- c) Not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- d) provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network; and
- e) Provide for traffic calming measures as appropriate.

## 5. Monitoring and Review

This Neighbourhood Plan covers the period up to 2038. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which this Plan seeks to address will change.

This Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored by the Parish Council for its continued relevance. The policies and measures contained in this Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level, relevant to the delivery of this Neighbourhood Plan, will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review this Neighbourhood Plan on a four-year cycle commencing in 2029 or to coincide with the review of the Local Plan, if this cycle is different.