

BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSULTATION STATEMENT



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Section 15(2). Part 5 of the regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain:

- a. Details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- b. Explain how they were consulted;
- c. Summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- d. Describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

This statement describes the statutory and non-statutory consultation that has taken place and the steps taken to ensure the engagement of as wide cross section of Blackfordby residents and businesses within the process as possible.

2. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION DURING DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT PLAN

Following a request from residents in Blackfordby Ashby de la Zouch Town Council agreed on 6th June 2016 to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. At the time the Town Council was producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the for the town Ashby de la Zouch and had decided to exclude the village of Blackfordby from the plan as they were felt to be distinct areas with their own development needs.

To gauge the level of support in the community for the development to a Neighbourhood Plan a launch event was held.

This was held at Blackfordby Village Hall on Saturday 1st April 2017 in the form of a drop in event. The event was publicised through press releases in the Ashby Times and Burton Mail. An advert had been placed in Ashby Life which is delivered to every household. A leaflet was also delivered to every household in the village.

89 people attended the Drop In, with 18 participants volunteering to help with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and 77 wanting to be kept informed of progress with the Plan.

Participants were asked to comment on the following themes:

- Housing
- Environment
- Transport
- Community Facilities
- Developer Contributions

Participants at the launch event expressed strong support for the development of Neighbourhood Plan in Blackfordby. Therefore, the Town Council agreed to move forward with the production of the Neighbourhood Pan. An application was made to North West Leicestershire District Council for designated status for the plan area. This was granted in January 2018.

Appendix 1 contains publicity materials for the launch event

Appendix 2. summarises the outcome of the launch event.

A Steering Group was established and comprised Town Councillors and local residents:

- Robert Nettleton (Chairman and resident)
- Leader Ashby de la Zouch Town Council
- Chairman of the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee
- The two Town Council ward Councillors for Blackfordby
- Six local residents
- The Deputy Town Clerk acted as Secretary

The Steering Group has met at regular intervals since 2017, with over 11 meetings being held. The frequency of meetings has fluctuated throughout the process.

A dedicated Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan page was created on the Town Council's website to enable people to keep up to date with progress and download Neighbourhood Plan documents. Regular updates were provided to the Town

Council's Planning and Transportation Committee who approved each round of consultation and submission of the Examination Neighbourhood Plan.

There were 4 rounds of consultation in total:

- The launch of the Neighbourhood Plan where the public's views were obtained on the issues facing the village, as described above.
- Promoting the emerging themes within the Neighbourhood Plan and recruiting volunteers for Focus Groups
- Consultation on the emerging policies within the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- Regulation 14 consultation on the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

3. PROMOTING THE EMERGING THEMES AND RECRUITING RESIDENTS FOR THE FOCUS GROUPS

In January 2018 a newsletter was produced to update residents on progress with the plan and to recruit residents for the three Focus Group. This was distributed to all households and businesses in the plan area and a copy was placed on the Town Council's website.

Appendix 3 - January 2018 Newsletter and publicity materials for the Focus Group launch.

The newsletter included an invite to the launch of the Focus Groups in February 2018. This event was held in the Village Hall and anyone from the plan area was welcome to attend. In addition to the newsletter the event was publicised through the village Facebook page and through an advert in Ashby Life which is distributed to households in the village. Residents who had attended the launch event and had requested to be kept informed were written to and invited to the meeting. Posters were also put up in the village. The Town Council website and twitter feed were also used to promote the event.

At the same time key local stakeholders including the school, church and local businesses were written to. They were sent a copy of the newsletter and an invitation to the Focus Group launch event.

Appendix 4 has samples of stakeholder correspondence.

In February 2019 a range of statutory stakeholders were also written to and asked if there were any issues that they would like the Neighbourhood Plan to address. As the plan area borders Derbyshire these stakeholders included South Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council, alongside Leicestershire County Council and surrounding parish councils. Other key stakeholders like the Coal Authority, Natural

England, the National Forest Company and the Environment Agency were also approached.

4. FOCUS GROUPS

At the Focus Group launch event attendees were provided with a brief update on Neighbourhood Planning and progress with the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan. At the meeting 55 residents offered to take part in Focus Groups and the first meeting of each Focus group was held. The three Focus Groups then met throughout 2018, with groups facilitated by staff from Yourlocale.

In August 2018 representatives from each Focus Group were invited to an event where they presented the emerging policies coming from their group. This enabled any areas of duplication or conflict to be identified and kept people informed of progress on the plan as a whole. It also provided the opportunity for initial feedback from local residents on the emerging policies.

The three Focus Groups were:

- Housing and the Built Environment
- Environment
- Transport, Employment and Community Facilities

Each Focus Group produced a draft chapter including policies relating to their area and supporting text.

As part of the Focus Group stage the Housing and Built Environment Group wrote to all landowners whose land had been part of the site assessment stage. This included all landowners in the Plan Area whose land was listed in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. As a result of this correspondence one landowner provided details of their plans for a site which was partly in the plan area.

The Transport, Employment and Community Facilities Group circulated a survey to 33 businesses and farms in the plan area. Seeking their views on their plans for the future and impact of planning and transport policy on their business. Unfortunately only four businesses replied, but their comments helped influence the content of the chapters produced by the group.

Appendix 5 - Contains a sample of the form and covering letter

5. HOUSING NEEDS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SURVEY

North West Leicestershire District Council commissioned a Housing Needs Survey for the village in July 2018. The District Council and Midlands Rural Housing, who were conducting the survey provided the Town Council with the opportunity to add some Neighbourhood Plan related questions to the survey form.

Each Focus Group was asked to come up with some questions and these were reviewed by the Steering Group. Eleven questions designed to help inform the Neighbourhood Plan were added to the questionnaire. However the questions within the housing needs survey section were also very relevant to the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and help identify gaps in current housing provision.

Appendix 6 – Contains publicity material about the Housing Needs Survey

Appendix 7 – Contains the survey form.

There were 201 forms returned and of these 187 respondents felt that they were adequately housed at present. These respondents focussed their answers on the Neighbourhood Plan questions.

Appendix 8 – Contains a report summarising the findings of the Housing Needs Survey.

The results of the survey were taken in to account when the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan was prepared. A key change which resulted from the consultation was the inclusion of the Cow Close Football field as a Local Green Space.

6. CONSULTATION ON EMERGING POLICIES

In March 2019 a Drop In event was held to update people on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and to gain their views on the policies emerging from the Focus Groups.

Appendix 9 – Contains publicity material for the Drop in event.

Publicity for the event included posters, flyers delivered to every household and an advert in Ashby Life.

In total 72 residents attended the event. Strong support was expressed for the policies on display, with some notable exceptions.

The policy on housing allocation received only 8 in favour and 22 against. This may have reflected a misunderstanding about the need for new housing in the area

and the added protection that is available to neighbourhood plans that allocate a site for residential development.

The policy on housing mix attracted an even split with 11 in favour and 12 against, this may have been a result of concern about the support for affordable housing, because there were 14 in favour of the policy on affordable housing and 15 against.

There was clear opposition to the policy on renewable energy and a split in views on the policy on electric vehicles.

Appendix 10 - Contains an analysis of the consultation.

These results were discussed by the Steering Group, alongside the feedback from the Housing Needs Survey. The Steering Group decided to keep the renewable energy policy within the draft plan and wait to see if similar opposition is voiced during the Regulation 14 consultation.

7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGULATION 14 PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

The pre-submission consultation was launched on 13th May and ran until 24th June 2019. The consultation was publicised through:

- Flyers delivered to each household in the Neighbourhood Plan area
- An advert in Ashby Life which goes to all households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Details were placed on the Town Council's website, including a copy of the draft plan.
- Social media was used to promote the consultation.
- Letters were sent to Statutory Stakeholders, neighbouring parish councils, Leicestershire County Council, Derbyshire County Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, South Derbyshire District Council, the National Forest Company, the local MP and other local stakeholders, landowners and developers. North West Leicestershire District Council forwarded letters to landowners who have land in the Blackfordby area in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Survey.

Appendix 11 - Provides details of publicity for the Phase 1 Pre-submission consultation, including a summary of people and organisations contacted.

8. RESULTS OF THE REGULATION 14 PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

There were 21 respondents to the Pre-Submission Consultation:

- 8 Statutory Consultees – Environment Agency, Natural England, Coal Authority, Highways England, North West Leicestershire District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Local Access Forum and the National Forest Company.
- 4 developers/ landowners.
- 5 local groups e.g. Civic Society, Allotments Association, local campaign groups.
- 4 individual Town Councillors and residents.

Changes to the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan

- The Local Green Space assessments were reviewed and revised to provide greater clarity.
- Additional Heritage Assets were added, to reflect those within the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- The Ridge and Furrow section was reviewed and the Steering Group reviewed the site allocation to ensure it would not impact on one of the protected views or contains a good example of ridge and furrow.
- Local connection criteria were added to the affordable housing policy.
- A section on Developer Contributions was added.

In November 2019 North West Leicestershire District Council issued its screening opinion of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan. Following representations from Natural England it was decided that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulation Assessment were required. These were completed in early 2020.

The recommendations from the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment were incorporated within the Examination Neighbourhood Plan. These related to development within the River Mease catchment area.

9. CONSULTEES

Statutory Consultees:

North West Leicestershire District Council

South Derbyshire District Council

Leicestershire County Council

Derbyshire County Council
Historic England
Environment Agency
Natural England
British Gas Properties
Highways England
National Forest Company
Leicestershire Local Access Forum
Leicestershire Police
British Telecommunications Plc
The Coal Authority
National Grid
Network Rail Infrastructure
Severn Trent Water
East Midlands Housing Group
Andrew Bridgen MP
District and County Councillors
CPRE
Voluntary Action Leicestershire
North West Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
Age UK Leicestershire
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service
West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
Homes and Communities Agency
Neighbouring Parish Councils

Local Community

Primary School
Local Churches x 2
Women's Institute
Village Hall
The Old School Room

Local Businesses (3)

Landowners and developers

Details obtained from North West Leicestershire District Council of the owners of land listed in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and all of these were contract. In addition, landowners who had already developed land in the area were contacted.

10. ARRANGEMENTS FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

The SEA was prepared by AECOM in February 2021

Appendix 12 is the Environmental Report.

The Town Council's response to the recommendations contained in the Environmental Report are in **Appendix 13**.

The Environmental Report was shared with all stakeholders in line with the Regulations.

The comments received through this consultation are in **Appendix 14**.

11. SEA CONSULTEES

The Coal Authority
Highways England
Heatons
Leicestershire County Council
NWLDC
Historic England
Residents of Blackfordby
Gladmans
Natural England
Environment Agency
Severn Trent Water



Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan



**RESIDENTS OF BLACKFORDBY ARE
INVITED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE
BLACKFORDBY
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
ON SATURDAY 1ST APRIL 2017 AT
BLACKFORDBY VILLAGE HALL
DROP IN ANYTIME BETWEEN
10AM AND 2PM**

The Neighbourhood Planning process is designed to enable the local community to influence planning and development in their area. The Town Council wants to find out what people think about living in Blackfordby and how the village can be improved. Residents will also be given the opportunity to be part of the team developing the Neighbourhood Plan.



Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan



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Press Release

ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING BLACKFORDBY'S FUTURE



Ashby de la Zouch Town Council has started work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Blackfordby. Councillor John Coxon proposed that there should be a Neighbourhood Plan for Blackfordby to help ensure the village retains its own distinct identity in the light of recent housing developments approved for the village. With the Ashby de la Zouch Neighbourhood Plan now reaching a conclusion it was the right time to focus on Blackfordby.

To launch the process the Town Council are giving local people the opportunity to come along to a drop in session to give their views on the village. All comments will contribute towards the preparation of a plan for the long term vision for Blackfordby. Residents will also be given the opportunity to be part of the team preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Drop in session is on Saturday 1st April from 10am to 2pm at Blackfordby Village Hall.

Councillor John Coxon, Leader of Ashby de la Zouch Town Council said: "The Neighbourhood Planning process is designed to enable the local community to influence planning and development in their area. The Town Council wants to find out what people think about living in Blackfordby and how the village can be improved. The event will give people the opportunity to have an initial say on the future development of Blackfordby".

Message Ends

Note to editors:

Neighbourhood Planning is a process that is designed to enable the local community to influence planning and development for their area by helping to decide:

- The most appropriate places for new homes, offices, leisure facilities and other development to be located;
- What type of development is needed and what it should look like;
- Which important green spaces and other areas should be protected;
- What improvements or additions to local facilities and services will be required alongside any developments.

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by the 2011 Localism Act, with designated front runners starting to prepare plans in April 2012. There are five key stages to neighbourhood planning:

- Defining the Neighbourhood which will receive designation as a Neighbourhood Plan area;
- Preparing the plan;
- Independent examination;
- Community referendum;
- Legal force.

Neighbourhood Plans have been developed across the country, within Leicestershire 70 have been or are being prepared, with 5 of those having been formally adopted.

Karen Edwards

Legion House

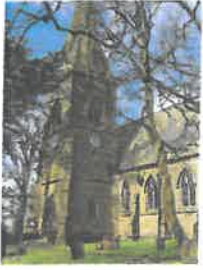
South Street

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Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan



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Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan



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the repairs, but church custo-
dians have emphasised that
help from the public is needed.
They have launched an
online fundraising page for the
cause, aiming to raise £10,000
for the most pressing repairs
which are to replace and refurb-
ish the stone.
To donate and help restore
the church, visit:
www.justgiving.com/crowdfun-
ding/breedonchurch



Budding bakers at Ibstock
Community College have been
competing in the first round of
the college's Easter bake off.
Students were challenged to
design, make and decorate the
best Easter cupcakes.
Linda Higginson, head of
design and technology who is
overseeing the competition,
said: "The standard in the
first round was very high and
we are looking forward to see-
ing what the other students
come up with over the next
few weeks."
The bake off is one of a
series of inter-House competi-
tions running this term.



RESIDENTS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF BLACKFORDBY

THE people of Ashby are to be
given the chance to shape the
future of Blackfordby and its
long-term vision as the town
council proposes a
Neighbourhood Plan
for the village.
The proposed plan
comes from the leader
of Ashby de la Zouch
Town Council,
Councillor John
Coxon, who says it is
vital that Blackfordby
retains its identity fol-
lowing the approval of
development for the
village, including up to
91 homes on land
north of Butt Lane and
east of Hepworth
Road.
This has come after
the Ashby
Neighbourhood Plan
reached a conclusion
that Blackfordby now

needed attention.
Cllr Coxon said: "The
Neighbourhood Planning
process is designed to enable
the local community to influ-
ence planning and development
in their area.
"The Town Council wants to
find out what people think
about living in Blackfordby and
how the village can be
improved."
Neighbourhood Plans were
introduced by the 2011
Localism Act, with such plan-
ning being a process that is
designed to enable the commu-
nity to influence planning and
development for their area.
They can do this by helping
to decide:
• The most appropriate places
for new homes, offices, leisure
facilities and other develop-
ment to be located
• What type of development is
needed and what it should look



John Coxon

• What improvements of addi-
tions to facilities and services
will be required alongside any
developments.
As a result, Ashby Town
Council are launching their
Blackfordby plans by hosting a
drop-in sessions where resi-
dents will be given the chance
to give their views on the vil-
lage. All comments will con-
tribute towards the preparation
of a plan for the long term
vision for Blackfordby.
Residents will also be given the
opportunity to be part of the
team preparing the
Neighbourhood Plan.
Cllr Coxon added: "The event
will give people the opportunity
to have an initial say on the
future development of
Blackfordby."
The drop-in session takes
place on Saturday, April 1 and
runs from 10am to 2pm at
Blackfordby Village Hall.

NAL FUTURE



originally to transport
the Leicestershire and
field to markets both
The Ashby Canal,
plots the rise and
risk of abandonment
significant leisure
shire LE67 3QP

Ruling cabinet to consider progress report on how county council is supporting communities

A PROGRESS report on how
the county council is support-
ing communities is to be con-
sidered today.
Leicestershire County
Council's ruling cabinet will
consider progress with its
communities strategy, which
was launched in 2014, today
(Friday, March 10).
Councillor Pam Posnett,
cabinet member for commu-
nities, said: "We've made a
great start in developing
ways to help communities to
help themselves. I've always
believed that communities
know what's best to tackle
their problems and to make
the most of their opportuni-
ties and I want the council to



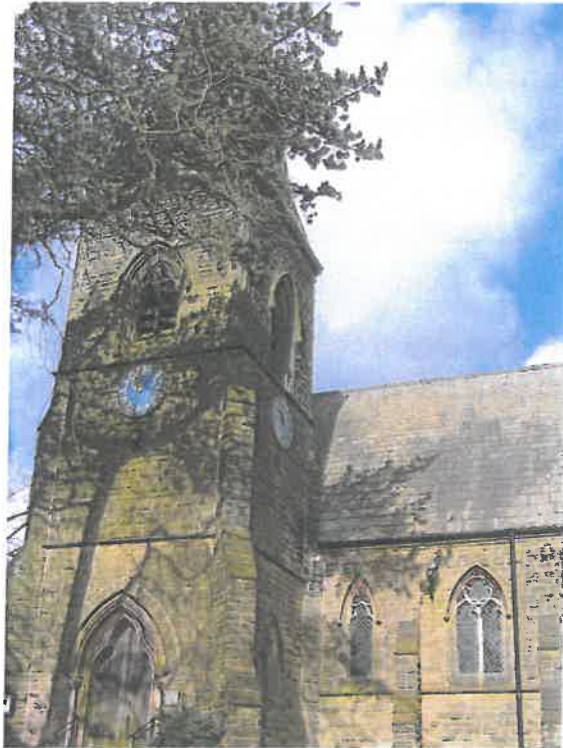
Pam Posnett

support them to do this."
Examples of successes over
the last three years include:
• Transferring control of up

to 35 smaller libraries to
community groups;
• Launching local area co-
ordinators, which signpost
vulnerable people to advice
and support;
• Shire grants providing
funding for communities and
voluntary groups;
• A campaign to highlight
what communities can do to
support vulnerable people
and families;
• Grants to start and grow
social enterprises.
Now, the strategy has four
priorities. They are:
• Helping communities to
support themselves, individ-
uals and families;
• Supporting communities to

work with public services and
deliver better outcomes for
people;
• Helping the voluntary and
community sector to be an
effective provider;
• The council should be out-
ward focussed, transparent
and open to new ways of
working.
The progress report also
outlines the council's plans
for a series of engagement
and consultation events from
June so they can gather peo-
ple's views about how the
council should continue to
support communities.
The cabinet meeting takes
place at 11am on March 10 at
County Hall.

BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



LAUNCH EVENT

1ST APRIL 2017

HELD AT BLACKFORDBY VILLAGE HALL



1. Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Launch event

The launch event was held on Saturday 1st April 2017 in the form of a drop in between 10am and 2pm.

The event had been publicised through press releases in the Ashby Times and Burton Mail. An advert had been placed in Ashby Life which is delivered to every household. A leaflet was also delivered to every household in the village.

89 people attended the Drop In, with 18 participants volunteering to help with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and 77 wanting to be kept informed of progress with the Plan.

Participants were asked to comment on the following themes:

- Housing
- Environment
- Transport
- Community Facilities
- Developer Contributions



2. Comments received

Comments on Developer Contributions have been merged with comments on specific themes so they can be considered as part of the Theme Group discussions.

Housing

- Keep it a village – no houses!
- Water supply must have pressure limits. How close are we to capacity now?
- Drainage infrastructure must have limits. How close are existing drainage/ sewage systems to their capacity?
- If we are to have more houses. Make them affordable for young people and starter homes.
- No new housing on greenfield sites are needed or wanted in Blackfordby.
- Small development of affordable bungalows for ageing population.
- Starter homes and homes for families – not bungalows – they currently represent too high percentage of the total.
- Oppose mass housing developments that simply encourage migration from Birmingham, Derby etc and add to the traffic congestion on the M42 and Swarkestone bridge.
- Field should be green not brick.
- Maintain Blackfordby as a separate village with housing development not encroaching on the green space around.
- Affordable housing for 1st time buyers.
- Blackfordby is a village – not to become an urban sprawl!
- Too little too late!
- Please maintain our village – not allowing development which links to Woodville.
- Any new builds to consider window styles, roof types etc in more of a 'historic' village style.

Environment

- No solar farms – fields should be green not glass. Use buildings for solar solutions.
- We need to keep a gap between Blackfordby and Woodville to ensure it keeps its identity.
- As most of Blackfordby is surrounded by National Forest e.g. Johns Wood, the wild life must be preserved e.g. foxes, bats, buzzards, hedge hogs are all quite common here.
- Need to keep a distance from Woodville and new estates as Blackfordby will lose its identity as a village.

- Land at the end of Field Lane, Boundary that runs along Heath Lane divides Blackfordby from Boundary. Boundary has significant history in its own right and should not join Blackfordby. These fields contain skylark nests (present now) and kestrels, buzzards and sparrow hawks nest in the trees. These are protected birds.
- Neither should Blackfordby join up with Woodville – separation supports village identity.
- Keep our green spaces green & protect them for future generations.
- Reduction of vehicular noise and air pollution.
- Low level eco-friendly with renewable resources.
- Heritage suggests that Blackfordby is a village – it should remain so and not become a suburb of Ashby or Midway. Green space to be ringfenced.
- Maintain village integrity and stop developments that link the village to Woodville.
- Keep green field.
- Grass land between North Close/ South Close to be taken for housing (houses should be bungalows if at all)
- The park needs updating with more play equipment, picnic benches
- Keep the green fields green!
- Keep green fields

Transport

- Too much traffic now
- Improve the public transport – faster, more frequent and later in the evening
- Improve parking for residents on Main Street near school - School teachers have facility to park at village hall, most don't use it, so residents fed up because we cannot park, we have to hope we have a space when we come home.
- Poor public transport
- Children at **risk** from Blackfordby school towards Heath Lane as inadequate footpath. Same Butt Lane.
- Very good public transport but poor roads and pavements.
- Restriction of access down/up Butt Lane to new estates along the bypass. Traffic speeds around the corner in to Butt Lane. Too much traffic now.
- Introduce traffic calming and speed reduction measures on Butt Lane and Drift Lane. There is currently no regard for speed limits or safety.
- Speed restrictions are needed on Heath. Especially at the 511 end. It has a 30mph sign but it might be a well say 130.
- Main Street needs better parking especially round school.
- We already have the M1 running through the village.

- Traffic the main problem far too much exceeding speed limits. More warning signs – maybe a bypass!
- No footpath in part of the village. Single footpaths elsewhere, many too narrow for pram or pushchair.
- Far too much traffic is now using Butt Lane to and from the bypass estates. The speed, volume and noise has become a nightmare. Difficulty leaving our driveway safely every morning.
- Consider road safety of children at beginning and end of school e.g. bus times.
- Poor public transport , poor footpaths, dangerous double bend with no path right by the school.
- Heath Lane is used as a rat run. Especially at tea time. Too much, too fast. Get police involved prosecute where possible heavy vehicles flouting the 7.5 ton weight limit.
- Blackfordby needs further traffic calming particularly at peak times in mornings and evenings as traffic volumes grown with new developments.
- Traffic in Heath Lane is bad at certain times. Vehicle speed, pavements are narrow or non-existent. There is a blind bend and a school. This is an accident waiting to happen.
- Roads within the village are too narrow now – increased traffic flow will increase potential for accidents.
- Parking is inadequate – roads are narrowed by parked cars.
- Congestion bad due to over building nearby.
- Main Street rat run from Moira to A511.
- Part of agreement for parking with Highways was to use facility of village hall when the extension was built – not happening.
- Traffic management on Heath Lane. Only lived there 10 years but have noticed the increase in cars etc together with speed. Maybe limited to 30mph.
- Traffic management badly needed in Heath Lane. As being used as a short cut to Butt Lane by speeding traffic breaking 30mph restriction.
- Update the village and stop through traffic which makes the school area very dangerous. Improve parking around school.
- Someone will soon be killed on busy road.
- There are no paths to walk along up to school – Heath Lane & Well Lane.
- Speed of traffic has risen.
- Traffic down Main Street is terrible, buses coming through our village are putting passengers at risk with the amount of speeding traffic taking short cut off the 511.
- Mini Roundabout at junction of Heath Lane and A511 Boundary. Major congestion at rush hour and high risk of turning on fast road.
- Traffic is horrendous! Speeding is constant through the village.

- Stop Blackfordby becoming a chicken run. More traffic calming measures needed, certainly on Butt Lane.

Community Facilities

- Blue Bell refurbishment to new use – small shop + post office, café (pop up)
- Can the Blue Bell Inn become a community building.
- Any housing development must provide a basic shop for local residents. The village has 'no soul' as it has no facilities.
- Why do residents of Blackfordby have to use Woodville surgery, when there is a closer surgery, whose practice policy is not to take patients from Blackfordby – Why can't this be challenged.
- Local shop/ Post Office for older residents or disabled who cannot travel
- Shops at least 2 good quality and a café/ meeting place for young families – encourage them to stay in the village.
- Shops needed. Too many people have to travel/ older people find it very difficult to get to Swadlincote or Ashby.
- Any new housing development must feature mandatory retail units with adequate parking for same.
- Close current school and move it to where new houses are being built. Better access, quieter road around Main Street. Convert current school for accommodation.
- Community building for elderly residents to stay in the village and not become isolated.
- Doctors surgery is already full to capacity. So are the schools.
- No facilities – The roads are already full. The surgery most of us in the village to Woodville/ Swadlincote. Where are we to obtain healthcare, schools and parking in the future.
- Woodville school on full capacity yet more houses are being built.
- Youth Club not being used as such, full of stuff! Could this be used by the community coffee club, youth club, meeting room, drop in centre, tourist info!
- Need to encourage young families to stay.
- Better facilities for young children in the park/ playing field with picnic benches for social interaction. Also, attractive benches and planters along Main Street etc.
- Need for a community shop/ café/ daily meeting place i.e. convert the Bluebell pub into a pub + café open during the day.
- Yes agree – Blue Bell has lots of potential – 1 pub is enough if we are to keep it.

General

- Around Blackfordby Council boundaries are complex – ensure you are working in a 'joined up' way for the interests of the community.
- Street/village signs should be made more attractive i.e. 'old fashioned' not the huge modern Blackfordby sign coming in off the bypass.
- Boothorpe has links with Blackfordby but sits in a different parish – Ashby Woulds. So not advised of this event. Can the boundary be change to make more logical?
- Can Boothorpe be leafleted for future events?
- We live in Leicestershire, but we are treated like we live in Derbyshire – can this not be reviewed? (A Leicestershire postcode and Burton on Trent phone no). We pay our taxes in Leicestershire.

3. Next steps

Participants at the launch event expressed support for the development of Neighbourhood Plan in Blackfordby. The next steps in the process are:

- Apply to North West Leicestershire District Council for designated status.
- Establish an Advisory Group to steer the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- Establish Theme Groups to consider: Housing, Environment and Transport/Employment/Community Facilities.
- Apply for grants to contribute to the cost of producing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Appoint specialist consultants to help produce the Neighbourhood Plan.



BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Volume 1, Issue 1

January 2018

What's been happening:

- Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan has been launched
- An application has been made to North West Leicestershire District Council for designated status.
- A Steering Group has been established
- Specialist neighbourhood Planning Consultants, Your-locale have been appointed to support the Steering Group in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Focus Group Launch event Monday 5th February 2018 at 7pm in Blackfordby Village Hall, all welcome

Inside this issue:

- Shaping Blackfordby's Future **1**
- The Need for a Plan **1**
- What Happens Next? **2**
- Neighbourhood Plan Area **2**

A Neighbourhood Plan—Shaping Blackfordby's Future

A successful launch event was held last year in Blackfordby Village Hall with more than 80 villagers attending.

Several residents expressed an interest in being part of a Steering Group to guide the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Steering Group includes Town Councillors and Blackfordby residents namely:
 Robert Nettleton (Chairman)
 Cllr John Coxon
 Cllr Jim Hoult
 Cllr Mrs Di Whetton
 Cllr Allen Green
 Keith Thompson (Vice Chair)
 Jane Lloyd
 Mike McCrea
 Bill Chesterton
 Colin Carr
 Karen Edwards (Secretary)

The Steering Group have met three times and Blackfordby residents Robert Nettleton and

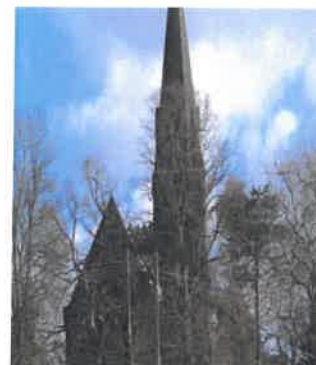
Keith Thompson were appointed to the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively.

Deputy Town Clerk Karen Edwards will act as Secretary.

Terms of Reference for the Steering Group can be seen on the dedicated Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan page on the Town Council's website: <http://www.ashbydelazouch.info/Blackfordby-Neighbourhood-Plan.aspx>

The Chairman noted that the Steering Group is made up of people over 40 years of age, and it was agreed to explore how to encourage younger people to get involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Any one from the village is welcome to join the Steering Group.



The Need for a Plan

Do you feel like the right new homes are being built in the right places?

Is Blackfordby losing its identity? Will it one day simply merge with Woodville and Boundary? Can local schools and doctors' surgeries cope with an expanding village? Do you want to help protect the open spaces that are so very special to our community?

In the light of new housing developments approved for the village, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council has proposed a Neighbourhood Plan for Blackfordby to help ensure the village re-

tains its own distinct identity.

Neighbourhood Planning is a process that's designed to let the local community influence planning and development for their area.

The Neighbourhood Plan will cover key planning issues in areas such as:

- Housing
- Environment
- Community facilities
- Heritage
- The need for shops and businesses
- Traffic and
- Leisure

It adds local detail to broader planning policy and can say what open spaces are protected, what type of new housing is built, where and what it looks like and what new facilities and infrastructure are needed locally.

The development of a Neighbourhood Plan will play a key role in shaping the future of Blackfordby, now and for many years to come.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Local schools are being asked the the views of school age young people living in Blackfordby, with a view to seeking their inclusion in the Neighbourhood Planning Process.

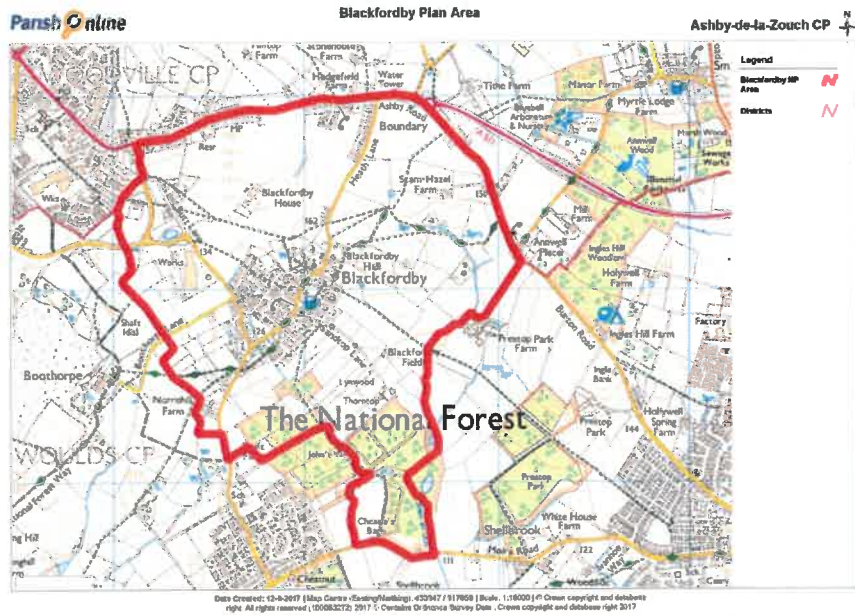
Special Focus Groups are being established to look in detail at:

- Housing
- Environment
- Transport, Employment and Community Facilities

These Focus Groups will look at issues raised by residents at the launch event and suggest policies for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

If you live or work in the village and want to play a part in shaping the future of Blackfordby then come to the **Focus Group Launch event on Monday 5th February from 7pm at a Blackfordby Village Hall**. Alternatively contact Karen Edwards: 01530 416961 or email: info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk

North West Leicestershire District Council have appointed a Rural Housing Enabler to conduct a Housing Needs Survey for Blackfordby. They will be sending a questionnaire to all households in the village asking questions about their housing needs and will also ask questions to help inform the Neighbourhood Plan.



Ashby de la Zouch Town Council
Leglon House
South Street
Ashby de la Zouch
LE65 1BQ
Tel: 01530 416961
Email:
info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk





Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan



**BLACKFORDBY RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE BLACKFORDBY
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOCUS GROUPS**

ON MONDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2018 AT BLACKFORDBY

VILLAGE HALL

7PM TO 8:30PM

Following the successful launch of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2017 Focus Groups are being established to look at: Housing, Environment, Transport, Employment and Community Facilities.

The Groups will look at issues raised at the launch event and suggest policies for inclusion in the Plan. If you live or work in the village and want to play a part in its future then come along to the Launch. There will be a brief presentation on progress to date and an opportunity for the first meeting of each Focus Group.



19th January 2018

Dear Resident

Re: Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan

I am pleased to announce the launch of the Focus Group stage of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan. People who live or work in Blackfordby are invited to the launch event which is on **Monday 5th February at Blackfordby Village Hall from 7pm to 8:30pm.**

Following the successful launch of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2017 three Focus Groups are being established to look at:

- Housing
- Environment
- Transport, Employment and Community Facilities

The groups will look at issues raised at the Neighbourhood Plan Launch event which was held last year and suggest policies for inclusion in the Plan. If you want to play a part in future plans for the village then come along to the launch. There will be a brief presentation on progress to date and an opportunity for the first meeting of each Focus Group. Focus Groups usually meet 4 or 5 times over a 3 month period.

If you are unable to come along to the meeting but would still like to be part of a Focus Group then please contact myself on 01530 416961 or email: info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk.

Further information on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan can be found at this address: <http://www.ashbytowncouncil.org.uk/Blackfordby-Neighbourhood-Plan.aspx>

Yours faithfully

Karen Edwards
Deputy Town Clerk

13th May 2019

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Neighbourhood Plan for Blackfordby

I am writing to you as a stakeholder who has an interest in Blackfordby to advise you that Ashby de la Zouch Town Council has produced a Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan for Ashby de la Zouch. The Town Council launched Regulation 14 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan on Monday 13th May 2019.

The plan can be downloaded on the Town Council's website at:

<http://www.ashbydelazouch.info/Blackfordby-Neighbourhood-Plan.aspx>

I would welcome any comments you have on the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan and these can be given through a comments form, a copy of which is attached or if preferred by letter or email.

The consultation **ends on Monday 24th June 2019**. The responses will then be analysed and an examination version of the Neighbourhood Plan will be produced..

Should you require any further help or clarification, please contact myself at the above address or email: info@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk.

Yours faithfully

Karen Edwards,
Deputy Town Clerk

Blackfordby Stakeholder list – April 2019

The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations identify the following consultation bodies for the purpose of Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 consultation:

Consultation body	Date sent	Response
b) A local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority:		
County Council - Nik Green, Communities and Places Officer, Leicestershire County Council, Nik.Green@leics.gov.uk	15/5/19	
District Council – NWLDC – Ian Nelson, Planning Policy	15/5/19	
Emma Trahearn – Community Focus Team Leader, NWLDC, Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville, LE67 3FJ	13/5/19	
District Council – South Derbyshire - Karen Beavin, Planning Policy Team Leader, Planning Policy Team, South Derbyshire District Council, Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote, DE11 0AH	15/5/19	
Ashby Woulds Town Council – Andrea Robinson, Ashby Woulds Town Council, 17 Ashby Road, Moira, Swadlincote, DE12 6DJ	15/5/19	
Woodville Parish Council – Andrea Robinson, Parish Rooms, High Street, Woodville, Swadlincote, DE11 7EA	15/5/19	
Hartshorne Parish Council, Mr R Smith, Harsthorpe Parish Council PO Box 8243, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 1GE	15/5/19	
Smisby Parish Council, New Clerk being advertised so use email address:	15/5/19	
Derbys CC – as before Dane Handley-Parkin, Policy, Monitoring and Development Manager, Derbyshire County Council, County Hall Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG	15/5/19	
c) The coal authority		
Deb Roberts, Planning Liaison Officer, The Coal Authority, 200 Lichfield Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 4RG thecoalauthority@coal.gov.uk	15/5/19	
d) The Homes and Communities Agency		
Homes and Communities Agency, 5 St Philip's Place, Colmore Row Birmingham , B3 2PW	15/5/19	
e) Natural England		
Miss C Jackson, Consultation Service, Natural England, Hornbeam House, Electra Way, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 6GJ enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk	15/5/19	
f) The Environment Agency		
Mr James Lidgett, Environment Agency, Lower Trent Area, Trentside Offices, Scarrington Road, West Bridgeford, Nottingham, NG2 5FA nick.wakefield@environment-agency.gov.uk	15/5/19	
g) Historic England/English Heritage		
Historic England. eastmidlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk 2 nd floor, Windsor House, Cliftonville, Northampton, NN1 5BE	15/5/19	
Ann Plackett, English Heritage, East Midlands Region, 44 Dergate Northampton, NN1 1UH	15/5/19	
h) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited		
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited, Kings Place, 90 York Way London, N1 9AG	15/5/19	

i) The Highways Agency		
Ms Aoife O'Tool, Highways Agency, Level 9, The Cube 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham B1 1RN	15/5/19	
k) Any person i. to whom the electronic communications code applies ii. who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus in the area		
British Telecommunications Plc, Customer Wideband Planning Group Post Point BSTE 0301, Bath Street, Nottingham NG1 1BZ	15/5/19	
ii) Clinical Commissioning Group		
West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, 55 Wood Gate, Loughborough, LE11 2TZ	15/5/19	
lii) Licence holder under the Electricity Act 1989		
FAO Mr D Holdstock, National Grid, AMEC Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited, Gables House, Kenilworth Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 6JX n.grid@woodplc.com	15/5/19	
liii) Licence holder under the Gas Act 1986		
<i>British Gas Properties, Aviary Court, Wade Road, Basingstoke Hampshire, RG24 8GZ LETTER RETURNED</i>	15/5/19	
liv) Sewage Undertaker/iv) Water undertaker		
Mr Peter Davies, Severn Trent Water Ltd, Hucknall Road Nottingham, NG5 1FH	15/5/19	
m) Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or part of the neighbourhood area		
Voluntary Action Leicestershire admin@vasl.org.uk , 9 Newarke Street, Leicester, LE1 5SN	15/5/19	
Roy Holland. Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland roy.holland@ageukleics.org.uk	13/5/19	
CPRE info@cpreleicestershire.org.uk	13/5/19	
n) Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area		
Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership Prakash@lemp-leics.org.uk	Bounced	
Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups natglg@outlook.com	13/5/19	
o) Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area		
Interfaith Forum for Leicestershire equality@leics.gov.uk	13/5/19	
Rev Michael Fish, The Vicarage, 11 Vicarage Close, Blackfordy	15/5/19	
Rev S Rolls, Superintendent Minister, Blackfordby Methodist Church, C/o 51 Tennyson Avenue, Midway, Swadlincote, DE11 0DT	15/5/19	
p) Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area		
North West Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce, 2a Thornborough Road, Coalville, LE67 3TH. Email: john.merison@nwleicschamber.co.uk	15/5/19	
q) Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area		
Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living. 5-9 Upper Brown Street, Leics, LE1 5TE admin@lcil.org.uk	15/5/19	
Disability Access Group?		
Other bodies		
Leicestershire Police, Force Headquarters, St Johns, Enderby, Leicester, LE19 2BX	15/5/19	
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue, 12 Geoff Monk Way, Birstall, Leicester LE4 3BU	15/5/19	
East Midlands Housing Group, Chan Kataria, Memorial House, Whitwick Business Park, Stenson Road, Coalville, LE67 4JP	15/5/19	
National Forest Company, Phil Metcalfe, Green Infrastructure and	15/5/19	

Planning Officer, The National Forest Company, Bath Yard, Moira, Swadlinote, DE12 6BA		
Councillors/MP		
MP: Andrew Bridgen, Constituency Office, Unit 10, The Courtyard, Whitwick Business Park, Stenson Road, Coalville, LE67 4JP	15/5/19	
County Councillor John Coxon, Highfield House, Leicester Road, New Packington, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 1TQ	13/5/19	
District Councillor Gill Hoult, 1 Shellbrook Close, Shellbrook, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 2UJ	13/5/19	
Local Businesses:		
Pub Landlord, The Black Lion, 3 Main Street, Blackfordby, Swadlincote, DE11 8AB	15/5/19	
Ms S Savage, Executive Headteacher, St Margaret's Primary School, Off Main Street, Blackfordby, Swadlincote, DE11 8AB	15/5/19	
Businesses?		
Mr M Kerry, Wavin Ltd, Forest Works, Butt Lane, Blackfordby, Swadlincote, DE11 8BQ	15/5/19	
Chris Deakin, Charnwood Alpacas, Scamhazel Farm, Ashby Road, Boundary, Swadlincote, DE11 7BA	15/5/19	
Statutory/Voluntary Organisations		
The Old School Room, Katherine Moore,	15/5/19	
Blackfordby Village Hall, Sandtop Lane, Blackfordby	15/5/19	
John Howells, Chairman, Leicestershire Local Access Forum, C/o Room 700, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire, LE3 8RJ. Email: accessforum@leics.gov.uk	15/5/19	
Landowners and developers		
Guy Mansfield, Prestop Park Farm, Burton Road, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 2TE	15/5/19	
NWLDC forwarded letters to Housing sites in the SHEELA	15/5/19	
Mark Goodall - The Bluebell, email: markgoodall1@btinternet.com	13/5/19	
Davidsons Homes, East Midlands Office, Wilson House, Leicester Road, Ibstock, LE67 6HP	15/5/19	
Orbit Homes, Garden Court, Harry Weston Road, Binley Business Park, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2SU	15/5/19	
Gladman Homes, Alexandria Way, Congleton Business Park, Congleton, CW12 1LB – but check address and contact of person who wrote to me	15/5/19	
Fisher German, The Estates Office, Norman Court, Ivanhoe Business Park, Ashby de la Zouch, LE65 2UZ	15/5/19	
Others		
Ed Dade – info@neighbourhood-planning.co.uk	13/5/19	
Mark.mcgovern@ssaplanning.co.uk	13/5/19	



Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan

Community Facilities, Transport & Employment Focus Group

Working with Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

Blackfordby Business Survey: Helping us to help you thrive

We appreciate that you are busy, but ask for a quarter of an hour of your time to help secure the future of Blackfordby as our village and home.

The Localism Act of 2011 gave residents the power to shape the future of their communities by putting local plans at the heart of a new planning system. Under the Act Councils and we **the local people** are able make decisions about future development, its design and location.

Blackfordby Parish Council, together with Ashby Town Council, has embraced these new powers. Working groups of residents are formulating what is known as the 'Neighbourhood Plan' encompassing all of our Parish and community.

All of the businesses operating in and from our Parish are an integral and essential element of Blackfordby's health and future - **we understand that you are part of our business community.**

Your input in the planning of our village's future **is essential** for both you and our community's health and development. **Your experience, views, needs and concerns are key elements** of both formulating this Plan and in helping to secure Blackfordby as a thriving village and home for the people who live, will live and work here in this lovely corner of Leicestershire.

We would ask you to **please give us a little bit of your time** by completing the enclosed quick questionnaire and returning it in the stamped addressed envelope provided, as soon as possible.

If we have sent this to you in error, your business has changed or is no longer operating then we would also like to know, as our search and local knowledge are not foolproof.

Thank you.

Blackfordby Parish Neighbourhood Plan - Local Businesses Questionnaire

	Your company/trading names(s):	
1	<p>As a stakeholder in Blackfordby do you feel part of our community?</p> <hr/> <p>Do the owners of the business live in Blackfordby?</p> <p>Are any employees resident here and how many?</p> <p>If not resident but working here how far do they travel?</p>	
2	<p>How do you feel your business contributes to our community?</p> <p>Are there steps you or the community could take to improve on that?</p>	
3	<p>What impact is recent growth in housing in the Blackfordby and neighbouring areas having on your business?</p>	
4	<p>How does your business benefit from people coming in to Blackfordby for business or recreational purposes?</p>	
5	<p>Do you foresee expansion and growth of your business within the next five years? (Comments please)</p> <p>Does current local planning affect your business?</p> <p>What aspects of the development of Blackfordby might affect your business?</p> <p>Are there any changes you would like to see in Blackfordby (e.g. parking, bus routes and timetables, business rates, community facilities)?</p>	
6	<p>What are your experiences of broadband connectivity, stability and speed?</p> <p>How does this affect you business?</p> <p>Do you know current internet speeds and what is it?</p>	

Please make any additional notes that you feel would help us on the reverse of this page.

Please return your completed document in the SAE to: **Businesses Questionnaire, 168 Heath Lane, Blackfordby, DE11 8AA**

Thank you.

We want your views on the future of Blackfordby

Please can you complete and return the joint Neighbourhood Plan & Housing Needs Survey questionnaire you will receive in the post next month. This will show what services, facilities, transport and local homes, if any, are needed and what the views of the community are.

The Neighbourhood Plan aspect of the survey is looking to help the community to decide the future of places for living and working.

The Plan should achieve legal status and will be used to influence future planning decisions for the parish.

The findings will be used to make a draft plan reflecting the consensus views of the community as a whole. When the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed, final approval will be sought by holding a formal referendum within the parish.

The Housing Needs Survey aspect of the survey will see if local people have the homes that they need.

If homes are needed for those with a connection to the village we will work with the Town Council, District Council and the community to look at possible solutions, such as a small development (i.e. 4-8 properties) of local homes, but first we will see if any are actually needed or wanted...

Please look out for the questionnaire and take the time to complete and return it so your views are heard.

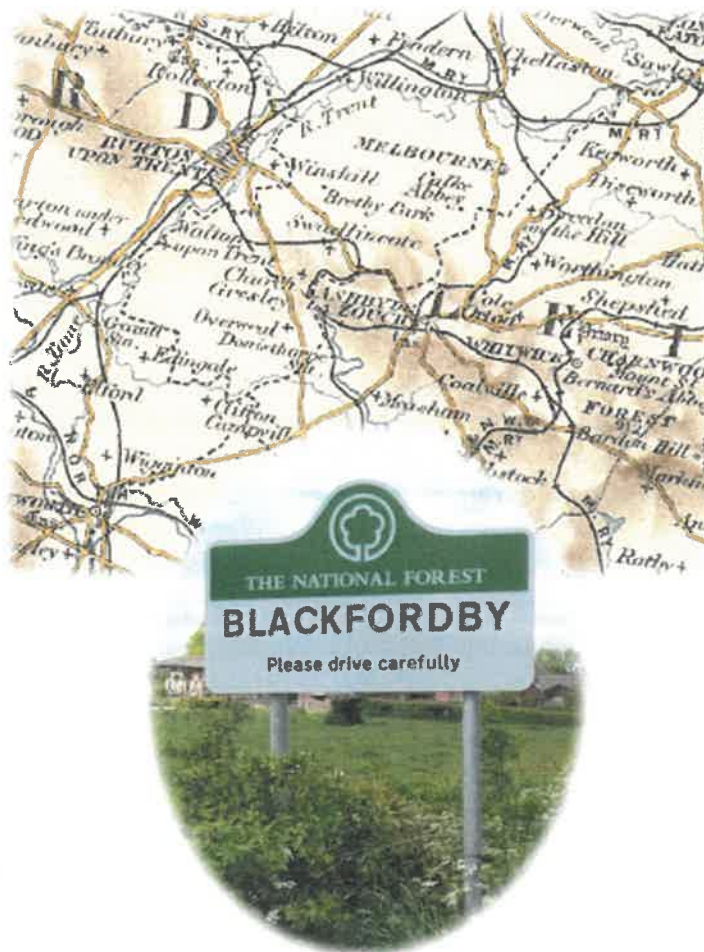
For further information please contact us on:

www.midlandsrural.org.uk

@MidlandsRural

0300 1234 009

Investigation of rural housing need in North West Leicestershire including early Neighbourhood Development Plan questions



BLACKFORDBY July 2018

Housing Directorate
Strategic Housing
Please ask for: Ruth Robinson
Telephone: 01530 454611
Fax: 01530 454788

July 2018
Our Ref: RR/RHNS

What do you think?

I am the Affordable Housing Enabler at North West Leicestershire District Council and would like your help to understand more about the type of housing that **may** be needed by local people in rural areas in order to influence the type & size of homes built in the future.

To assist me, please would you find the time to complete the enclosed 'Housing Needs Survey' which is being undertaken independently by Midlands Rural Housing - it should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. All the information provided will be confidential.

The Council is duty bound to gather information about the housing needs of its communities so we may understand the needs of all our residents, whether they wish to buy their own home, part rent or part buy (shared ownership), rent privately or through a social landlord such as the Council or a Housing Association.

As part of a county wide programme housing needs surveys have been carried out across the District over the last few years and all rural villages will have been surveyed by the end of the year. The programme can be viewed at http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/rural_housing

The information from these surveys will be used to make sure that any new homes built reflect what is needed by existing local residents who have a connection to the particular area.

If any new homes are built it is important that they are in keeping with the village & are built to a high standard of design. The Council's adopted design initiative has ensured that the overall design of recent housing developments such as those in Diseworth, Long Whatton, Belton, Heather, Swannington and Breedon are of the highest specification. See the Council's Rural Housing webpage if you would like to find out more.

If you have any queries or concerns or need any help completing the survey please do not hesitate to contact Midlands Rural Housing on **0300 1234 009** or by emailing enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk

Please return completed surveys to Midlands Rural Housing in the pre paid envelope provided by [TBC].

Yours faithfully

Ruth

Ruth Robinson
Affordable Housing Enabler

About the survey

The countryside is an important asset for all of us and there is a general desire that it should be protected. However, the rise in house prices over the last decade has meant that the social mix of rural communities is under threat. The loss of council housing through the Right to Buy Scheme has also had an impact. Many Households, including those on above average incomes, are unable to afford the property prices necessary to stay in their village. As a result many villages are becoming the preserve of the rich and / or the elderly.

The purpose of this survey is to assess levels of housing need in rural areas of North West Leicestershire. As such the questions asked, particularly in Part 3 of the questionnaire, relates to the type, size and tenure of properties required. Part 3 should only be completed by those who need to find a home in the parish now or in the next five years. There is no assumption that there is a need for additional housing within the Parish but if a need is identified North West Leicestershire District Council will investigate the potential for affordable housing development.

This survey comes in three parts and seeks to collect basic information about you and the people who live with you.

Please complete Part 1 and Part 2. Only complete Part 3 if you, or a family member, need to find a new home in the parish now, or in the next five years. We are interested to find out the need for all types of housing. So, if you think you will need a new home, whether you wish to purchase on the open market, or need rented accommodation, we would like to hear from you.

If more than one member of your household is in housing need or is hoping to move within the next five years. Please complete a separate form for each expression of need. Contact Midlands Rural Housing (0300 1234009 www.midlandsruralhousing.org) for additional forms.

Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) are independently conducting the survey on behalf of North West Leicestershire District Council. MRH will analyse the results of this survey. Any information or comments provided may be included in our analysis but your identity will not be revealed and we will ensure that readers of any report will not be able to identify you.

We cannot guarantee that new homes will be built as a result of this survey, but any new homes would look to meet the needs of those with a local connection.

Note - this Housing Needs Survey form conforms to accepted best practice and has been checked by independent professionals with experience of survey design.

Part 1: General Information

1. Which category best describes your household?

(please tick one box only)

- One person household
- Two parent family
- Couple
- Lone Parent family
- Other—please specify.....
-
-

2. Please complete the table below for all those currently living in your household

	Male/ Female	Age	Relationship to you (e.g. husband, daughter)
You			
Person 1			
Person 2			
Person 3			
Person 4			
Person 5			

3. Do you live in?

(Please tick one box only)

- House
- Flat
- Bungalow
- Other—please specify.....
-
-

4. How many bedrooms do you have?

(Please indicate below)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more (if so, how many

5. Which of the following best describes your current accommodation?

- Own your own home outright
- Own your home with a mortgage
- Renting from the Council
- Renting from a Housing Association
- Shared ownership with a Housing Association
- Renting from a private landlord
- Living with parents or relatives

(if you are living with family and wish to move out please request another survey form to register your housing need)

- In housing tied to your job
- Lodging with another household
- Sharing with friends
- Other (please explain).....
-
-

6. How long have you lived in this Village / Parish?

- Less than 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- 5 - 10 years
- Over 10 years

7. Please tell us what type of housing you think is needed in the Village / Parish

- No further homes are needed
- Homes for young people
- Small family homes (1-2 bedrooms)
- Large family homes (3+ bedrooms)
- Homes for single people
- Homes for elderly people
- Homes for people with disabilities
- Other—please specify.....

8. Have any former members of your household left this Village / Parish over the last 5 years?

- Yes No

If **yes**, how many people?

If **yes**, was this...

- To take up employment elsewhere
- Marriage or separation
- Due to the lack of affordable housing
- To go to university or college
- Other—please specify.....

9. Would you support building a small number of homes in this Parish if they would help to meet the needs of local people?

- Yes No

If **no**, please briefly explain your concerns



Example of local affordable rural housing scheme at David Taylor Close, Heather

Part 2: Questions to inform the Neighbourhood Development Plan

10. Thinking about sustainable development for Blackfordby over the next 15 years, where do you think the priority in housebuilding should be in the village?

(tick all that apply)

- A controlled extension of the existing built up area?
- Infilling or re use of brownfield sites inside the existing built up area?
- Infilling or re use of brownfield sites outside of the current built up areas and settlements?
- No opinion / don't know?
- Other (please give brief explanation)

11. Should Blackfordby's Neighbourhood Plan support land being made available for energy production?

(tick all that apply and use a double tick if you think an option is of particular importance)

- Biomass
- Shale or gas fracking
- Geothermal
- Solar
- Wind
- Nuclear
- Oil
- None of these
- Don't know / no opinion

12. Blackfordby's Heritage and Environment. The following have been identified as features of Blackfordby which residents would like to protect.

Please look through the list and tick any that you agree with.

(tick all that apply and use a double tick if you think an option is of particular importance)

- St Margaret's Church
- Churchyard (including war graves)
- The Church Clock
- The Spring
- The new War Memorial
- The Institute (Old School Room)
- Butt Cottage
- Blackfordby Hall
- Natural features and green space
- The Brook
- Lady Wood (Bluebell Wood)
- The Black Lion
- The Rec
- Main Street's thatched cottage
- The Methodist Chapel
- The Bluebell
- Football pitch
- Oak Cottage, Well Lane
- St Margaret's School
- Other—please specify

13. Which are the most important Local Green Spaces in Blackfordby?

Sites	Comments

14. How do you rate the following services in relation to Blackfordby?

(please tick)

	Bad	Poor	Good	Excellent
Links to the motorway and major route network				
Access to public transport				
Access to rail services				
Access to airports				
Access to local service centres/towns				
Other (please specify)				

15. How do you travel to work? (please circle)

Car

Bus

Walk

Cycle

n/a

16. How concerned are you about the following within the Parish? (please tick)

	Not at all concerned	Slightly concerned	Very concerned
Speeding of traffic			
Volume of traffic			
HGV movements			
Nuisance parking			
Lack of village car park			
Condition of road			
Condition of pavements, bridleways and footpaths			
Other (please specify)			

17. Please rate the importance to you of the following to the Parish?

(please tick a box in each line)	Not important	Important	Very Important	Would be good to have
FACILITIES ALREADY IN THE VILLAGE				
Village pub				
Blackfordby Facebook site				
Village Noticeboard				
Mobile library				
Defibrillator				
Public benches				
Clubs and interest groups				
Places of worship				
Village Hall				
Village School				
Mobile Post Office				
Younger children's play area				
Football Field				
Cemetery				
Bus service				
Bus shelters				
Dog-waste bins				
FACILITIES YOU WOULD LIKE IN THE VILLAGE				
Village Store				
Permanent Post Office				
ATM/ Cash dispenser				
Cafes				
Takeaway				
GP surgery in the village				
Pharmacy in the village				
Village allotments				
Other (please specify)				

18. Events, visitor attractions and tourism

(please tick a box in each line)	Disagree strongly	Agree	Agree strongly
Should we encourage tourism?			
Should we improve signage?			
Should we encourage development of more B&Bs?			
Should we encourage holiday lets?			
Should we encourage cyclists and walkers?			
Should we have more village seasonal events? (e.g. Bonfire, Carols, Summer Fete)			
Should we encourage wider public festivals? (Steam fair, scarecrow festival, music festival)			
Other (please specify)			

19. What ideas do you have on what could we consider to bring the Parish together:

20. Anything else? Please let us know if there are any additional or improved facilities, services or changes that you would like to see in the parish, that have not been covered in this questionnaire?

You may not have a need for alternative housing at this time but please consider the questions overleaf in case you may have a need in the coming years or know of a relative who may wish to return to the village.

If this is not the case then please return your questionnaire completed to this point in the pre paid envelope provided (no stamp required) by [tbc] 2018

Part 3: Your Housing Requirements

The following information is only required if you would like to be considered for housing.

All questions relate to the person requiring housing. If more than one person requires housing, additional forms can be requested from Midlands Rural Housing - 0300 1234 009 / enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk

21. Housing need:

Are you in need of another home in this Village?

- Yes, now
- Yes, within 12 months
- Yes, within three years
- Yes, within 5 years

22. Local connection to Village / Parish

- I was born / grew up here
- I currently work here
- Close family live here
- I live here now
- I am starting a job here
- Offering / receiving care and support for / from family
- Other—please specify.....

23. Are you a former resident that wishes to return?

- Yes No

If yes please tell us why you originally left

24. Reason for Housing Need

(please tick all that apply)

- First independent home
- Present home too small
- Present home too expensive
- Need permanent accommodation
- Renting, but would like to buy
- Disabled, need specially adapted home
- To be closer to employment
- Couple setting up home together
- Present home too large
- Family break up
- Cannot manage stairs
- Moved away but wish to return
- To be closer to parent or other family member
- Present home in poor condition
- Other—please specify.....

25. Location of future home

If a suitable home became available which of the following places would you be happy to live in?

(please tick all that apply)

- Blackfordby
- Ashby
- Elsewhere in the District
- Elsewhere in the County
- Elsewhere in the midlands

To provide some context for the following questions, statistics from www.zoopla.co.uk show that average open market house values for Blackfordby are approximately:

Detached £280,000

Semi detached £180,000

Terraced £100,000

To afford a mortgage for a home usually requires a 10% deposit and the value of the mortgage to be between 3 and 4 times combined household income. So to get a mortgage on a semi detached house valued at £180,000 would need a deposit of £18,000 and an income of around £45,000.

For information on shared ownership housing please visit

www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk. It is possible to purchase a stake in a home (40%, 60% etc.) and pay rent on the remainder. So, for example, a 40% share in a semi detached house may be available for a deposit of around £7,000 if you have an income of around £20,000. In addition to mortgage repayments there would also be rent payable on the 60% that you don't own and this would be around £250/month. A 60% ownership share could be available for a deposit of around £12,000 to those on incomes of around £30,000 with monthly rents on the unsold equity being approximately £170/month.

Housing Association affordable rented homes in the area is likely to be around the following amounts:

1 bed = £86/week 2 bed = £110/week

3 bed = £127/week 4 bed = £163/week

26. Type of housing - What would best suit your housing need?

(tick all that apply)

- Buying on the open market
- Buy on open market with friends
- Privately renting
- Shared ownership (part rent, part buy - for further information please visit www.helptobuymidlands.co.uk)
- Renting from a Housing Association

What type of home do you need?

Bedrooms	House	Bungalow	Flat
1 Bed			
2 Bed			
3 Bed			
4 Bed			
5+ Bed			

27. If you are in need of affordable or private rented housing are you registered with any of the following? (tick all that apply)

- | | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local Authority Housing Register | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Housing Association housing register | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Private Letting Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you wish to be considered for affordable rented housing when any becomes available (either in Blackfordby or anywhere else in the County) you MUST be registered with the Local Authority. 11

Please answer the questions below if you would like to be considered for alternative housing.

The answers you give will help us to assess whether you are eligible for affordable housing or how much you could comfortably pay for new housing. We cannot register your interest if you don't provide this information.

Please note that your details will remain strictly confidential and will not be shared with other parties.

28. Your Details

Name

Address

29. Your Employment:

How many people in the household wishing to move are; (Please indicate the number of people in each category in the appropriate box)

- Working full time
- Working part time
- Unemployed
- Retired
- In full time or further education
- Claiming Benefit
- Claiming Job Seeker's Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Other—please specify

Again, please note that this information is only needed from you if you are looking for alternative housing.

If you would like alternative housing it is important that you complete this section so we can assess affordability

30. Your Income

Please indicate the annual income of the household wishing to move.

Please use joint income where applicable

- Below £14,999
- £15,000 - £19,999
- £20,000 - £29,999
- £30,000 - £39,999
- £40,000 - £49,999
- £50,000 - £59,000
- £60,000 - £69,999
- £70,000 - £79,999
- Over £80,000

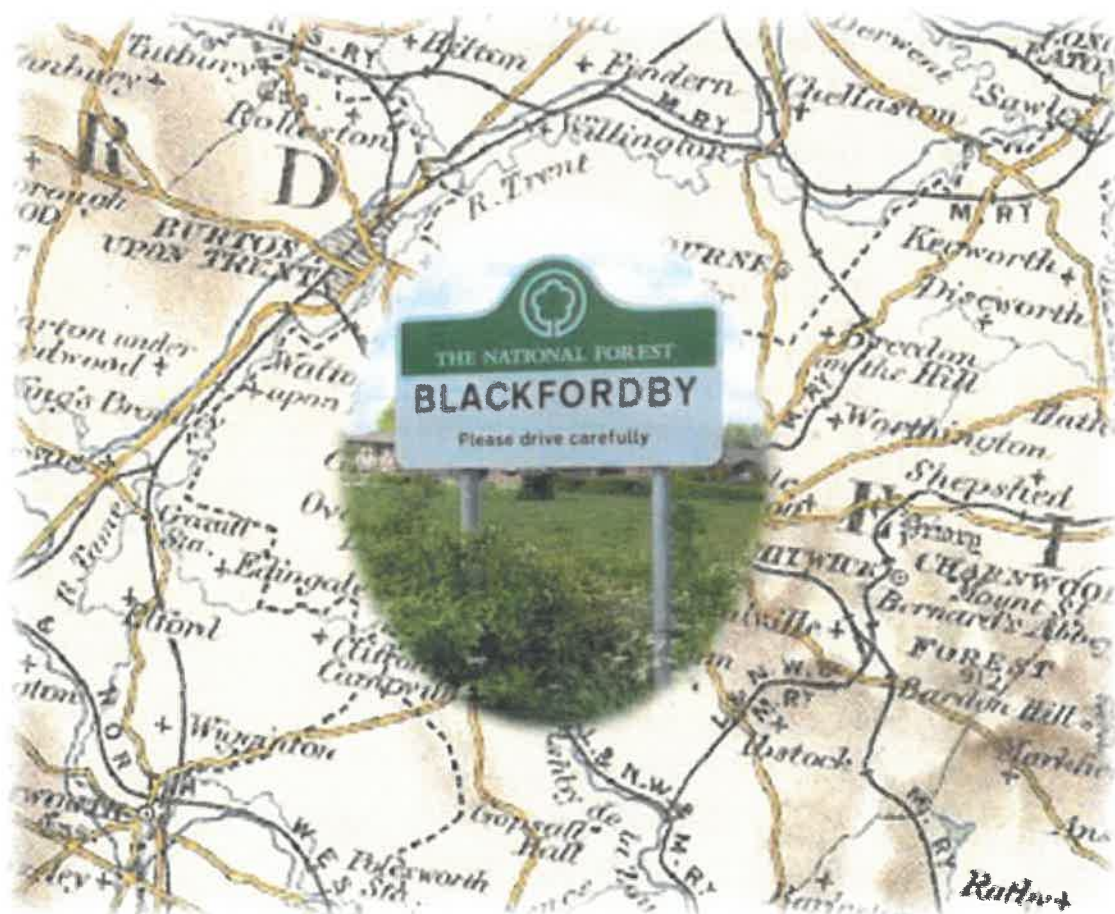
31. Your Savings

Do you have any savings or equity which could be used towards the purchase of a home?

- No Savings
- Under £4,999
- £5,000 - £9,999
- £10,000 - £19,999
- £20,000 - £29,000
- Over £30,000

Thank you for your time and for completing this questionnaire. Please return in the pre paid envelope provided by [tbc] 2018

**A DETAILED INVESTIGATION
INTO THE HOUSING NEEDS
OF BLACKFORDBY
INCLUDING NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT
PLAN QUESTIONS.**



**PRODUCED BY
MIDLANDS RURAL HOUSING WITH THE SUPPORT OF
THE BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP**

DECEMBER 2018



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1. Summary

- A Housing Needs Survey was carried out as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process in the Parish of Blackfordby in November/December 2018.
- Results obtained showed there was a need in the next 5 years for up to 5 affordable homes and 5 open market (sale) homes for local people enabling them to be suitably housed within the community.
- Local needs affordable homes could be developed on a 'rural exception site'¹, if available, and subject to local support some open market sale homes could be used to cross-subsidise the affordable homes.
- The alternative to this is that the local homes that are needed are developed as part of a larger development if the opportunity arises and if the needs cannot be met by existing properties.
- The housing needs that have been identified along with the potential ways to meet them, if desired and necessary will be explored further by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council, the local community, North West Leicestershire District Council and Midlands Rural Housing.

2. Introduction

Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) are one of the leading providers of rural housing services in the UK. MRH collaborate with government organisations, developers, architects, builders, parish councils, local authorities, and housing providers to assess the needs for, as well as enable access to excellent affordable homes in the Midlands. MRH is a subsidiary of emh Group, one of the largest providers of affordable homes and care and support services in the East Midlands. More details of the work of MRH can be found on the web site (www.midlandsrural.org.uk).

In Leicestershire, MRH works on behalf of a collaborative rural housing partnership. The Leicestershire Rural Housing Group is guiding the work of Midlands Rural Housing to assess and meet the housing needs of people in the villages of Leicestershire. Partners are focused on delivering affordable homes for local people and having a positive impact on our rural areas. The Group is a dedicated formal partnership between the County Council, six rural District and Borough Councils (including North West Leicestershire District Council) and three Housing Associations who fund enabling work in Leicestershire to investigate housing needs and bring forward affordable housing schemes where they are needed. The Group also includes non funding organisations such as the Rural Community Council, National Housing Federation and Homes England.

¹ An exception site is a piece of land outside but touching the village boundary that can be developed as an exception to normal planning policy. Planning permission is only granted on sites where it has been demonstrated that housing is needed and the homes provided will be affordable and reserved for local people as a priority in perpetuity i.e. now and in the future.

In 2018, North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) in partnership with the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Group instructed MRH to investigate the local housing needs of the residents of Blackfordby, Leicestershire. This formed part of a rolling 5 year programme of Housing Needs Surveys that NWLDC have to understand the housing needs of its rural communities.

Blackfordby is located in the north of the county of Leicestershire, close to the Derbyshire boundary. The village is about 2 miles North West of the town of Ashby de la Zouch and has approximately 528 homes and approximately 1,210 residents. For housing planning purposes, Blackfordby is classified as a “Sustainable Village”, a classification that is defined in the NWLDC Local plan.

In October 2017, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council applied for the designation of a neighbourhood plan area on behalf of the residents of Blackfordby which was approved in January 2018. A neighbourhood Plan Group was set up to undertake the project. The neighbourhood Plan group developed a questionnaire as a means of gaining residents’ opinions on a variety of issues, including assessing the village residents’ likely housing needs.

For obvious and sound reasons, MRH and the Blackfordby NP steering group agreed to merge both questionnaires into a single exercise. By discussion, a three part questionnaire document was agreed. The first two parts covered a variety of issues, primarily to support the development of the NP. The third part was exclusively for MRH’s Housing Needs Survey purposes. It invited residents with a connection to the Parish who expected to need a new home in Blackfordby within the next five years to supply MRH with additional personal information on a confidential basis.

All completed questionnaires were returned to MRH who agreed to capture and report all the data gathered in Parts 1 and 2 for the NP steering group, and to analyse the contents of Part 3 returns.

This report presents the data captured from Parts 1 and 2, plus the analysis of Part 3 returns which, together with housing register information from NWLDC, form the basis of the conclusions.

² Halifax Rural Housing Review 2014 - “a house in a rural area costs £206,423 on average, which is 13 per cent more than the typical cost of a property in an urban area at £182,710.”

3. Rural housing and the Housing Needs Survey

Average property prices in rural areas have increased more than urban areas in monetary terms over the past 5 years² forcing many local residents to move away from their towns and villages in order to find suitable and affordable homes. House prices in the countryside are now from £20,000 to £50,000 higher than in urban areas, despite average wages being lower.

The number of people on waiting lists for affordable homes in rural England has soared to around 750,000³. New household formation is outstripping supply by 3 to 1 (source: CLG). Increasing house prices and the limited availability of appropriate properties has resulted in local people being unable to find a home within their community and this may be happening in Blackfordby.

The Blackfordby Housing Needs Survey questionnaires were delivered to every household in the Village in November and early December 2018. The return date for the survey was 3rd December 2018 and returns were made via a postage paid envelope directly to MRH. Survey forms were distributed to all households as well as to those who contacted MRH to say that they had moved away from Blackfordby or had a strong connection to the Village and wished to complete a form. In total 528 survey forms were distributed.

The Housing Needs Survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of any local housing need for a range of housing tenures for Blackfordby residents. This evidence will be made available to North West Leicestershire District Council, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Ashby de la Zouch Town Council; used to inform Housing Strategy; and provide clarity on what type and tenure of housing is required to meet local needs.

In addition, the information can be used positively in the planning process. It provides a foundation on which to negotiate 'planning gain' opportunities with developers. In short, it gives planners and parish organisations evidence that can be used to obtain an element of 'local needs' housing in negotiations with house builders, should such situations arise in the village.

The information obtained from a Housing Needs Survey is also invaluable at the local level, particularly in relation to local authority, parish council and neighbourhood planning activities. Such information can be acted upon locally and taken on board in the decision making process when housing issues arise.

³ National Housing Federation, Rural housing research report 2017

4. Conclusion

MRH has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of Blackfordby up to 2023. This study has investigated the affordable housing needs of the village, residents' views with regard to living in the village and other information which will be further analysed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Process.

Of the 14 survey respondents who indicated a housing need in the next 5 years 3 were found to be in need of an affordable home:

- **3 were assessed as being in immediate need of affordable housing for rent /shared ownership**

1 x 2 bed house - affordable rented

1 x 3 bed bungalow - shared ownership

1 x 2 bed bungalow affordable rented

These results were cross referenced with the North West Leicestershire District Council Housing Register. One respondent to the Housing Needs Survey was also on the Housing Register and so is not counted below and so no double counting has taken place.

It was found that there were a further 2 households who have been assessed as being in housing need, they feature on the Housing Register but did not complete a Housing Needs Survey questionnaire. These households all have a connection to Blackfordby and have therefore been added to the total below. Their housing needs are as follows:

- **2 were assessed as being in immediate need of affordable housing for rent**

1 x 3 bed house - affordable rented

1 x 2 bed bungalow - affordable rented

IN TOTAL THERE IS
AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR
5 AFFORDABLE HOMES IN BLACKFORDBY
FOR THOSE WITH
A LOCAL CONNECTION

As part of the Leicestershire Partnership agreement the survey has also assessed the need for open market rental housing and open market sale housing in the Parish. The findings of which are shown below.

Of the 14 survey respondents who indicated a housing need in the next 5 years 5 were found to be in need of an open market home and none were in need of a open market rented home:

- 5 were assessed as being in need of open market housing (for local people) to purchase.

3 x 2 bed bungalows

1 x 5 bed house

1 x 3 bed bungalow

IN TOTAL THERE IS AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR
5 OPEN MARKET HOMES IN
BLACKFORDBY FOR THOSE WITH
A LOCAL CONNECTION

Appendix 1 - Housing Need Analysis

Of the 201 returns, 187 were from people who felt that they were adequately housed at present. These respondents completed a form primarily to answer the Neighbourhood Plan questions in the survey as well as to offer their support, objection or thoughts towards 'local needs' housing and comments on life in the village. It was, therefore, not necessary to process these in the 'housing needs analysis' as they had not indicated a housing need for the next 5 years.

i) Respondent analysis

The following table lists details of 11 of the 14 respondents who stated that they are in housing need in the next 5 years as well as those assessed as being in need on NWLDC's Housing Register. Respondents were asked to identify what they felt is needed in terms of property type and size together with a preferred tenure type. In reality it may not be possible to meet the aspirations of each respondent. Incomes and likely property prices are considered in order to ensure that any proposed future homes would indeed meet the needs of those to be housed. Therefore a 'likely allocation/purchase' is suggested to outline realistic provision.

RESPONDENTS BELOW HAVE AN AFFORDABLE NEED IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS						
Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Preferred Home and Tenure	Likely Allocation / Purchase
4	Yes	Unknown	Couple living in privately rented home	Renting but would like to buy to be closer to family	2/3 bed house Open market purchase / shared ownership (Blackfordby/ Ashby)	2 bed house Affordable rented
6	Yes	No	Family living in own home	Disabled, need specially adapted home close to family support.	2 bed bungalow (Blackfordby)	Unable to assess as details not provided
7	Yes	No	Single person living with family	First independent home for couple setting up home together	2 bed house Not given (Anywhere in county)	Unable to assess as details not provided

Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Preferred Home and Tenure	Likely Allocation / Purchase
8	Yes	Yes (NWLDC Register)	Family living in own home	Present home too large – cannot manage stairs	2 bed bungalow Affordable rented (Blackfordby)	Unable to assess as details not provided
9	Yes	No	Family living in affordable rented home	Present home too small; disability – cannot manage stairs	2 bed house/ bungalow Affordable rented (Blackfordby)	2 bed bungalow Affordable rented
14	Yes	Yes (NWLDC Register)	Family living in own home	Present home too expensive; disability – cannot manage stairs	3 bed bungalow Affordable rented (Blackfordby / Ashby)	3 bed bungalow Adapted for disabled use Shared Ownership

RESPONDENTS THAT DID NOT COMPLETE A SURVEY FORM BUT ARE ON NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S HOUSING REGISTER AND HAVE BEEN ASSESSED AS BEING IN IMMEDIATE HOUSING NEED

	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Likely Allocation
1	Yes	Yes (NWLDC Register)	Single person living in affordable rented home	Cannot manage stairs	2 bed bungalow Affordable rented
2	Yes	Yes (NWLDC Register)	Family living affordable rented home	Present home too small	3 bed house Affordable rented

**RESPONDENTS BELOW HAVE AN OPEN MARKET NEED
IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS**

Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Preferred Home and Tenure	Likely Allocation / Purchase
3	Yes	Unknown	Couple living in own home	Present home too large	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase (Blackfordby)	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase
5	Yes	No	Couple living in own home	Present home requires too much maintenance	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase (Blackfordby)	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase
10	Yes	Unknown	Family living in own home	To be closer to family	5+ bed house Open market purchase (Blackfordby/ Ashby)	5 bed house Open market purchase
11	Yes	Unknown	Couple living in own home	Present home too large	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase (Blackfordby / Ashby)	2 bed bungalow Open market purchase
13	Yes	Unknown	Couple living in own home	Present home too large	3 bed bungalow Open market purchase (Blackfordby/ Ashby)	3 bed bungalow Open market purchase

ii) House price trends

House Prices in Blackfordby

Market activity

Last 5 years



Any property type



Average price paid
£197,305



Sales
72



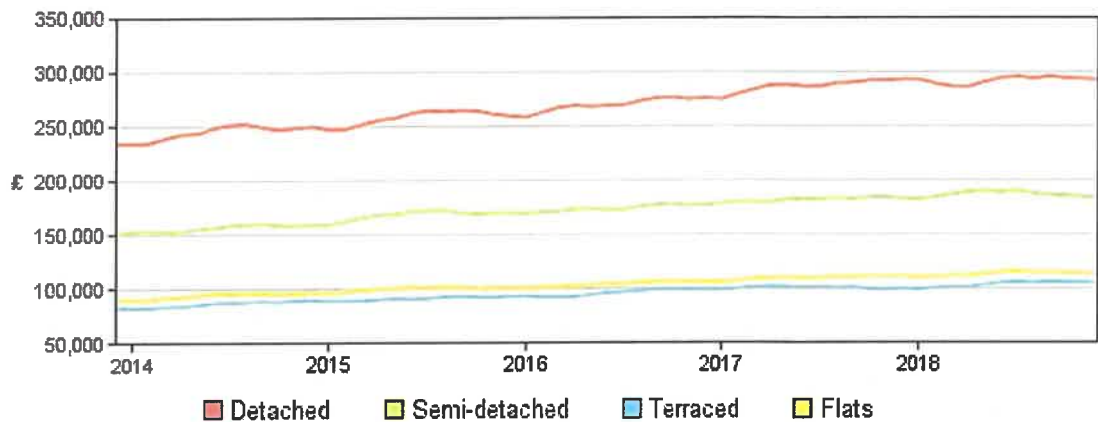
Current average value
£255,496
(Zoopla Zed-Index)



Value change
£53,053
▲ 26.21%

Property prices in the village have, overall, increased over the past 5 years. During that period prices have increased by an average of 26.21% (£53,053).

Value trends in Blackfordby, Swadlincote



iii) Local context - properties for sale

By way of local context, the table below shows prices of properties that were for sale in Blackfordby in December 2018 (source: www.zoopla.com). There were no properties available for rent.

Current asking prices in Blackfordby

Average: £288,772

Property type	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	5 beds
Houses	-	-	£195,000 (3)	£327,790 (5)	-
Flats	-	-	-	-	-
All	-	-	£195,000 (3)	£327,790 (5)	-

Current asking rents in Blackfordby

Property type	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	5 beds
Houses	-	-	-	-	-
Flats	-	-	-	-	-
All	-	-	-	-	-

At the time of the report being written (December 2018) according to Zoopla all the three bedroom properties for sale in Blackfordby were semi detached properties.

There were 5, four bedroom properties for sale, and of these 1 was semi-detached and one was a bungalow. The most expensive property was £449,950 with the least expensive property being the semi detached at £230,000. The detached properties ranged between £310,000 and £325,000.

Affordability is calculated using a mortgage multiplier of 3.5 times household income with a 10% deposit.

The 'cheapest' available house is a 3 bed semi detached house at £185,000. Based on this affordability criteria it would require a deposit of almost £18,500 and an income in excess of £47,500 per annum to afford the 'cheapest' property currently available in Blackfordby. The private rental market is currently offering no properties to rent in Blackfordby.

iv) **Local context - properties sold**

Property value data/graphs for Blackfordby

Property type	Avg. current value	Avg. £ per sq ft.	Avg. # beds	Avg. £ paid (last 12m)
Detached	£292,133	£231	3.2	£215,000
Semi-detached	£182,967	£246	2.8	£160,000
Terraced	£104,192	-	1.8	£105,000
Flats	-	-	-	-

The average property price for actual sales since December 2017 can be seen on the right hand column of the chart above. The left hand column shows the current average property value.

Based on the affordability criteria explained earlier, to purchase a detached house at current average value (£292,133) would require a deposit of over £29,200 and an income of over £87,500 per annum. To purchase a terraced house at the average current value (£104,192) would require a deposit of £10,400 and an income of over £26,500 per annum.

Appendix 2 - Respondent Details

A total of 528 survey forms were distributed and 201 were received in return, giving a return rate of 38% against the number distributed. In our experience this is a good level of response for a survey of this kind and it is only those who have a housing need or are interested in a local needs development and general village life that are likely to respond.

i) Type of Household

The questionnaire asked village residents to indicate the type of household they are.

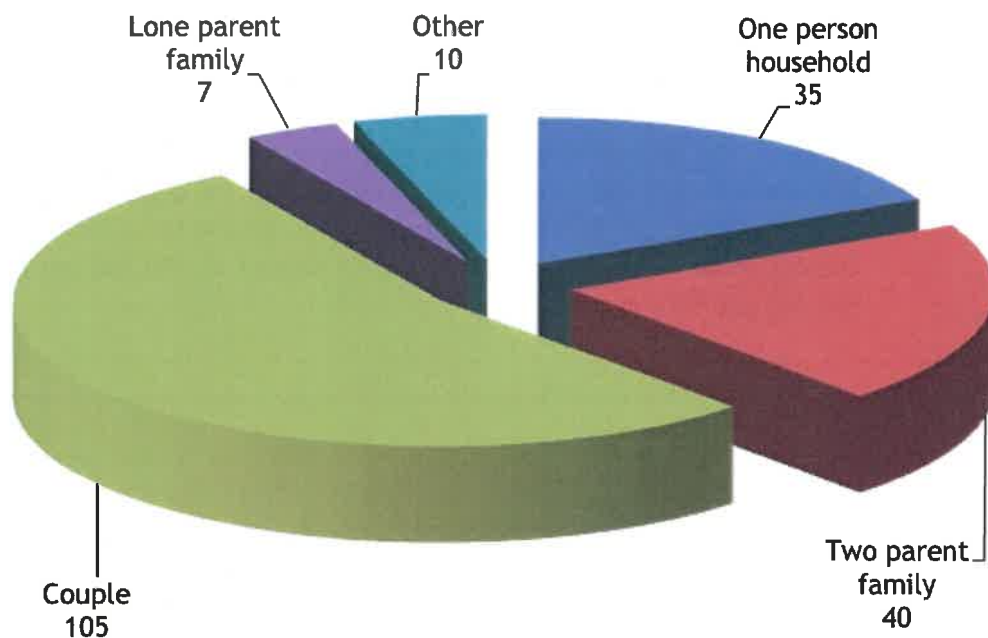


Fig 1.1 - Household type

The chart above (fig 1.1), shows the breakdown of households that responded to the survey.

The largest number of responses was from households containing couples; 53% of total responses were from this group.

20% of responses came from two parent families and 18% from one person households.

4% of total responses were from lone parent families and 5% from 'other' types of household.

ii) Tenure of all Respondents

The current household tenure of respondents is given in the chart below (fig 1.2):

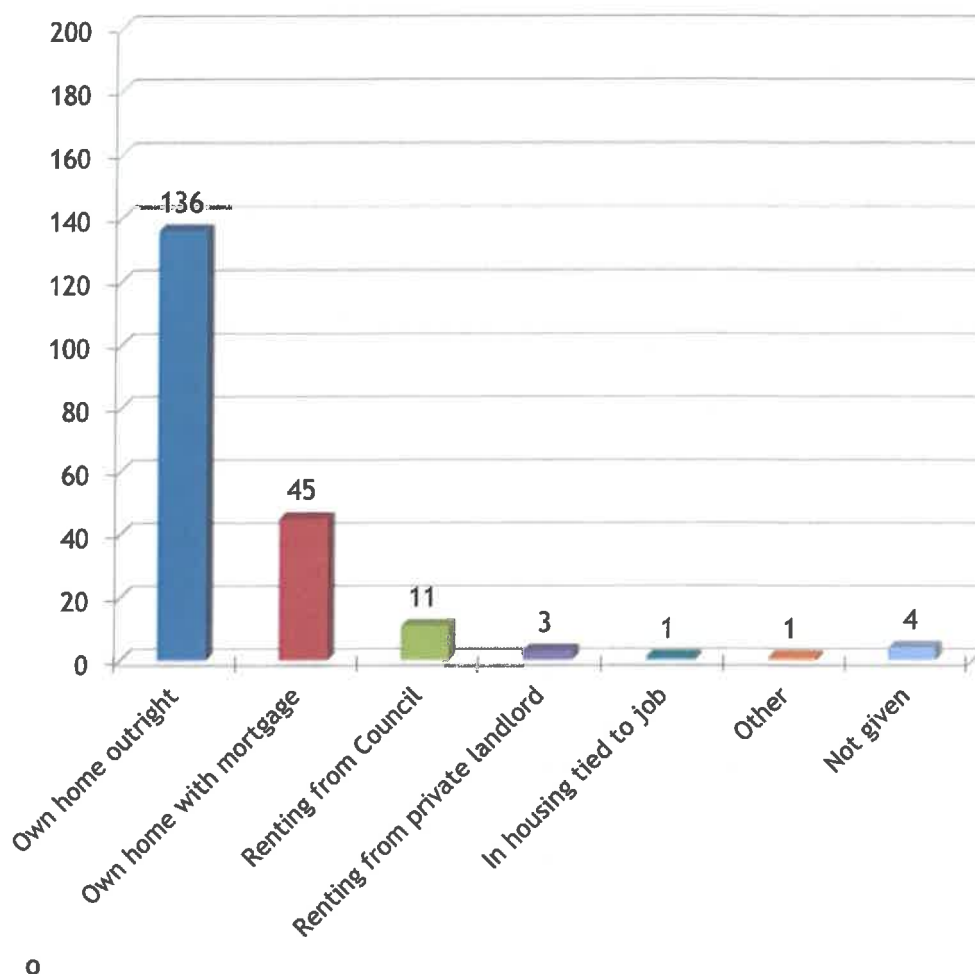


Fig 1.2 - Tenure of respondents

Occupiers' were by far the largest tenure group accounting for 92% of replies (69% of total survey respondents owned their home outright and have no outstanding mortgage on their property and 23% have a mortgage on their home).

8% of respondents live in rented accommodation (6% rent from a council and 2% rent privately). 1 response came from a household living in accommodation tied to employment and 1 came from a household describing their tenure as 'other.' 1% of responses did not give an answer to this question.

No respondents indicated that they lived in a rented housing association home; a housing association shared ownership home; with parents/relatives (although people in housing need who are living with parents/relatives may have completed and returned part 3 of the survey); sharing with friends or lodging with another household.

iii) Property Types

The following chart (fig 1.3) details the type of property that respondents currently reside in:

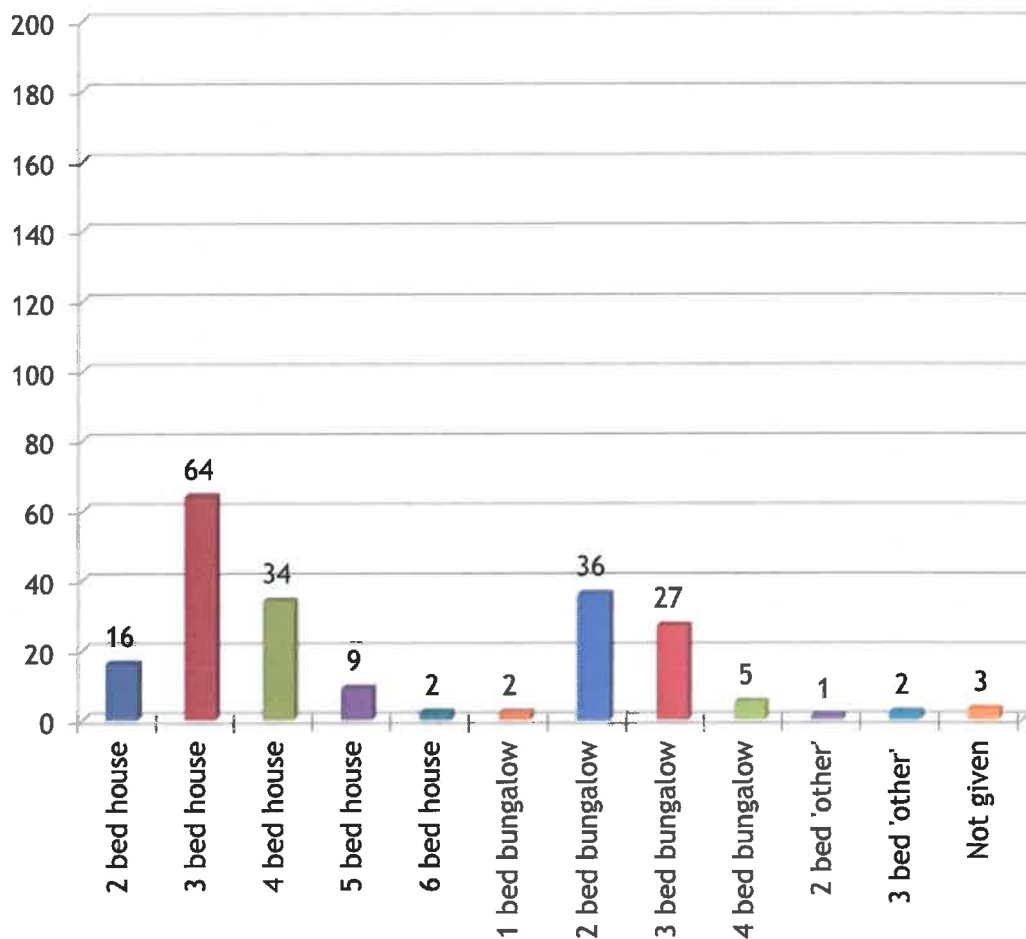


Fig 1.3- Property Types

62% of respondents live in a house and 35% live in a bungalow.

Those living in 3 bedroom houses were the largest group (32% of responses), followed by those living in 2 bedroom bungalows (18%).

4 bedroom houses were the next most popular house type with 17% of households living in them closely followed by 3 bedroom bungalows (13%) and 2 bedroom houses (8%).

iv) Length of Residence in Parish

The length of time that respondents have lived in Blackfordby is given in the chart below (fig 1.4):

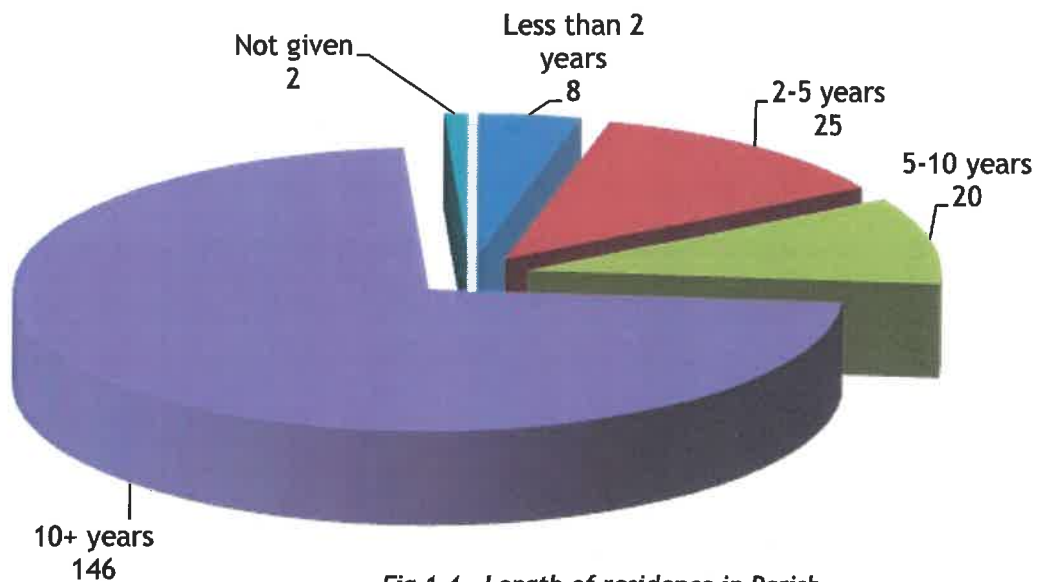


Fig 1.4 - Length of residence in Parish

It shows that 73% of completed surveys came from households that have lived in the Parish for in excess of 10 years.

10% of respondents have lived in Blackfordby for between 5 and 10 years, and 12% have been there for between 2 and 5 years. Only 4% of responses came from those who have lived in the village for less than 2 years.

2 respondents did not provide an answer.

v) Type of Housing required in the Parish

The questionnaire asked for opinions on the type of housing that respondents believed is needed in the Parish. The results are given in the chart below (fig 1.5):

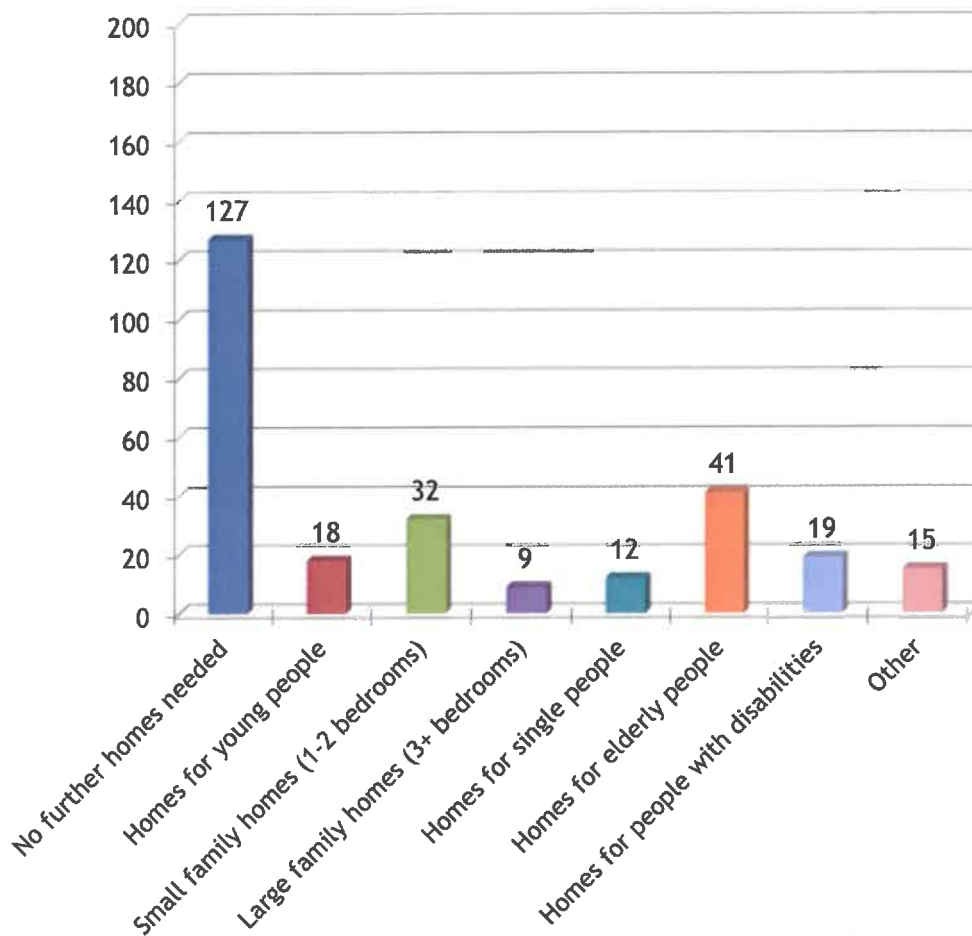


Fig 1.5 - Type of housing needed in Blackfordby

It shows that 63% of respondents thought that no further homes were needed in Blackfordby.

Of those that believed more homes were needed, the most popular reasons were:

- Homes for elderly people
- Small family homes
- Homes for people with disabilities
- Homes for young people

Residents made further comments about development in the village which were as follows:

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
1	Not enough options to downsize.
2	Not sure
3	New build should be limited to what the village/local area requires. Not for profit of builders.
4	125 homes started and planned.
5	No info on which to base opinion.
6	Not social housing
7	As there is a large new estate in Butt Lane, that is enough.
8	Not until infrastructure is improved.
9	Affordable housing of various sizes for all.
10	With the Butt Lane development.
11	Build more homes at Packington now that we've had our share.
12	Butt Lane development should be adequate.
13	Not sure
14	Homes are already being built in the village
15	Bungalows

vi) **Migration and Reasons for Leaving**

The survey asked whether respondents had experienced former members of their household leaving the Parish over the last 5 years and, if so, what the reasons were for them leaving.

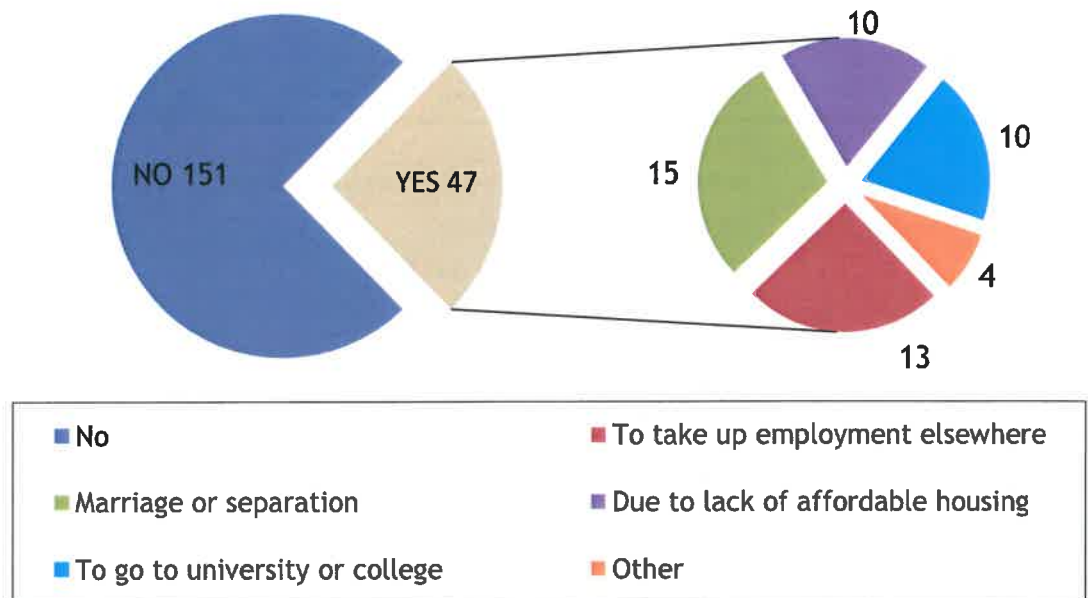


Fig 1.6 - Migration and reasons for leaving

Fig 1.6 shows that 23% of Parish residents who returned questionnaires were aware of others who had had to leave the Parish in the last 5 years.

The total number of those who had left the respondent households in the parish over the last 5 years totalled 62 people.

The reasons for members of these households leaving can be seen in the chart above, but it is worth noting that 10 of the 62 people identified left due to a lack of affordable housing. (Respondents were allowed to select more than one reason for leaving).

vii) **Support for Small Number of Homes to meet Local Peoples' Needs**

One of the fundamental questions in the survey is that which asks whether people are in favour of a small number of homes in the village to meet the needs of local people.

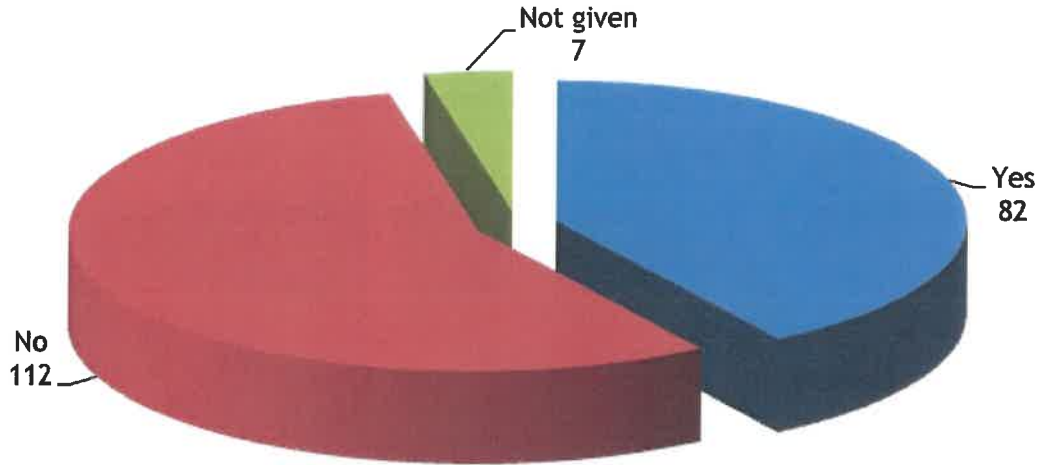


Fig 1.7 - Support for homes for local people

Fig 1.7 shows that 41% of respondents are in support of a small number of homes to meet local peoples' needs, while 56% said that they are not in support.

3% respondents did not express an opinion.

The following word cloud emphasises the most common words found among the individual comments that were made.



The following 11 questions were asked in order to help inform the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

viii) **Sustainable Development for Blackfordby over the next 15 years**

The questionnaire asked in question 10 where respondents felt any priority in housebuilding in the village should be located.

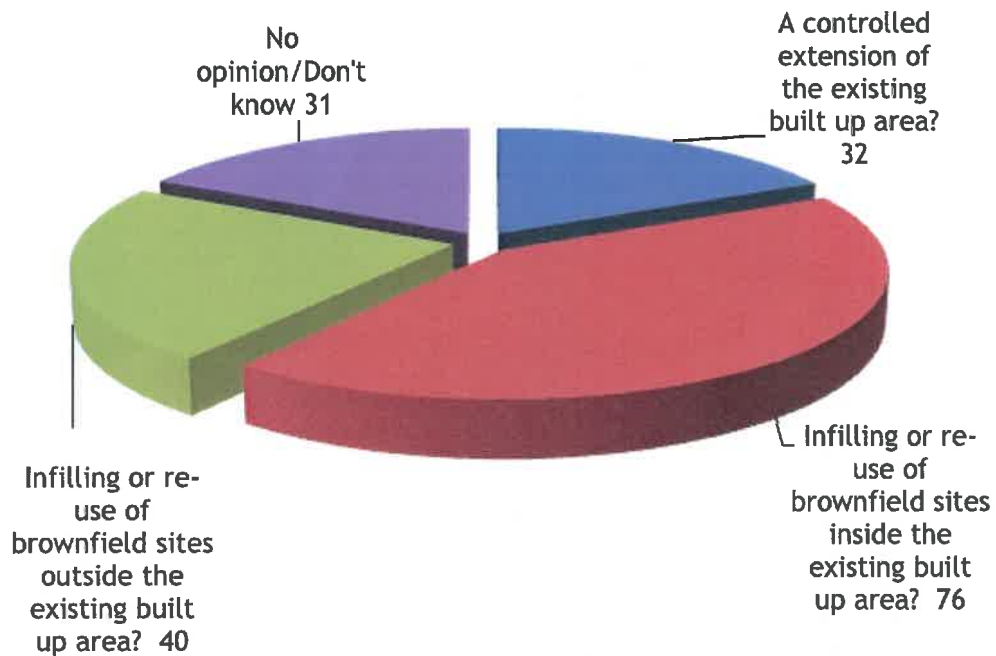


Fig 1.8 - Locations for development in the village

Fig 1.8 shows that 42% of responses came from households that felt that infilling and the use of brownfield sites inside the existing built up area was the best way forward. 22% of respondents were in favour of infilling or and the use of brownfield sites outside the existing built up area.

18% thought a controlled extension of the existing built up area would be the best way forward over the next 15 years and 17% did not express an opinion.

The additional comments in this question generated the word cloud below. The larger the word the most often it was stated by residents in their comments.



ix) **Land for Energy Production**

A fundamental question in the survey was question 11. This asked whether people in the village would support village land being made available for energy production?

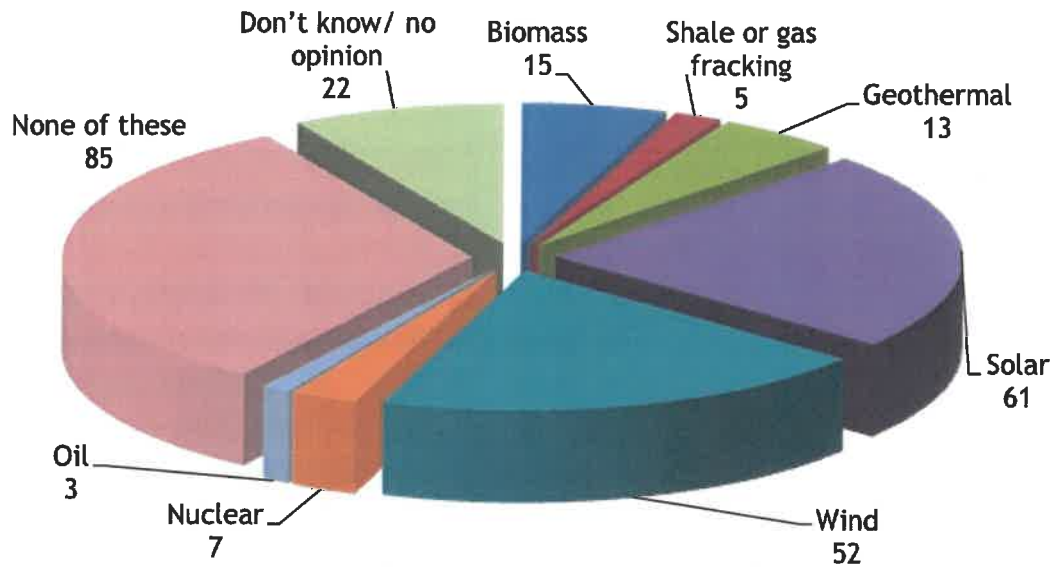


Fig 1.9 - Support for energy production

Fig 1.9 shows that 32% of respondents were not in support of any land being made available in the village for energy production in relation to the methods asked in the question.

23% were in favour of Solar energy production and 20% supported wind power in the village.

6% were in support of bio mass with 11% supporting the other energy production methods.

8% had no opinion.

x) **Blackfordby's Heritage and Environment**

The following two charts detail respondents' answers to question 12 in the survey which asked residents which features of Blackfordby they would like to protect;

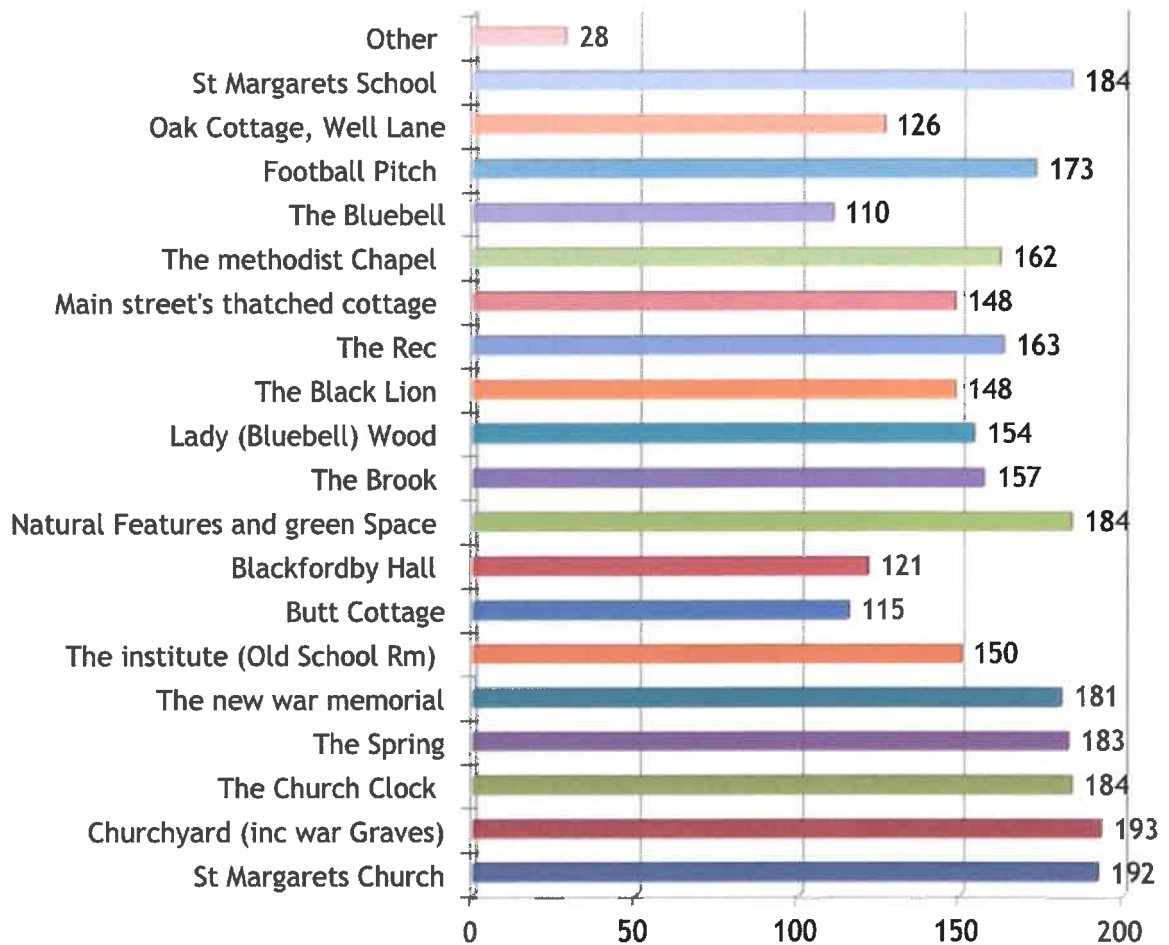


Fig 2.0 - Features of the village to protect

Fig 2.0 shows that there was positive village support to protect all of the features of Blackfordby mentioned in the question. The most popular features being the church, the church clock and churchyard, closely followed by the school, the village green spaces, the spring and the new war memorial.

Residents were also asked to comment if there were other features that they thought were worthy of protection and by far the most mentioned building was the 'Village Hall' as can be seen in the word cloud below.



xi) **Blackfordby's Important Green Spaces**

Question 13 sought village residents' comments on the sites they felt were the most important local green spaces in Blackfordby.

The word cloud below represents the most popular comments made by residents in regard to Blackfordby's green spaces. The most mentioned words are represented in bigger text in the word cloud below.

The actual comments can be found in appendix 4.



xii) Blackfordby's Service Connections

In Question 14 residents were asked how they rated the transport services that serve Blackfordby.

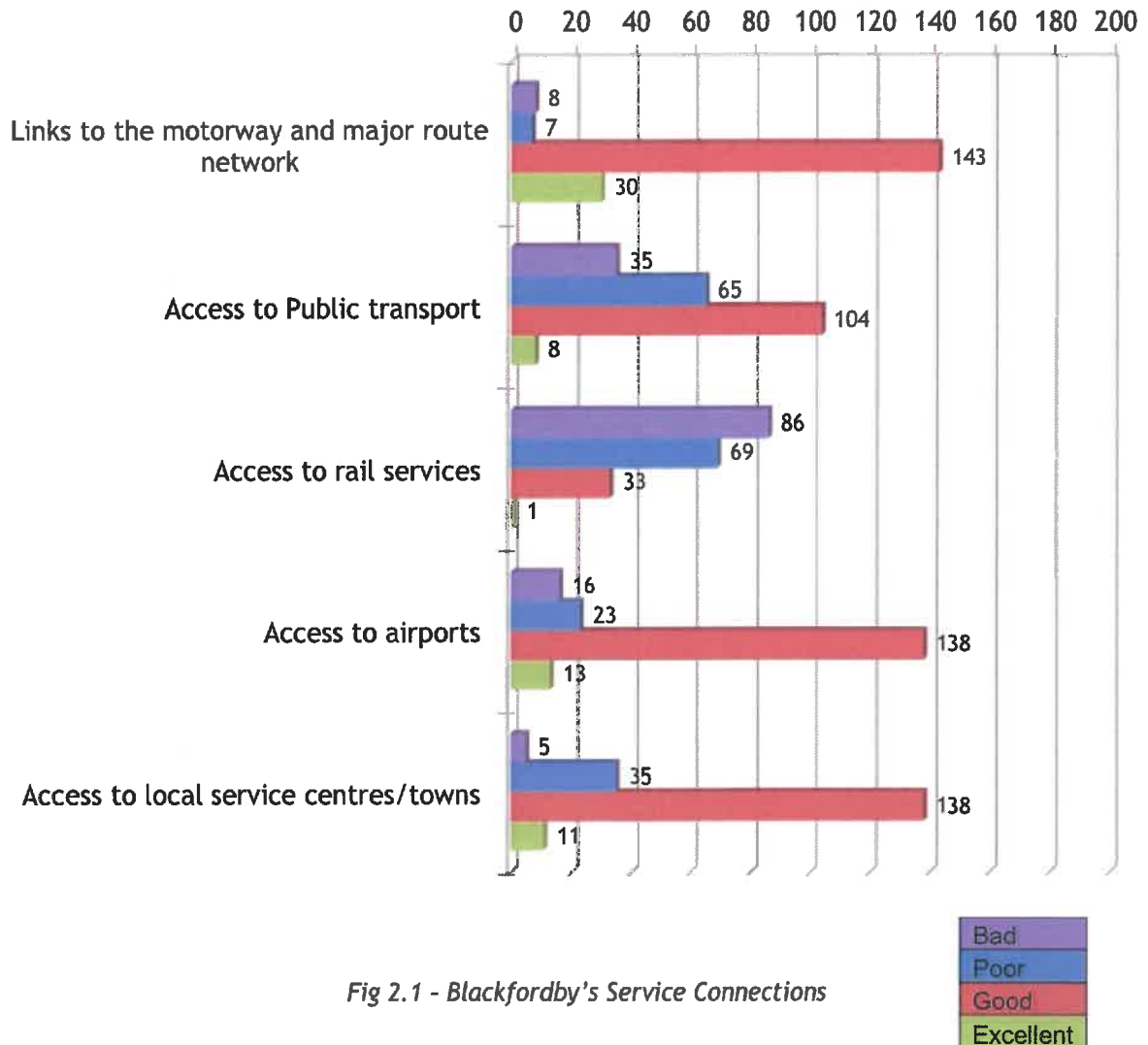


Fig 2.1 - Blackfordby's Service Connections

The majority of respondents regarded Blackfordby's access links to the road network, to public transport, to airports and to the local service centres and towns as good. However access to rail services was considered to be bad.

Only access to the road networks was considered to be excellent.

The word cloud below represents the most common words found in the additional comments made by residents in response to this question.

cars village **traffic**

xiii) How do Residents Travel to Work

Respondents were asked at question 15 how they travelled to work from the village.

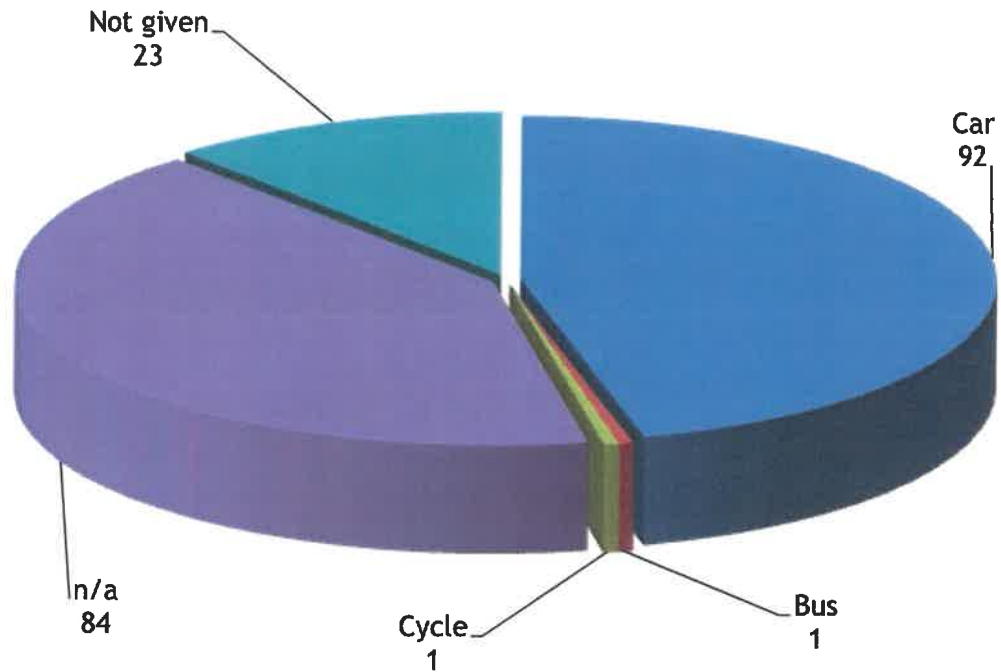


Fig 2.2 - travel to work

At 46% the overwhelming majority of residents who responded to the survey travel to work by car.

Only 2 respondents caught the bus or cycled.

42% of respondents selected the 'not appropriate' option and of those who clarified this choice the majority were retired and so did not need to commute.

11% of those who responded did not answer this question.

xiv) **Concerns in the Parish**

Question 16 asked respondents about the concerns they have within the Parish.

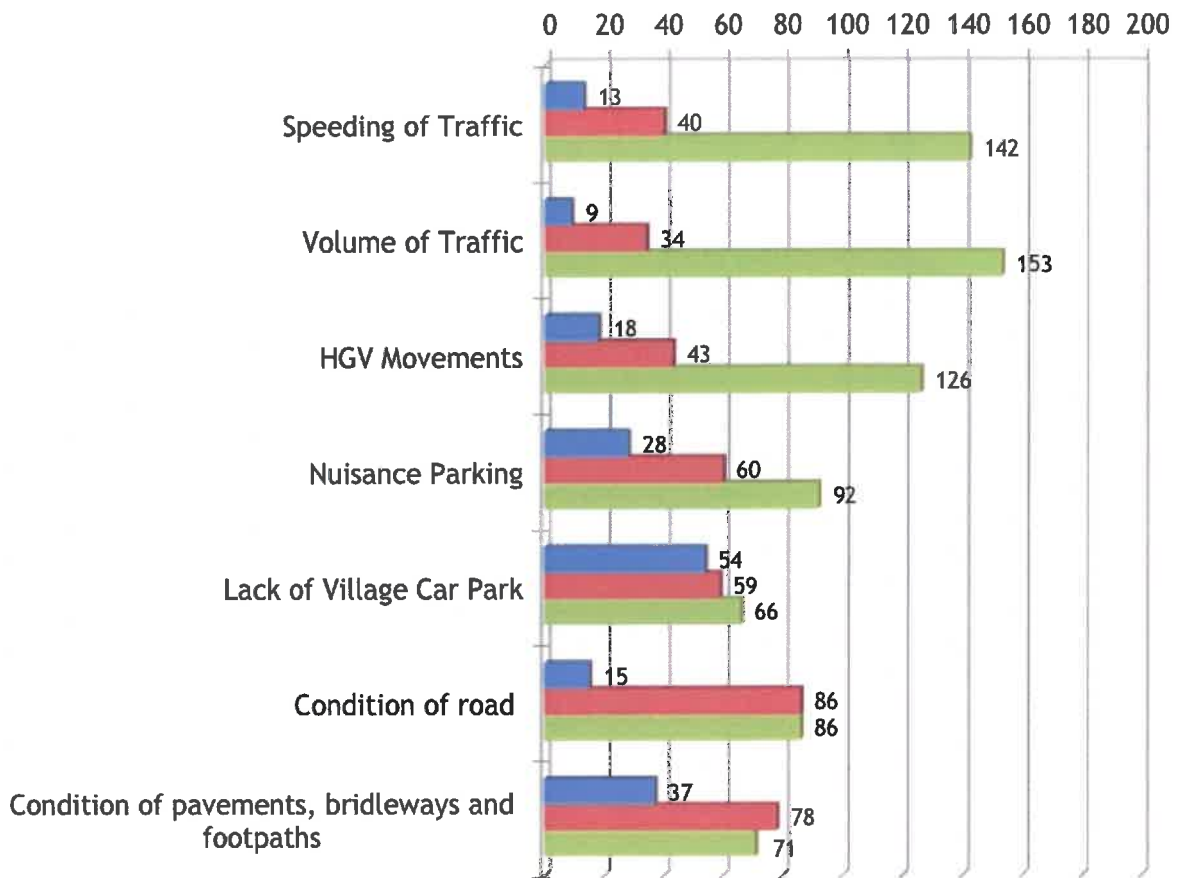


Fig 2.3 - Concerns in the parish



The biggest concern of respondents was the volume of traffic in the village and closely followed by the speed of this traffic, HGV movements in the village and nuisance parking.

The lack of ‘a village car park’ was of the least concern to the village residents followed by the condition of the pavements, bridleways and footpaths.

Comments made in the other section of the question are represented by the word cloud below:



xv) **Facilities in the Village**

Villagers were then asked (question 17) the importance to them of the facilities that already exist within the village and what facilities they would like in the village and how important these were to them.

The graph (2.4a) below illustrates the level of importance of the facilities to the residents of Blackfordby which already exist.

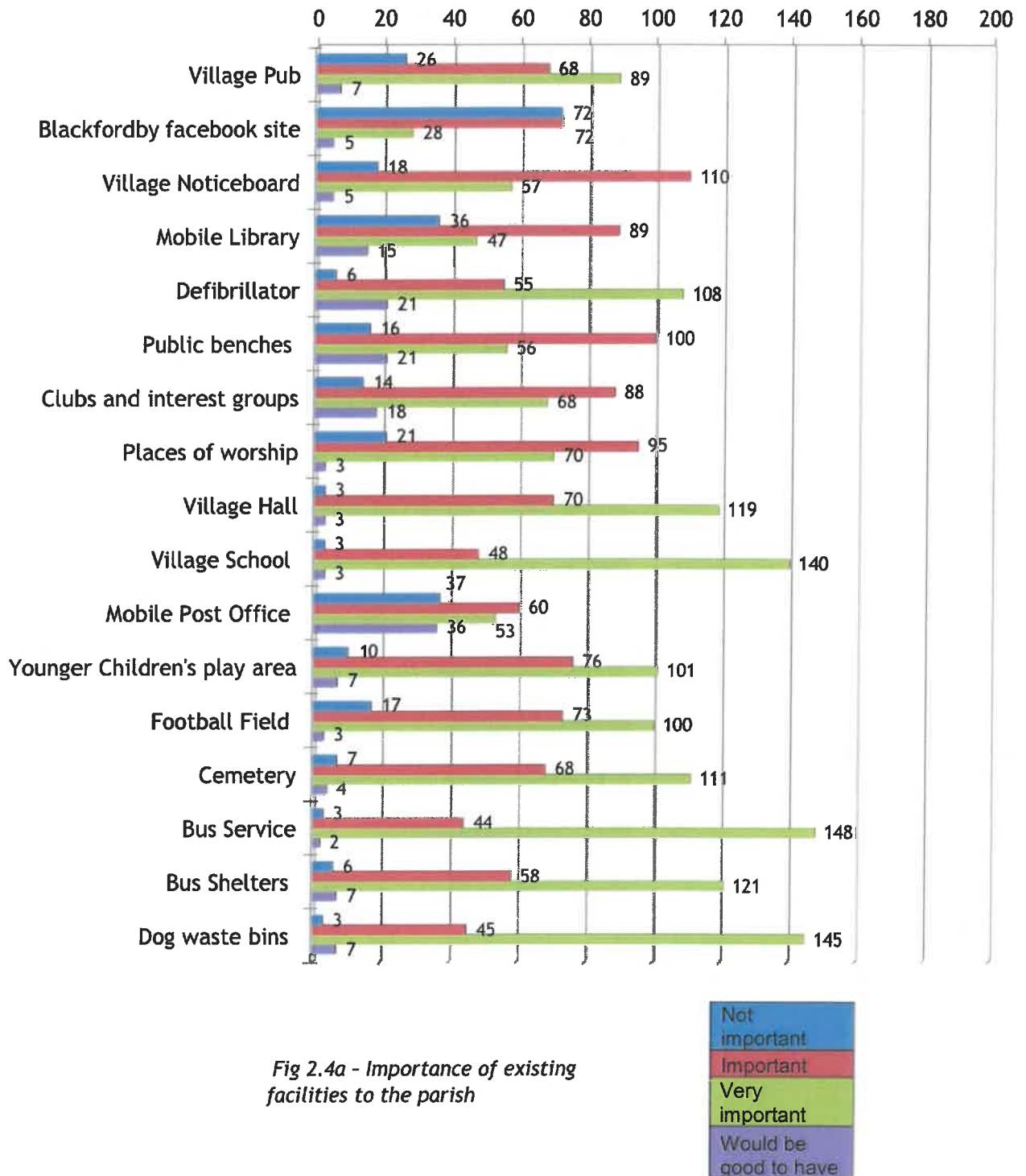
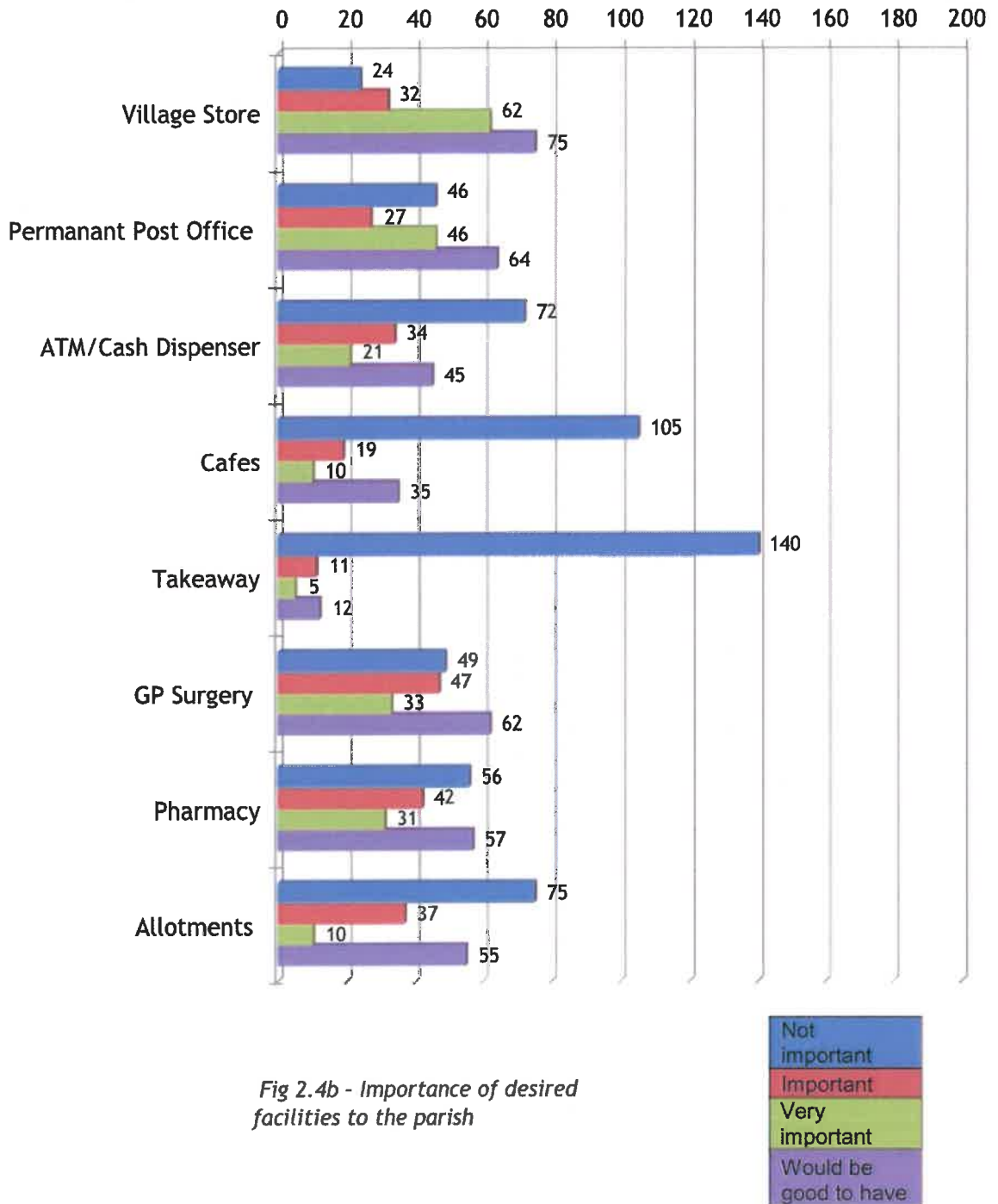


Fig 2.4a - Importance of existing facilities to the parish

In graph 2.4b below it can be seen what facilities residents would like to see in the village and which they consider to be the most important of these, as you can see a village store is the most desired facility followed closely by a post office.

These are followed by a doctor’s surgery and a pharmacy which the village does not currently have.

Respondents do not consider a ‘takeaway’ an important addition to the village.



The additional comments made by respondents in response to question 17 can be seen below:

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
1	Village store/post office combined (Bluebell pub could be used for this). - Very important.
2	Nursery/preschool - would be good to have.
3	Hair dressers - would be good to have.
4	Restore of the Bluebell - would be good to have.
5	Not sustainable
6	Nothing that brings more traffic to a village the council are intent on spoiling.
7	A nice local food pub along the lines of the bulls head at Repton, the Bluebell would be ideal - would be good to have.
8	Leave it alone, fine as it is!!
9	Pathway all the way up the hill.
10	Better play equipment on the rec - important.
11	Communal garden area with benches and planters/raised beds. Duck pond with above. (Pond at the end of Butt Lane but to many reeds and no sitting area.) Picnic benches in red/football field.
12	Build on allotments - Green fields and tree planting paid by housing development - very important.

xvi) Events, Visitor Attractions and Tourism

Respondents were asked at question 18 about their views on encouraging events, visitor attractions and tourism in the village.

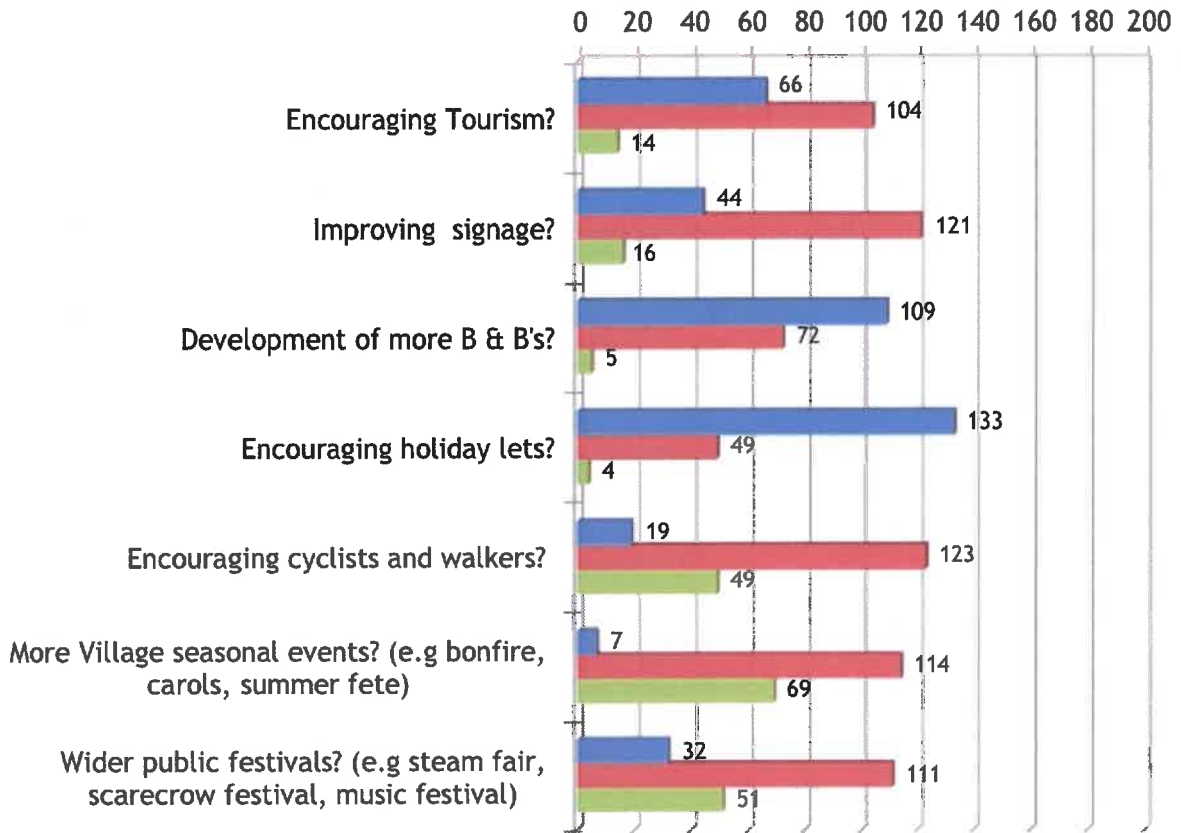


Fig 2.5 - Encouraging events, visitor attractions and tourism



From the above graph it is clear that the respondents strongly disagree with the encouragement of more bed and breakfast establishments or encouraging holiday lets but would like to encourage other types of tourism to the village.

The respondents to the survey are very much in favour of holding more seasonal village events and inviting wider public festivals to the village. They also feel that cyclists and walkers should be encouraged to visit the village.

There was particular support for the ‘open gardens’ event from comments made in the ‘other’ comments box.

xvii) Ideas to Bring the Parish Together

Question 19 asked respondents for their ideas on what could be done in the neighbourhood to bring the Parish together.

The word cloud below illustrates the most identified words used by residents when responding to this question. The larger the word appears the more often it was mentioned.



The actual comments can be found in Appendix 4.

xviii) Any Additional Comments

Respondents were asked by question 20 whether there were any additional or improved facilities, services or changes that they would like to see in the parish that have not been covered by the questionnaire.

The word cloud below illustrates the most identified words used by residents when responding to this question. The larger the word appears the more often it was mentioned.

The actual comments can be found in Appendix 5.



Appendix 3

xi) Comments regarding Blackfordby's Green Spaces.

Which are the most important Local Green Spaces in Blackfordby?

#	RESPONSES
1	The rec, football pitch, land adjoining Moira and the open fields on Ashby Lane.
2	The surrounding fields, these give the village identity. The surrounding woods, important for the national forest and good for promoting healthy walks for residents. The park is used by children and well placed by the school. The football pitch used by the children and village community.
3	All of them are important the local area is being over developed affecting village life.
4	The rec and the football pitch, only green sites left in Blackfordby.
5	The rec, football pitch and open fields.
6	The rec and football pitch. This forms a bit late on comments for green spaces as they are already being built on.
7	All are important.
8	The Boothorpe lanes leading to Moira, the church green, the recreational ground, the area at the rear end of the village NT land. It is important to retain areas at woodland, open spaces and walking lanes around Blackfordby to keep the village small and not lined by development to Woodville and Norris Hill to become a sprawling urban area.
9	Green fields, land already planted up by the National Forest. Need to maintain our identity and keep green fields 'green'. The same with areas/fields already planted with trees. We live in the National Forest, which should limit the number of houses granted building permission. Also keep the gap between Blackfordby and Woodville, very important.
10	The rec and the football pitch, other green spaces, lost to housing development. More green spaces - trees required in the village.
11	Recreation ground and near the school. Now one of the two green spaces left since building was allowed between North Close and South Close.
12	The rec, playing field and surrounding fields. Necessary for school, for sports and dog walking, for air quality and walking.
13	The football pitch and rec.
14	Surrounding fields, the rec and football pitch. No further use for house building.
15	The recreation ground.
16	The rec, football pitch and Bluebell wood.
17	All green spaces are important.
18	All of them.
19	Recreation area and football pitch. Need to be more green spaces instead of more housing developments.
20	The football pitch and the rec. Only green spaces left in the village.
21	Boothorpe Lane and surrounding fields and walkways, Fields and footpath behind the church/oak cottage. Fields and footpaths behind Ashby Lane towards Ashby. Use by village and those outside the village regularly. I use the areas to jog and walk the dogs. The children walk and play in the fields. The owners of Oak Cottage set up a woodland with each child of St Margaret's School having their own tree. We get a lot of birds, bats, foxes, hedgehogs etc in the fields surround the village.
22	All green spaces should be retained.
23	Heath Lane, Butt Lane and Lady Wood, We need the green fields and wildlife. Blackfordby is supposed to be a village not a housing estate. It is being destroyed by building.

24	Butt Lane North close and South Close, already building on.
25	The rec and playing field, would like to have local village football team again and go and watch.
26	The rec.
27	School playing field. Land belonging to the chapel at the side of the Bluebell pub.
28	All of them.
29	All surrounding greenfield sites.
30	The rec and football pitch, it's green! Traffic to and from houses there would be impossible. It's all we've got.
31	Fields north of Butt Lane (around Blackfordby house farm) this area is not only good farm land but is a visual break between Blackfordby and the urban sprawl of Woodville and Swadlincote. Unfortunately the council are gradually sacrificing by continually allowing mass development. Also balance ponds, are the home to wildlife in particular rare newts.
32	Have we got any?
33	Park, the football field and all surrounding Blackfordby. We chose to live in a rural village, if you surround it with new housing we may as well move to Ashby!
34	The rec and the football pitch, all remaining green fields around the village including Boothorpe.
35	All of them.
36	By the school, the football pitch, and Boothorpe Lane. North Close - too late for that green space.
37	Sadtup Lane and Moira Lane, Fields and walking towards Ashby and the wooded area towards Blackfordby from Moira. The church/school, playing field and play ground. The football pitch, brings local teams together to support them, and good exercise.
38	Both parks and if Davidson development should have proportional amount of Green space. Do not allow developers to create extensive developments, without at least 30% green space, otherwise you end up like every other housing estate.
39	The rec and surrounding areas for walking/cycling. Stop building, too much traffic.
40	Fields between Butt Lane and Heath Road and the rec.
41	Childrens play area and football field. The only two pieces of green space left in the village.
42	The fields that surround the whole village.
43	The football pitch, the rec and surrounding open fields. It provides greenery for the elderly that live nearby, also community uses it for the football matches and events. The rec is used by the children of the village. The fields should be returned for wildlife and walks etc for future generations. Enough is enough now.
44	The rec and football pitch. For youngsters to play on.
45	The football field and the rec, obvious - the only green spaces for fetes etc.
46	All fields that surround the village boundry.. This would ensure that the village does not join up to Ashby Moira and Woodville creating urban sprawl. The football field and green areas around the church, for children's safety and aesthetics of the village.
47	The rec and football pitch
48	Football field, the rec and farm land. For the children to play and left alone that we still see some country side.
49	The football field and the rec. Small village keep it that way.
50	The rec and football pitch, only two green spaces in the village.
51	Every single bit of green space i.e the football pitch, the rec and all surrounding fields. Else Blackfordby will become just another part of the urban like Swadlincote and Ashby.
52	The rec and surrounding area is important to children. The Orchard.
53	The rec and football pitch. This area belongs to the people of Blackfordby donated by the Joyce family. Common ground, used to be known as Cow Close. A valuable green space.

54	Not sure.
55	The rec and football pitch, gives a recreational area for all the village, great views and wonderful space. Needed for the village children to play on.
56	The rec and football pitch.
57	The rec, football field, lady wood, wide verge on Boothorpe Lane, green spaces between settlements. Vital areas of recreation for adults and children. Incredible bluebell wood. Filled with wild flowers.
58	The surrounding green or farm fields.
59	The rec and neighboring woodland, must be preserved.
60	Football field and the rec, all green spaces.
61	Rec/park, the football pitch and all of the existing surrounding fields. Although the play equipment could do with upgrading for obvious reasons. To many green spaces being used for housing.
62	The rec and the football field, sports facilities and play area are a must for every community.
63	The rec and football pitch. Both are important for the children of the village and have always been well used for as long as i have known. The fields on the edge of the village, the fields help to keep the identity of the village so that Woodville/Albert Village and Blackfordby don't all merge into one another.
64	The rec, football pitch and the woods.
65	Rec IT was gifted to the village years ago by the previous owner. Needs to be left alone.
66	Whole surrounding area
67	Football pitch and the rec, must have facilities for youngsters.
68	Football pitch and the rec. Area between old peoples bungalows in South close, is a disgrace.
69	I do not live in the village but green fields around the area should no be developed on.
70	Fields. Butt Lane. Blackfordby from Woodville. More tree planting needed between Blackfordby and Woodville and Butt Lane south of A51 left as a cul-de-sac . Butt Lane is a lane not a service road for more vehicles to use access. new house development.
71	Boothorpe, rest of the fields on Butt Lane where they have started to erect over one hundred houses. This village is mentioned in the Doomsday Book and i think that to destroy whats left i will shudder to think that the wild life will be destroyed as well.
72	The rec and football pitch.
73	The rec, football pitch and surrounding fields.
74	Football pitch and the playground. Needs to support the village activity/youths.
75	Recreation ground and the football pitch. There aren't too many green spaces left in Blackfordby now.
76	The rec and the football pitch, needs bringing up to date.
77	The football pitch, rec and all surrounding fields, no more major developments.
78	Green fields surrounding the village. Green fields buffer zone to keep Blackfordby a village - joined to Woodville and Swadlincote.
79	Rec by school and the football pitch.
80	All green spaces are important why shouldn't they be!
81	All green spaces are important, not many left.
82	Between villages Ashby and Moira.
83	Football pitch and surrounding green fields. For local people to enjoy and build local community.
84	All areas. The rural location is why living in Blackfordby is so important to me.
85	Fields between Ashby Road and Blackfordby. Fields next to Heath Lane. for the young.

Appendix 4

xvii) Comments regarding bringing Blackfordby together.

What ideas do you have on what could the Neighbourhood Plan Group could consider to bring the Parish together?

#	RESPONSES
1	To make more use of the village hall for community events.
2	Summer fete. Scarecrow festival. Bonfire/fireworks event. Music festival. Christmas fair. Farmer's market. Make better of the village hall, e.g pop up health checks and clubs.
3	Traffic calming schemes, especially on Butt Lane
4	Parish council for Blackfordby.
5	We could develop a 'chatty' drop in room at the village hall/hot for people who feel isolated or lonely and are not able to get out and about using public transport. We could have a community project such as Blackfordby in Bloom, to move the village look appealing. The open gardens was a lovely event held for the first time in along time.
6	More open gardens etc.
7	More open communication on plans for Blackfordby. Since 2017 open gardens the community has come together more and additional funding would enable ideas to become a reality.
8	Yoga classes in the village hall or old school rooms.
9	The youth club desperately needs reopening and events for the children to get to know each other better here. The park could do with an uplift too.
10	Unsure.
11	Regular coffee/tea/cake events for the elderly of the village. Demise of the village play school was a loss but apparently not affordable. Would be great to bring that back. An after-school care club, reasonable price, for working moms! Regular organised litter picks.
12	Blackfordby's community is mixed. People who have lived here years mix, the newer people don't. It will get worse with new builds.
13	Family fun days and family.
14	Alternations to the bed in the road y the church, all roads through the village are awkward. A doctors surgery would be wonderful!
15	Seasonal events are very important. Gatherings and social events are improving with new events such as open gardens. The school and church are very good at organizing and we must ensure the village hall and the old school room continue to serve the village.
16	Dog waste bins, sick and tired of looking at dog bags used and left behind. Using side of the house to throw used bags dog mess on football field. Butt Lane road too small for the village.
17	Also these new developments are NOT AFFORDABLE! New houses only attract people from little cities, Birmingham, Leicester, Derby, Nottingham. They do not do well with locals. They then have to commute to work in there cities causing more traffic. They also do there big shopping in these cities.
18	I cant believe you are asking these questions as you take no notice of public meetings of how residents feel about development and bringing more traffic and noise to what was a lovely village. Stop ruining residents way of life. We have development in Woodville that use is as a rat run now. You are just intent on destroying villages.
19	Blackfordby open gardens was excellent.
20	Villagers always stick together, only interference from county council for any villages to change causes a problem.
21	Public perpetuals maybe.

22	Better parking, easier access to the chapel.
23	I consider the parish is already together.
24	Help the elderly scheme so that they are not afraid of the younger generation. Encourage younger generation to volunteer.
25	More schedules to encourage the elderly to come together i.e training in the uses of I.T perhaps a lunch club.
26	Listen to the opinions of the villagers there was unanimous opposition to the Butt Lane development but it still went ahead.
27	Turn the Bluebell into shops and post office to benefit people in the village.
28	Village farm for all to participate in especially children 8 - 18 as this age group are often overlooked.
29	Slow down the traffic, better footpaths to encourage children to walk to school. Encouragement of a 'village identity' to keep Blackfordby a village in NVL.
30	Not sure.
31	A police station/house.
32	Leave the village very much as it is. Most people that live here like it just as it is!
33	Renovating the old school has been a wonderful venture - more organised events like open gardens and litter picking.
34	See other above. First ever open gardens was very successful.
35	None
36	Scarecrow festivals, bonfires and fireworks.
37	To be left alone and stop anymore developments. To get a real healthy neighbor development group and to attempt to get as many people as possible involved.
38	Investment into the Bluebell Pub to turn it into a modern local pub that serves food and re-vamp the beer garden. This will get more use now especially with the new housing estate being built.
39	Quite a dew of the ideas regarding facilities could become a reality if Bluebell pub could be used. Plenty of room for a range of things - cafe, craft groups, store, ATM...
40	Expanding the village will do the opposite. - a close community will be divided. This is a very important factor to consider.
41	Stop out pricing local people and encouraging city people as our prices are lower to them and they don't integrate.
42	We have an under utilized village hall that needs to encourage concerts, amateur dramatics, scouts, guides, choirs etc to get the village buzzing again.
43	Open gardens was a great success leading to offer interest groups and meetings.
44	We have paid enough through new housing. Poor council planning, we need more tree planting and green belt between Woodville and Blackfordby lets have Blackfordby a village not a future valley housing estate.
45	To have open spaces, green fields. Save the wild life, less traffic.
46	Bluebell pub could be valuable location for good food/drink and entertainment. (Not another fast foods outlet (2 meals for £10)). - Good food/Gusto village pub.
47	Why not build a surgery, pharmacy and a shop where the bluebell is, that would be really useful to the people in the village but i wont hold my breath on it happening.
48	Why not consider the land the 'empty' Bluebell Inn stands on, for a little shop, surgery/pharmacy? Surely with all the new builds going up we definitely need these facilities? Also how are you going to make the school larger for new pupils with all the new families that will be arriving?
49	More local events.
50	N/A

51	Smaller fete.
52	The village used to have public festivals, steam fair, bonfire etc. Until regulations made the cost prohibitive.
53	Everything is ok, we have lots of friends in the village.
54	Newsletter

Appendix 5

xviii) Comments regarding any additional or improved facilities, services or changes that residents would like to see in the Parish?

Anything else? Please let us know if there are any additional or improved facilities, services or changes that you would like to see in the parish, that have not been covered in this questionnaire?

#	RESPONSES
1	We need to keep our space between communities, especially Blackfordby and Woodville boundary. It is already creeping closer together. Would be good to encourage tourism, care facilities etc and B & B.
2	More green areas and trees. Shop - post office. House builders to put something back in to the community, for what has been lost.
3	Do not allow building on the site of the Bluebell Inn.
4	- Policing - Additional dog litter bins - Rubbish bins - More mobile services to help large elderly population (recent changes to bus route does not appear to have considered the older generation).
5	A change that I do not like to see is that the village of Blackfordby, because of the actions of the NWLDC's planning committee, is inching its way towards the urban sprawl of Woodville. I would like to see more consideration given to the concerns of life time and long standing village residents of all ages.
6	No HGV lorries through the village except for deliveries. (Access)
7	Repairs to the C of E Church. Better school playground equipment, climbing frames etc. Blackfordby in bloom?? Tree planting and wild flower meadows. Nature reserves to encourage local wildlife.
8	All covered in Q17 but these are impractical given the size of the village.
9	Bluebell Inn?
10	I do not normally partake in 'box ticking' exercises such as this because as you say in the introduction to this survey, you are 'ovty bound' to ask residents but most villages will have the opinion that the council usually ignore the residents in favor of developers. The last time we had a survey similar to this it was a pre-cursor to a large housing development being approved, and i suspect this is what is happening here, especially as village rumor is the large black of farmland adjacent to the new Blackfordby spires development has been sold for more housing.
11	More facilities for both elderly and young children they have no activities. Noticing drugs being used, sold by black sporty car. Asian background. Not good.
12	A mini roundabout or traffic lights need installing at the top of Heath Lane for access to A511. The village is very untidy and overgrown. The council need to maintain sites more regular.
13	Lived here 50 years and the village has less facilities then when we have moved in! As a local we do not like the area now it is far to over crowded and too many people, cars and houses.
14	More pavements as elderly people and mobility scooters are not provided for. The need to keep as a village otherwise it will be just an extension of Woodville.
15	Leave things as they are!
16	If there is a must that we must build in the village, i would suggest building a small retirement village for the elders to enjoy rather than affordable housing for the younger generation that have no respect for anything these days sadly. The world is no longer a nice place to be existing in.
17	A priority must be the controlling of heavy lorries using the Main Street past the Church and school and the speed of traffic through the village - particularly at rush hour.
18	Develop the Bluebell pub site for small affordable housing example as in photo on page 5. This would create a younger feel and tidy the area. This could also be used for a shop or doctors or all 3.

19	Traffic lights at the top of Heath Lane - left for Woodville right for Ashby.
20	Use money from developers to improve facilities for the young of the village such as all game courts etc. Extended school to accommodate influx of children from the new developments currently planned.
21	Stop using this end of NWL as a 'dumping ground' for any planning application for large homes. There is much more land within Coalville that is not being used - use it! i.e the land site of the old Mitchell Grieves site. Blackfordby is fine with a few tweaks it could be even better.
22	As I have children - traffic is a major concern. Some slow down signposts and traffic calming would be well overdue!
23	Am very concerned about the poor condition of the Main St, Thatched Cottage which is grade 2 listed but falling into complete disrepair. It would be a great loss to the village.
24	None
25	The roads to be widened on Butt Lane and Heath Lane to accommodate the growing housing situation. Also speed bumps/traffic calming further down Main Street and on Butt Lane
26	As above. The Bluebell used to be thriving and at the heart of the village. Investment needs to be made, not shied away from. The car park would also be a good spot for a mobile post office to stop.
27	The usage of the village hall, especially at weekends, needs to be reassessed. Now pollution is often at unacceptable levels and would get worse with an expansion of the village.
28	Doctors and schools. Doctors in particular and no services for elderly. This is not a good place now for the elderly as no facilities.
29	I would like to see Lady Wood open to the public and it used to be especially at Bluebell time.
30	No mention of the village link road to keep traffic out of the village. No mention of the access road on the Butt Lane. No mention of temp road on Butt Lane. All through traffic heading through the village to join the A511 at the Boundry island.
31	Take notice of the people who live in the village and not just the few who shout the loudest. Do a postal survey on major issues that affect the village and a vote.
32	Good pub for improving community spirit with food/wine and not beer bluebell site perfect location.
33	The Butt Lane development and other current building works are adding considerably to the housing stock. I don't think we need any further housing plans for the foreseeable future.
34	We do not need more housing. The school is full, you have to wait 4 - 5 weeks to get a doctors appointment (woodville surgery). We have no shop or post office.
35	Shop, post office etc. In short - all the amenities we used to have but now lost. All of the above should have been considered well before planning permission was given.
36	The village is already having developments and if continues will result in price dropping
37	Small footpath up the hill past the Church.

Appendix 6 - Contact information

Midlands Rural Housing

Whitwick Business Centre
Stenson Road
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 4JP



Telephone: 0300 1234 009

Email: Philippa.McKenna@midlandsrural.org.uk

web: www.midlandsrural.org.uk



@MidlandsRural

Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan

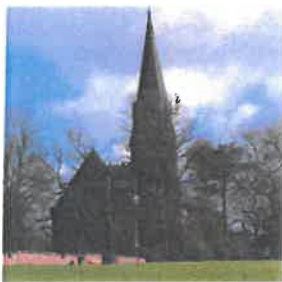
Blackfordby residents are invited to an update on the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan on

SATURDAY 9TH MARCH 2019

**Drop in any time between
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at The Old School Room, Main Street, Blackfordby

Give your views on the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. These cover issues like Housing, Protecting Local Green Spaces, Environmental Protection, Heritage, Transport and Community Services.



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BLACKFORDBY

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DROP-IN EVENT

9 MARCH 2019

CONSULTATION ANALYSIS



1. Background

Project Brief

The Blackfordby community, through its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, organised an open event at the Blackfordby Old School Room on 9 March 2019 (10:00 am – 12:30 pm) to share the emerging policies with those who live and work in Blackfordby.

The aim of this event was to see whether or not the local community supported the emerging policies – including ones on housing, Local Green Space and environment; community facilities; design; transport and business.

Publicity

The drop-in event was promoted in a variety of ways:

- The event was publicised in the Ashby Life magazine which was delivered to each household in Blackfordby;
- Leaflets promoting the event were distributed to each household and posters placed around the area;
- Members of the Steering Group spoke to villagers to inform them of the event and to encourage attendance.



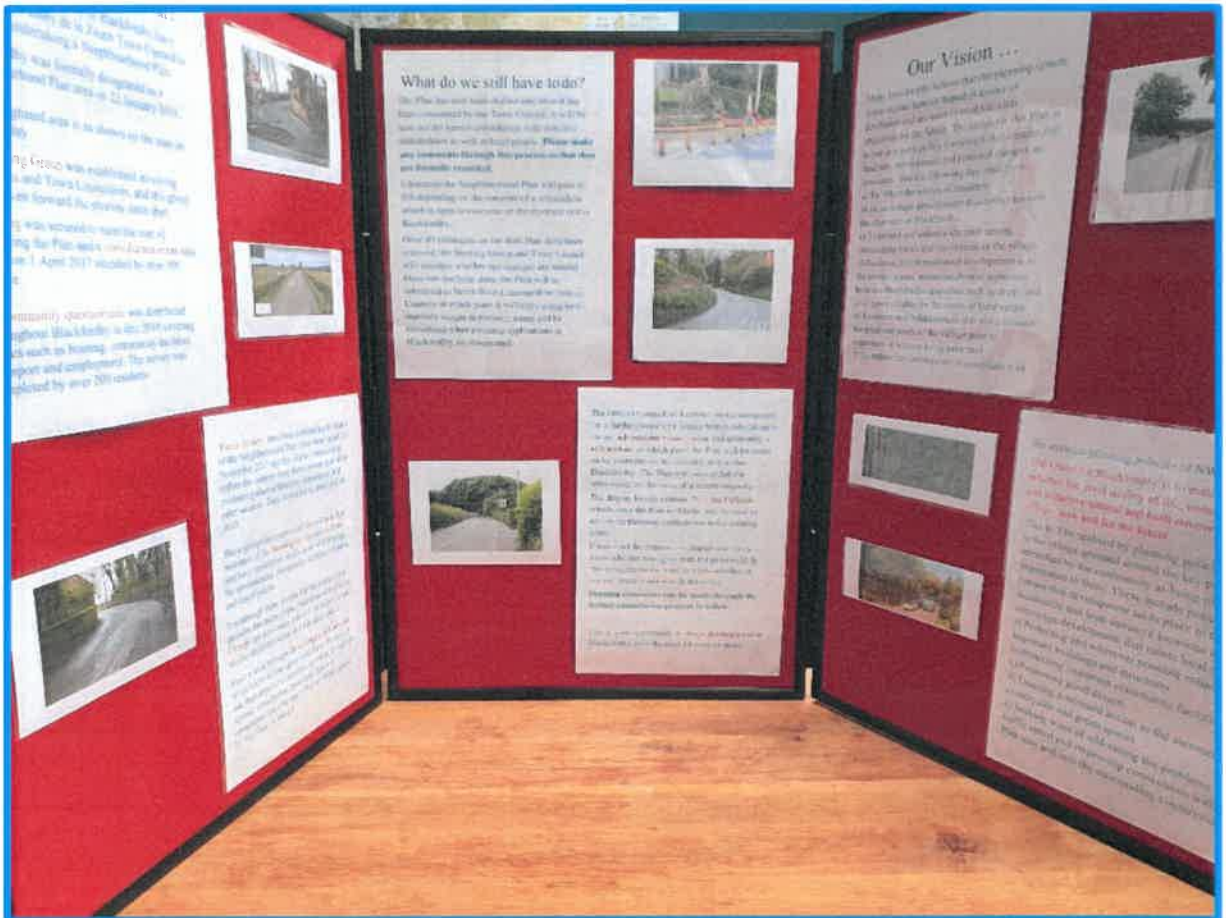
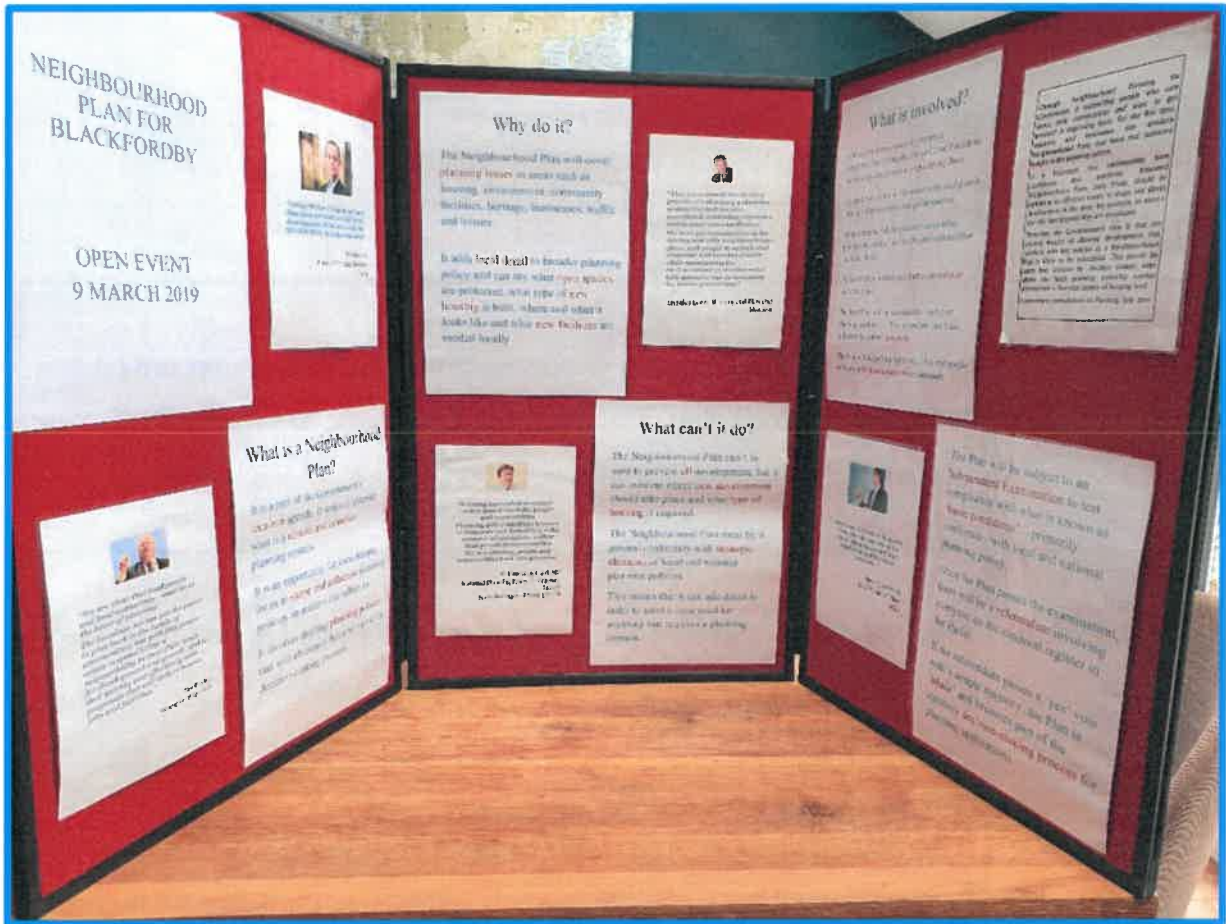
List of attendees

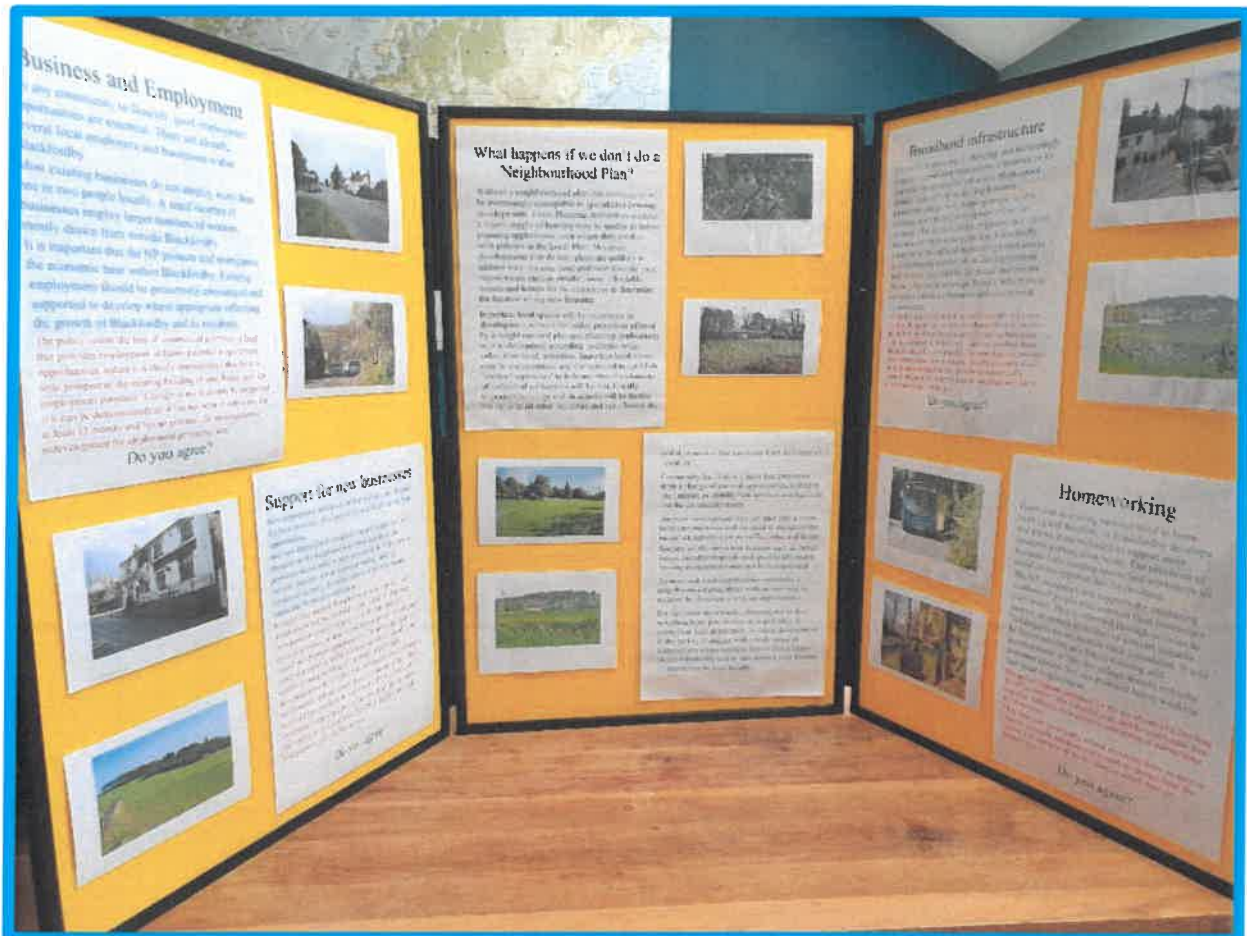
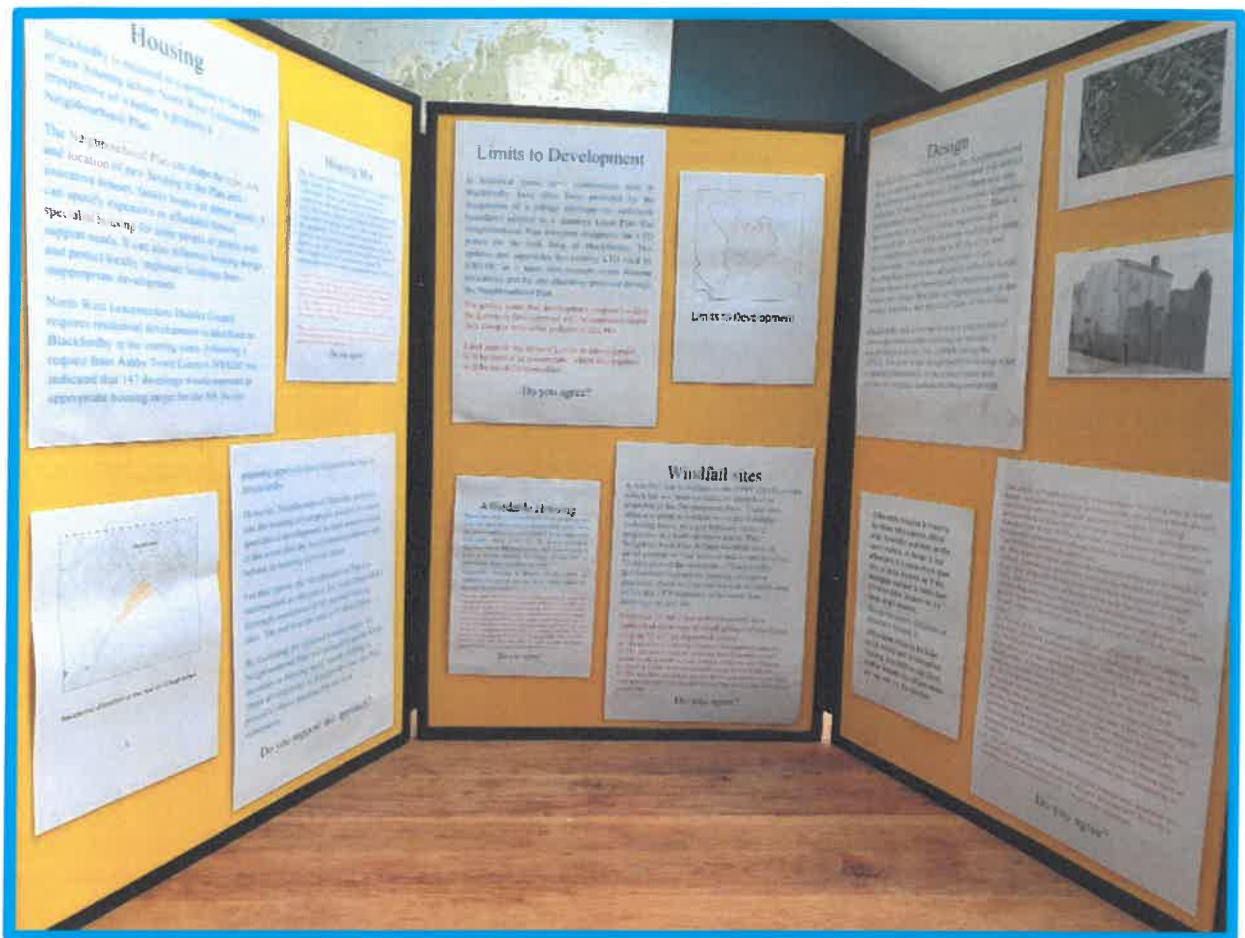
A total of 72 people attended the event.

2. Format of Event

Sign in	A Member of the Steering Group welcomed attendees on arrival and recorded attendance. People could remain anonymous if they preferred. Arrangements for the Open Event were explained.
Background	The first displays introduced Neighbourhood Planning and described the process and what has been undertaken to date.
Consultation on key issues	<p>A series of display boards were spread across the room, each of which focussed on the emerging policies within the draft Neighbourhood Plan – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Housing – Method of determining numbers, location; allocation; mix, design, affordable housing;▪ Environment –Local Green Space and other environmental protections including views;▪ Transport▪ Businesses and Employment▪ Community Facilities <p>Having read the displays, attendees were asked to indicate their support for the policy. General comments were welcomed and members of the NP team were on hand to record people's views, but people were directed to the upcoming pre-submission consultation for expressing detailed observations so that the comments could be formally recorded.</p>

The next pages show the display boards detailing the emerging policies.





3. Consultation findings

The policies on display and the support expressed for each are as follows:

VISION: 36 Y/ 2 N

Comments:

- No comments about business in the area

HOUSING: 8 Y/ 22 N

DESIGN: 22Y/ 2 N

HOUSING MIX: 11 Y/ 12 N

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: 14 Y/ 15 N

WINDFALL SITES: 22 Y/ 2 N

Comments:

- 4 or 5?

LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT: 32Y/ 5 N

LOCAL GREEN SPACES: 39 Y/ 0 N

RENEWABLE ENERGY (Turbines and Solar): 6 Y/ 27 N

RIDGE and FURROW: 31 Y / 0 N

LOCAL HERITAGE LIST: 37 Y/ 0 N

BIODIVERSITY: 35 Y/ 0 N

BUILDING FOR BIODIVERSITY: 23 Y/ 2 N

IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES: 43 Y/ 0 N

IMPORTANT VIEWS: 34 Y/ 1 N

SITES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE: 34Y/ 0 N

AREAS OF SEPARATION: 37 Y/ 0 N

EMPLOYMENT/BUSINESS: 30 Y/ 0

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT: 27 Y/ 3 N

SUPPORT FOR NEW BUSINESSES: 25/ 3 N

Comments:

- If we wish to support new business/working from home, why remove public transport?
Profit before purpose!
- NB: Bus routes being considered by Leics CC to be removed including those from Ashby to Leicester (129), removing ability to commute to Leicester

HOMEWORKING: 31Y/ 4 N

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE: 33Y/ 7 N

Comments:

- As long as not siting over-sized ugly masts
- Broadband and phone should be improved for all – at the moment is rubbish
- Why just improved broadband for new developments?

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES: 38 Y/ 0 N

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT: 34 Y/ 2 N

ELECTRIC VEHICLES: 14 Y/ 13 N

FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS: 38 Y/ 0 N

General Comments:

Environment

- Protecting green separation Butt Lane
- Hepworth Rd – self build applic – enforcement of tree planting
- Parking
- Traffic in old Butt Lane
- Inadequate footpaths
- Object to turbines
- Energy – support solar energy on roofs – not large sites on agricultural land or turbines
- Affordable

- Ridge and Furrow x 2
- Area of separation – increase extent
- Young people – provision
- Childcare provision
- Facilities
- S106 money
- Money from North Close development?
- I think the Authorities will do exactly as they like

Design

- Proposed location should NOT adversely affect the local green space. Davidson had totally ruined the green space. Blackfordby has now changed for the worse. Where there's money, councils will bend/break the rules all the time. The physical form has changed totally
- The maps detailing the proposed sites and boundary lines should be made larger so that we can see them and have a clear and informed choice. We are making decisions on areas we can't see
- Design, e) – don't agree with 101

Traffic, etc

- Butt Lane – a lot of lorries still coming to building site from Norris Hill, well over max limit
- Fenton Avenue – being used as car park by builders' services
- Parking opposite bus stops – Butt Lane causing congestion, safety – buses on to footpaths and blocked footpaths
- Need shop/cafe in village
- Where are new children going to school? Should be in village school
- Pub is land where Butt Lane lights are – amend policies – Hepworth Rd
- There is no bus through Blackfordby. People in their 80s and 90s are finding the new bus route very difficult. Without a good bus service through the village we are

housebound

- Butt Lane traffic, parking and high volume of traffic most of them speeding, bumping up pavements. Buses also as they nearly hit my husband a few months ago by bumping up on pavement. We think double yellow lines and speed humps would be a very good idea, it is horrendous
- Large lorries using Butt Lane to get through to A511. This must stop. Butt Lane is not suitable for large lorries
- Building on Butt Lane blocking drains along that road causing risk of flooding. Footpath moved without consent (as far as I'm aware)
- Bus moved along Butt Lane, no bus shelters for older residents and no consultation. Especially dangerous going towards Burton opposite new development. Things done without consultation or regulations, so sometimes proposals by Neighbourhood Plan is ignored
- Butt Lane is becoming a cut through for drivers going to Woodville. Where are the schools and doctors supporting the increasing population? We live in Blackfordby and our doctors is 8 miles away!!
- Traffic management, and there are no key village services! Cycle paths?
- Butt Lane – bus route changed without any consultation or communication to local residents – even to those with new bus stops now outside their properties! Speed on Butt Lane is concern, plus the need to navigate the lane carefully. Was the change linked to the new estate? Lots of elderly people who use the bus now have much further to walk
- Electric Vehicles: Why can't existing petrol stations incorporate charging points and not additional stations?
- Footpaths and bridleways: Existing footpaths to be maintained, ie not moved when any new development is agreed
- Plant more trees – plan a Blackfordby wood behind new development up to A511. Owls, badgers, foxes etc already reside here and we should be encouraging them. Red kites have been spotted at Albert village

SUMMARY

The event was a great success. A total of 72 people in attendance was very pleasing and there was a good and lively atmosphere with people staying for a considerable period of time to look at the display boards and to engage with others in attendance and with members of the Steering Group.

There was strong support for the draft policies on display, with some notable exceptions.

The policy on the housing allocation received only 8 in favour and 22 against. This may have reflected a misunderstanding amongst those present about the need for new housing in the neighbourhood area and the added protection that is available to neighbourhood plans that allocate a site for residential development.

The policy on housing mix attracted an even split with 11 in favour and 12 against. This may have been as a result of concern about the support for affordable housing, because there were 14 in favour of the policy on affordable housing and 15 against.

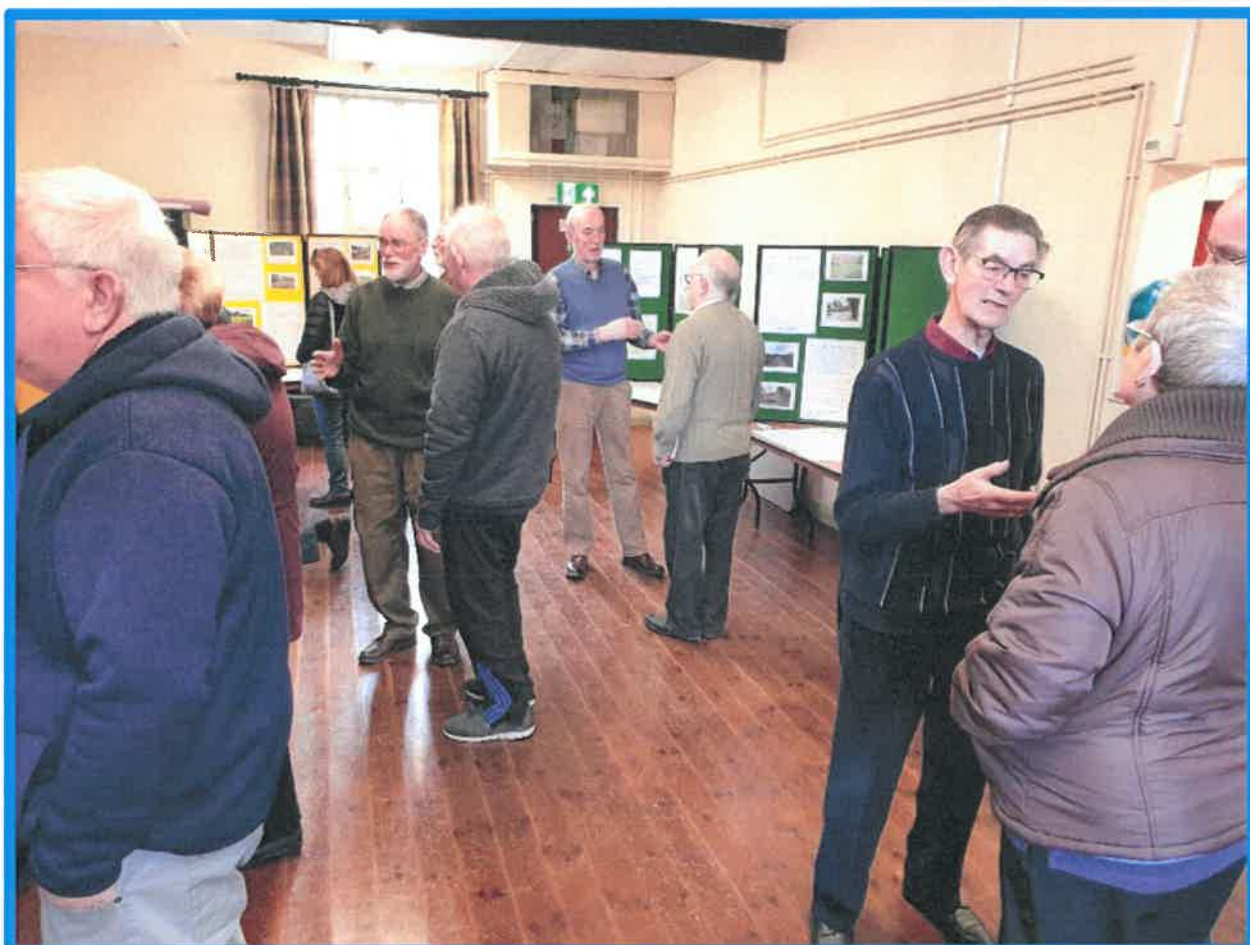
There was a clear opposition to the policy on renewable energy with only 6 in favour and 27 against.

14 people were in favour of the policy on electric vehicles and 13 against.

There were very few detailed comments about the above issues in the comments recorded at the event.

Some images from the event are on the following pages:









BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE OF BLACKFORDBY

**Consultation on the Draft Blackfordby
Neighbourhood Plan starts on 13th May and ends on
Monday 24th June 2019**

**The Plan is available to view on the Town Council's
website: [http://www.ashbydelazouch.info/blackfordby-
neighbourhood-plan.aspx](http://www.ashbydelazouch.info/blackfordby-
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**Contact the Town Council on 01530 416 961 if you want a
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Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan

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BLACKFORDBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

ADVERT



Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

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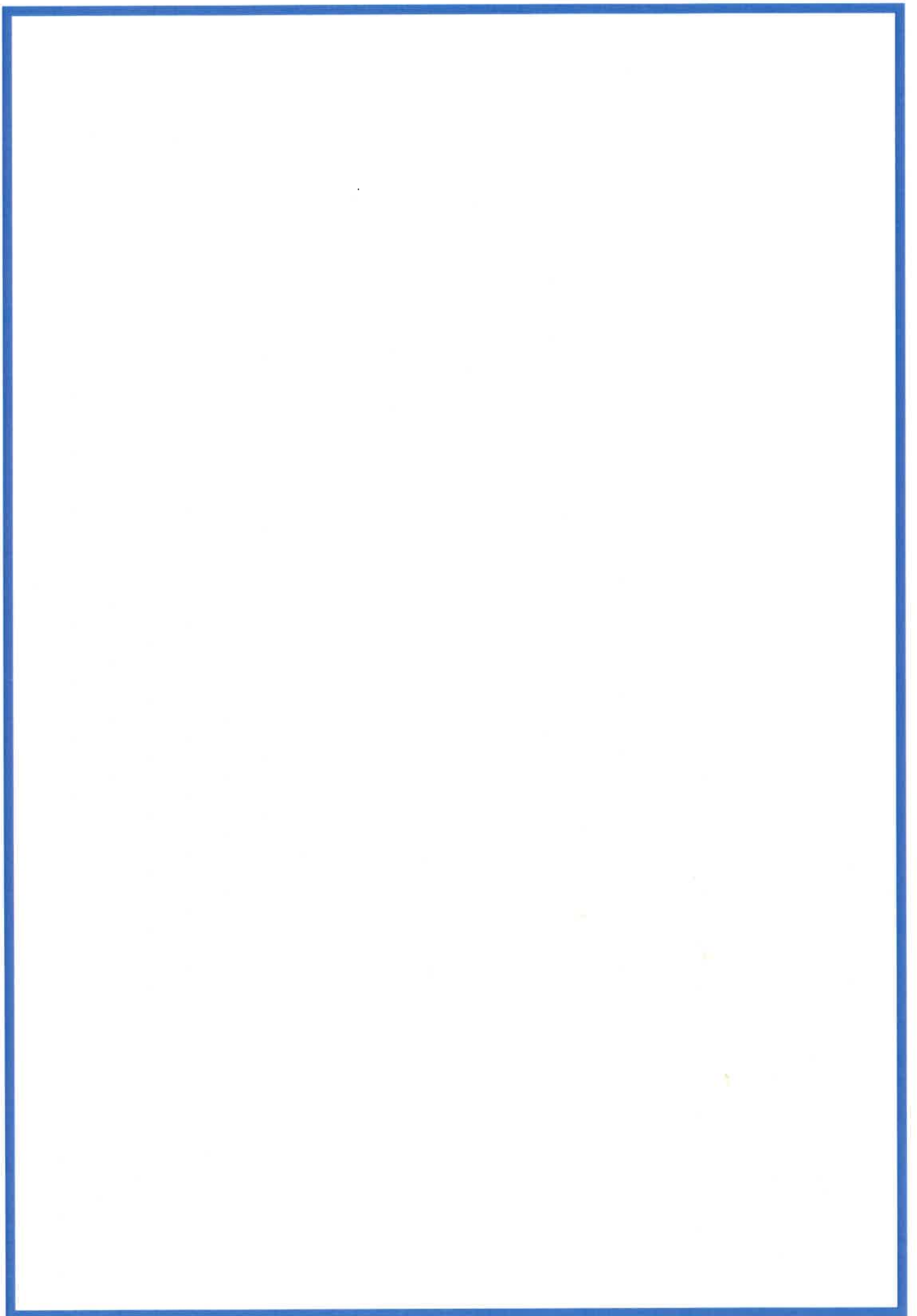
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Strategic Environment Assessment for the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Development Plan

Environmental Report to accompany Regulation 14
consultation on the Neighbourhood Development
Plan

Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

February 2021

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
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Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorised	Position
V1	February 2021	Draft report for internal review	Ian McCluskey	Associate
V2	March 2021	QB Review	Gary Kirk	Yourlocale Consultant
V3	March 2021	Locality Review	John Wilkinson	-
V4	March 2021	Final Report	Ian McCluskey	Associate

Prepared for:

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Non-Technical Summary

What is strategic environmental assessment?

A strategic environmental assessment has been undertaken to inform the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

NDP groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability / environmental objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the NDP and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the NDP and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Blackfordby NDP?

The Blackfordby NDP presents a plan for Blackfordby village and surrounding area within the administrative area of North West Leicestershire District Council for the period of 2020 to 2031. Prepared to be in conformity with the North West Leicestershire Local Plan, it sets out a vision and a range of policies for the NDP area. These relate to a range of topics, including, but not limited to, housing, open space, recreation, accessibility and housing.

Purpose of the Environmental Report

The Environmental Report, which accompanies the current consultation on the Blackfordby NDP, is the second document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (June 2020), which includes information about the NDP area's environment and community.

The purpose of the Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Blackfordby NDP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Blackfordby NDP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability / environmental issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the Blackfordby NDP has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the Blackfordby NDP;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the Blackfordby NDP;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the Blackfordby NDP; and
- Potential monitoring measures.

Scoping

The scoping stage involves the collection of information relating to:

- the state of the environment in the plan area; *and*
- relevant objectives and targets set out within plans, policies and programmes.

This information allowed for a range of key issues to be identified, and to establish what topics should be the focus of the SEA. The scoping process led to the following topics being scoped in or out of the SEA. These topics then formed the basis of an SEA Framework, which is the basis for appraising the Plan (and reasonable alternatives).

- Air Quality - **SCOPED OUT**
- Biodiversity - **SCOPED IN**
- Climatic factors (including Flood Risk) - **SCOPED IN**
- Historic Environment - **SCOPED IN**
- Landscape - **SCOPED IN**
- Land, Soil and Water Resources - **SCOPED OUT**
- Population and Housing - **SCOPED IN**
- Health and Wellbeing - **SCOPED OUT**
- Transportation - **SCOPED OUT**

Assessment of alternative approaches for the Blackfordby NDP

Alternative approaches have been considered in relation to the housing growth targets and the location of housing to be delivered.

One alternative to housing growth would be to not allocate any sites. However, a key objective of the NDP is to influence the location and type of housing development that is secured in Blackfordby. Therefore, this approach is considered to be unreasonable. A second alternative would be to pursue a high growth strategy. However, there is no evidence to justify substantially higher levels of housing growth and this housing target has been discussed and agreed with North West Leicestershire District Council to be reasonable. Therefore, this alternative is also considered to be unreasonable.

In regard to site allocations, the NDP proposes to allocate one site to meet the local housing needs. A number of site options were considered and appraised as part of a site assessment exercise by the Parish Council and against the SEA objectives. The site options are presented in the table below.

AECOM Ref	SHELAA Ref	Site Address	Gross Area (Hectares)	Indicative Capacity ¹	Source
Site 1	Bo1	Land at Heath Lane, Boundary	10.7ha	200	SHLAA
Site 2	By2	Land rear of 31 Main St, Blackfordby	0.8ha	14	SHLAA
Site 3	By4	Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby	6.6ha	124	SHLAA
Site 4	Wd2	Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville	2.85ha ²	53	SHLAA
Site 5	Mo12	Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira	2.3ha	24 ³	SHLAA

¹ The Indicative housing capacity has been derived from the North West Leicestershire SHELAA (2019).

² Approximate site area. A small proportion of the site area along the western boundary may fall outside the NDP area.

³ Most of this site area falls outside the NDP area. The site area which falls within the NDP area consists of two land parcels. The indicative capacity has been calculated against the site area of the northern land parcel (1.2ha) as the eastern parcel is considered to have access constraints and thus unlikely to form part of the developable area.

Site 2 is likely to have broadly neutral effects on the assessed SEA objectives other than for the Population and Housing objective for which a positive effect is predicted, as with all site options. Whilst a significant negative effect is predicted for Biodiversity, this is mainly due to the loss of tall grasses which cover parts of the likely developable area of the site and inevitable disturbances to ecological connectivity. Otherwise, it is envisaged that adequate buffering and other mitigation measures should safeguard some existing ecologically important habitats (in particular those along Shell Brook) and ecological connectivity can likely be sustained. It should however be noted that the likely effects (including mitigation) are dependent on the design of development and detailed ecological studies to fully understand the ecological value of the site. Therefore, there is potential for unsensitive design or any currently unknown habitats or presence of species to cause significant adverse effects on the Biodiversity objective.

Sites 1 and 3 are predicted to have mainly positive and neutral effects but development on these sites are predicted to cause significant irreversible harm to landscape character. This is partially also because the scale of growth is much higher than Site 2. Coalescence effects predicted for Site 3 can unlikely be avoided other than under a very low development density. The allocation of a small part of Site 1 along Heath Lane could likely avoid significant adverse effects on landscape character. However, this would also require the partial use of other site options to meet the housing target.

Other site options are considered to perform less favourably against the assessed SEA objectives.

The Parish Council seeks to allocate Site 2 for housing. The site has been selected as it has scored as the most sustainable option in the site assessment exercise undertaken by the NDP Steering Group. Consideration has also been given to its performance against the assessed SEA objectives. The site is also considered to have strong public support and considered to be of an appropriate scale to meet the housing requirement compared to other site options.

Assessment of the current version of the Blackfordby NDP

The draft Blackfordby NDP has been appraised against each of the environmental objectives in the SEA Framework. In undertaking the appraisal, each of the policies in the NDP has been considered individually and collectively. A summary of the findings is presented below.

<i>Biodiversity</i>	<i>Climatic Factors</i>	<i>Historic Environment</i>	<i>Landscape</i>	<i>Population and Housing</i>
Minor Negative	Minor Positive	Uncertain Minor Positive	Neutral	Minor Positive

The plan is broadly predicted to have positive effects, with a minor negative effect likely for Biodiversity mainly due to the potential for the housing allocation to have adverse effects on important habitats and ecological connectivity and to not be of a scale with the amount of development proposed to achieve environmental net gain.

Mitigation

A number of recommendations were made to enhance the positive effects of the draft plan and mitigate any negatives. These are summarised below:

- It is considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to better support energy efficiency and reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in new development. This could include

specific requirements to supporting design features that improve energy efficiency and reduces carbon dioxide emissions. This is of particular relevance given the climate emergency declared by North West Leicestershire District Council in 2019.

- It is also considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to require development proposals where possible to enhance the historic features and significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings. The policy could further be strengthened by requiring development proposals to demonstrate how proposals would result in a net enhancement to the historic significance of heritage assets and their setting.
- Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation) can be improved by requiring development proposals to protect, buffer and where possible enhance existing boundary hedges, trees and habitats and maintain undisturbed ecological connectivity. It is also recommended that the policy requires development proposals for the housing allocation to be supported by an ecological survey including a survey of protected species and to demonstrate how development would not cause harm or the loss of ecologically significant habitats, constrain ecological connectivity or displace without adequate mitigation any species present on site. The policy should also seek to encourage environmental net gain in accordance with the aspirations of the NPPF.
- Policy H1 can further be improved by affording protection to important existing landscape features and setting out a presumption against their harm. This includes safeguarding and where possible enhancing the natural corridor along Shell Brook and natural boundary screening along the southern boundary and undeveloped parts of the boundary along Drift Side. It is also recommended that planning proposals are required to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that demonstrates that the proposed scheme would not cause substantial harm to landscape character and the identified important view and that any adverse effects on landscape have been adequately mitigated. The LVIA should further demonstrate how any associated planting accords with landscape character, uses native species and where possible results in a net landscape gain.
- Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could be strengthened by allowing development proposals the option to deviate from the requirement set in the latest evidence underpinning the plan when supported with an assessment on housing need that demonstrates a local unmet need for the proposed housing mix. This should ensure the policy is flexible to changes in housing need in the long term.
- Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could further be strengthened by setting out the proportion of housing types and sizes to ensure new housing reflects local need and contributes towards the widening of choice.
- Policy ENV2 (Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance) could be strengthened by setting out a presumption against development on the identified sites of high significance for their environmental features and to require any development proposals to demonstrate and achieve environmental net gain, guided by the principles set out in the NPPF (2019).
- Policy ENV4 (Non-designated Key Buildings) should seek to afford greater protection to the identified features of local architectural and heritage interest by setting out a presumption against the loss or harm to the heritage asset unless if it can be demonstrated that the public benefit of the development proposal significantly outweighs the harm caused. The policy should further require development proposals to achieve enhancements to the significance of these heritage assets including their setting.

- Policies ENV8 and BE5 could be strengthened by requiring development proposals to be supported with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to provide an assessment of the landscape significance of the site and the likely impact of development. Policy ENV8 could further be improved by requiring a comprehensive restoration of land following use including a net improvement in the landscape quality of the site where feasible and appropriate.

It is considered that the above changes would help to improve the performance of the Plan.

Monitoring

There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any unexpected effects. The SEA has not identified any potential for significant effects that would require closer review or monitoring.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

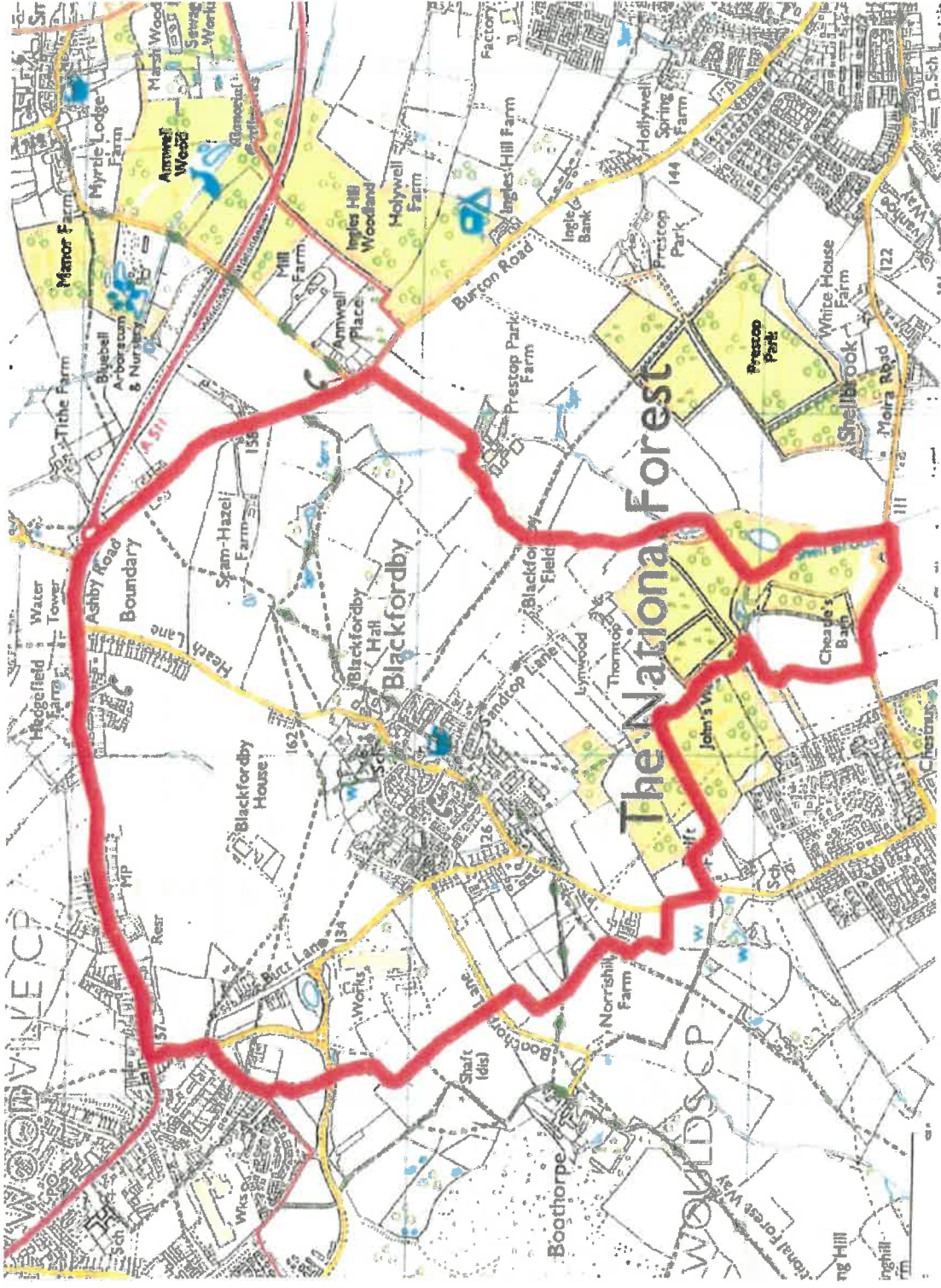
- 1.1.1. Ashby de la Zouch Town Council is in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the sustainable future growth of Blackfordby. AECOM has been commissioned to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of Blackfordby NDP on behalf of the Town Council.
- 1.1.2. The NDP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Local Plan for North West Leicestershire. The relevant document of the adopted Local Plan consists of the **North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031⁴** (2017).
- 1.1.3. The NDP will form part of the development plan for the Blackfordby area of Ashby de la Zouch in North West Leicestershire District, alongside the Local Plan. NDPs are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in North West Leicestershire District, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the Neighbourhood Planning process where appropriate.
- 1.1.4. The Key information relating to the Blackfordby NDP is presented in the table below (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the NDP for Blackfordby

Name of Responsible Authority	Ashby de la Zouch Town Council
Title of Plan	Blackfordby NDP
Subject	Neighbourhood Planning
Purpose	The Blackfordby NDP is being prepared as a NDP under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan for North West Leicestershire.
Timescale	To 2031
Area covered by the plan	The NDP area covers Blackfordby and the surrounding area in Leicestershire. The NDP area is shown in Figure 1.1.
Summary of content	The Blackfordby NDP will set out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the NDP area.
Plan contact point	Melanie Mitchell Email address: melaniemitchell@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk

⁴ North West Leicestershire District Council (2017) North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031 [online] available at: https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local_plan

Figure 1.1: The Blackfordby NDP Area



1.2 SEA explained

- 1.2.1. The Blackfordby NDP was 'screened-in' as requiring an SEA. The Screening Report (2020) identifies potential for significant environmental effects to occur from the implementation of the NDP that have not been considered and dealt with by the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan Review. Specifically, these environmental effects relate to the potential for significant effects on the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from housing allocations.
- 1.2.2. SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the Blackfordby NDP seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.2.3. The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
- 1.2.4. The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.2.5. In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:
 - What is the scope of the SEA?
 - What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?
 - 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
 - What are the appraisal findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
 - What happens next?
- 1.2.6. These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided within the report'. **Table 1.2** presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report

1.3.1. This document is the Environmental Report for the Blackfordby NDP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations.

1.3.2. Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet regulatory⁵ requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ⁶
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What's the scope of the SEA? What is the environmental 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What are the key issues & objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for plan making/SEA process.

⁵ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

⁶ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

1.4 Local Plan context for the Blackfordby NDP

- 1.4.1. The Blackfordby NDP area falls within North West Leicestershire. The adopted Local Plan relevant to the NDP area consists of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031 (2017). The adopted Local Plan is for the period of 2011-2031 and the Blackfordby NDP has been prepared in the context of this plan.
- 1.4.2. The Local Plan designates Blackfordby as 'Sustainable Villages'. Sustainable Villages are defined as '*settlements which have a limited range of services and facilities where a limited amount of growth will take place within the defined Limits to Development*'.⁷
- 1.4.3. In terms of housing need and delivery, the Local Plan sets out a housing requirement of 147 homes for Blackfordby between 2011 and 2031. This housing target has been confirmed by North West Leicestershire District Council. However, the NDP Steering Group have added a 15% Parish buffer to give a housing target of 169 units to be delivered in Blackfordby by 2031.
- 1.4.4. Three sites with a combined capacity of 85 homes are currently under construction in Blackfordby. In addition, two sites with a capacity of 92 homes have active planning consents. Therefore, a combination of committed and delivered developments since 2011 exceed the housing target for Blackfordby up to 2031. It is considered that Blackfordby does not have an unmet housing need for the period 2011-2031.

1.5 Vision for the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 1.5.1. The vision statement for the Blackfordby NDP, which was developed during earlier stages of plan development, is as follows:

“ The vision for Blackfordby is to maintain and enhance the good quality of life, community spirit and attractive natural and built environment in the village, now and for the future. ”

Blackfordby NDP vision statement

- 1.5.2. The Blackfordby NDP sets out a number of key objectives which underpins the policy framework for the plan:
 - a) To reflect the wishes of residents.
 - b) To ensure that development maintains the character of Blackfordby.
 - c) To protect and enhance the rural setting, outstanding views and open countryside of the village.
 - d) To ensure future residential development is in the correct places, maintains distinct separation between Blackfordby and other built up areas, and is of types suitable for the needs of local people.
 - e) To ensure that infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of the village. To be determined at planning application stage depending on the location and scale of development.
 - f) To ensure that development is compliant with the strategic planning policies of NWL District Council.

⁷ North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031 (2017).

2. The Scope of the SEA

2.1 SEA Scoping Report

- 2.1.1. The SEA Regulations require that: *“When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”*. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.⁸ These authorities were consulted on the scope of the Blackfordby NDP SEA for a 5 week period from 12th August 2020.
- 2.1.2. The purpose of scoping is to outline the key issues that the SEA should focus on through setting out:
- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the NDP;
 - Baseline data against which the NDP can be assessed;
 - The key sustainability / environmental issues for the NDP; and
 - An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the NDP can be assessed.
- 2.1.3. All statutory consultees provided a response to the Scoping Report. The comments made and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in **Table 2.1** below.

Table 2.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

Statutory Consultees	How the response was considered and addressed
Environment Agency	No comment
Natural England	Natural England advised that they consider the methodology and baseline information used to inform the scoping report to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and associated guidance. They also support the sustainability objectives contained within the SEA framework. They have also advised that there is now no longer capacity for additional developments within the DCS. It will therefore not be possible for new developments to rely on the scheme as mitigation. This has been considered in the appraisal.
Historic England	Historic England advised that they are of the view that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not likely to be required This has been noted.

⁸ In-line with Article 6(3), of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because *‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes’.*

2.2 Key sustainability / environmental issues

- 2.2.1. The full Scoping Report is attached as Appendix A to this report. This section sets out a summary of the key issues that were identified through scoping.
- 2.2.2. Drawing on the review of the policy context and baseline information, the SEA Scoping Report was able to identify a range of sustainability / environmental issues that should be a particular focus of SEA.
- 2.2.3. The selected environmental themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive⁹. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects (drawing from the screening opinion and local knowledge).
- 2.2.4. The scoping process allowed for some sustainability topics to be 'scoped out'; as it was considered the Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on certain factors. Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England have not raised any concerns in regards the scoping out of any sustainability topics.
- 2.2.5. The following environmental themes present the sustainability / environmental issues identified at the scoping stage with their scoping outcome:

Air quality

- There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the NDP area. Air quality in Blackfordby is generally good, with no significant issues identified.
- Traffic and congestion have the potential to increase emissions and reduce air quality in the area; however, air pollution is at a low baseline so effects are unlikely to be significant given the magnitude of effects involved and low emissions vehicles could offset this to an extent.
- Increases in vehicular emissions are also likely to be offset by factors such as measures implemented through the Leicestershire LTP3 which encourage modal shift from the private car towards public transport, walking and cycling. The North West Leicestershire Local Plan also includes mitigation measures to reduce the impact of new development on the existing highway network.
- Environment Agency have not raised any concerns on the scoping out of this objective.

SCOPED OUT

Biodiversity

- The NP area is with the River Mease Catchment and lies around 2 miles from the River Mease SAC and SSSI. Water quality in the Mease has deteriorated primarily due to high phosphorous levels. A Restoration Plan and Water Quality Management Plan are in place.
- There are no NNR, LNR, SPAs or Ramsar sites within or in the vicinity of the NDP area.

⁹ The SEA Directive is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on 'the environment, **including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors**' [our emphasis]

- There are several small areas of Woodland Priority Habitat and the National Forest south of the NDP area. New development encroaching on these areas could lead to loss of habitats and associated biodiversity.

SCOPED IN

Climatic Factors

- Average CO2 emissions per capita are declining in North West Leicestershire as a whole.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1.
- The likelihood of flooding from fluvial and non-fluvial sources could be exacerbated by development in the NDP area. However, opportunities for mitigation exist in sustainable design and sustainable urban drainage.

SCOPED IN

Historic Environment

- The NDP area contains a considerable number of heritage assets including Listed Buildings and a Conservation Area, which could be affected by policies and proposals within the plan (either positively or negatively).
- An unsensitive approach that does not seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets could result in the erosion of the townscape quality.

SCOPED IN

Landscape

- There are no nationally or locally designated landscape areas (LLA and AAL) within the NDP boundary.
- The policies of NWLLP offer a degree of protection to landscape assets and their settings, but insensitive development could have a disruptive impact on landscape.

SCOPED IN

Land, Soil and Water Resources

- The NDP area contains a parcel of Grade 2 agricultural land and potentially some Grade 3a land. These are classed as best and most versatile (BMV) land.
- The River Mease has elevated phosphorous levels. Deterioration of the water quality (ecological and chemical) can adversely impact the River Mease SSSI and SAC.
- The NDP area falls within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.
- Development is unlikely to have significant effects on land and soil resources and is unlikely to result in significant changes to water quality.
- The statutory consultees have not raised any concerns on the scoping out of this objective.

SCOPED OUT

Population and Housing

- The proportion of older residents (65+) is significantly higher in the NDP area compared to the regional and national average.
- The population of Blackfordby is likely to increase due to the developments currently being built in the area.
- Average house prices in the NDP area are similar to the national average.

SCOPED IN

Health and Wellbeing

- Blackfordby has a broadly healthy population with higher than national average life expectancy. The NDP area has lower than average levels of deprivation.
- There are several healthcare facilities within 2-4 miles from the NDP area. The NDP area also has a number of green and open spaces.
- The trend of an increasingly ageing population may require additional provision for health and social care services.
- The statutory consultees have not raised any concerns on the scoping out of this objective.

SCOPED OUT

Transportation

- The NDP area is well served by the highway network and the railway. There is scope for improving bus connectivity.
- Local residents in the NDP area are significantly more likely to travel by car compared to the national average.
- Whilst new development can increase traffic and congestion, the scale of development proposed is unlikely to result in a significant increase in traffic within the NDP area.
- The statutory consultees have not raised any concerns on the scoping out of this objective.

SCOPED OUT

2.3 SEA Framework

- 2.3.1. The SEA Framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics. The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which has been used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Plan (and any reasonable alternatives).
- 2.3.2. **Table 2.2** outlines the full SEA Framework, which focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can/will have in some areas.
- 2.3.3. These issues were then translated into an 'SEA Framework'. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline.
- 2.3.4. The statutory consultees were consulted on the SEA scope and SEA Framework at the scoping stage. Since, the SEA Framework has been streamlined to reflect the SEA objectives which were scoped out during the scoping exercise. The current SEA Framework reflects the feedback received from all statutory consultees on the SEA scope.

Table 2.2: The SEA Framework for Blackfordby NDP

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
<p>1. Biodiversity</p> <p>Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Avoid any impacts on the River Mease SAC? • Avoid any impacts on the importance of the National Forest? • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the NDP area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change?
<p>2. Climatic Factors (including Flood Risk)</p> <p>Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding?

3. Historic Environment	Will the option/proposal help to:
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the built environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment?• Contribute to better management of heritage assets?• Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance?• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
4. Landscape	Will the option/proposal help to:
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets?• Contribute to better management of landscape assets?• Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance?• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape?• Improve linkages to open space and the countryside?
5. Population and Housing	Will the option/proposal help to:
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the provision of a responsive range of house types and sizes to meet identified needs of different community groups?• Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs throughout their lives?• Create sustainable new communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities?• Enhance housing provision in existing communities?

3. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1. In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include:

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

3.1.2. The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this section explains how preparation of the current version of the Blackfordby NDP has been informed by an assessment of alternative site options.

3.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken

3.2.1. North West Leicestershire District Council formally designated Blackfordby village and the surrounding area as an NDP area in January 2018.

3.2.2. Since designation, the NDP Steering Group have gathered a range of evidence and undertaken significant consultation with local communities and other key stakeholders to identify the issues and opportunities that need to be addressed in the NDP. This has included a site identification and assessment process.

3.2.3. The first step in the SEA process was the development of a Scoping Report, which was published for consultation in June 2020. The SEA process is being delivered by AECOM as part of the Locality Technical Support Programme.

3.2.4. AECOM has worked alongside the NDP steering group to identify and appraise any reasonable alternatives, to ensure that the SEA helps to inform the approaches and policies within the draft Plan.

3.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.3.1. A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the Blackfordby NDP. The SEA Regulations¹⁰ are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.

3.3.2. Alternative approaches have been considered in relation to the housing growth targets and the location of housing to be delivered. This section describes how the SEA process has informed the proposed development strategy for the NDP.

Housing growth targets

3.3.3. Overall housing numbers (targets) are primarily the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority, North West Leicestershire District Council. The Blackfordby NDP is being prepared for the period 2020 to 2031 to align with the plan period of the adopted Local Plan.

3.3.4. The Local Plan sets out a housing requirement of 147 homes for Blackfordby between 2011 and 2031. This housing target has been confirmed by North West Leicestershire District Council. However, the NDP Steering Group have added a

¹⁰ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

15% Parish buffer to give a housing target of 169 units to be delivered in Blackfordby by 2031.

- 3.3.5. Three sites with a combined capacity of 85 homes are currently under construction in the Blackfordby NDP area. In addition, two sites with a combined capacity of 92 homes have active outline planning consents. Therefore, a combination of committed and delivered developments since 2011 exceed the housing target for Blackfordby up to 2031. Therefore, it is considered that Blackfordby does not have an unmet housing need for the period 2011-2031.
- 3.3.6. Despite the identified housing need already being met during the Neighbourhood Plan period (2020-2031), the Town Council is keen to continue meeting the challenge of housing delivery and as such seeks to allocate a housing site that will help to exceed these needs. The NDP therefore proposes additional housing growth of 14 dwellings for the period to 2031. This housing target has been discussed and agreed with North West Leicestershire District Council.
- 3.3.7. One alternative to housing growth would be to not allocate any sites and to rely upon existing commitments and windfall development. However, a key objective of the NDP is to influence the location and type of housing development that is secured in Blackfordby. Therefore, this approach is considered to be unreasonable, and essentially reflects the 'baseline position'.
- 3.3.8. A second alternative would be to pursue a higher growth strategy by allocating more housing through the NDP. Whilst this can provide a wider range of choice and flexibility in delivering additional housing, there is no evidence to justify higher levels of housing growth. The housing target of 14 homes has also been discussed and agreed with North West Leicestershire District Council. Therefore, this alternative is also considered to be unreasonable.
- 3.3.9. Taking the above into account, it is concluded that there are no further reasonable alternatives to the level of growth proposed through the NDP at this stage.

Site Allocations

- 3.3.10. The Blackfordby NDP proposes to allocate one site to contribute to meeting the local housing needs target. In order to identify potential site options for housing allocation the Blackfordby NDP Steering Group firstly looked to the Strategic Housing and Employment Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The SHELAA includes 9 sites that either fall partially or fully within the NDP area. At an initial stage, 4 SHLAA sites were omitted as they were either under construction, contained planning permission or deleted from the SHLAA and therefore not considered as reasonable alternatives to meet the housing growth target set for the NDP. The NDP Steering Group further identified a redundant public house within the Blackfordby conservation area but the landowners when contacted were unable to confirm availability and subsequently the site option was discounted.
- 3.3.11. The 5 site options identified by the NDP Steering Group which have been assessed under a site assessment exercise undertaken by the NDP Steering Group and as reasonable alternatives for the SEA are presented in **Table 3.1** and **Figure 3.1**. Smaller scale growth on parts of these sites was not considered a reasonable option as the promoters were suggesting that the whole sites needed to be considered.

Table 3.1: Sites identified by the Blackfordby NDP Steering Group and assessed as reasonable alternatives for the SEA

AECOM Ref	SHELAA Ref	Site Address	Gross Area (Hectares)	Indicative Capacity ¹¹	Source
Site 1	Bo1	Land at Heath Lane, Boundary	10.7ha	200	SHLAA
Site 2	By2	Land rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby	0.8ha	14	SHLAA
Site 3	By4	Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby	6.6ha	124	SHLAA
Site 4	Wd2	Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville	2.85ha ¹²	53	SHLAA
Site 5	Mo12	Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira	2.3ha	24 ¹³	SHLAA

3.3.12. The Blackfordby NDP Steering Group devised a site assessment criteria by using evidence from the NPPF, referring to the North West Leicestershire SHLAA and extracting and amending criteria from precedent examples of other Made neighbourhood plans for the assessment of sites in the Blackfordby NDP. The criteria consist of a RAG scoring system to allow sites to be ranked to identify the most suitable options. This exercise ranked the site options in the following order (ranked in the order of suitability):

- 1 Site 2 (Land rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby)
- 2 Site 5 (Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira)
- 3 Site 1 (Land at Heath Lane, Boundary)
Site 3 (Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby)
Site 4 (Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville)

3.3.13. To support the consideration of the suitability of these sites, the SEA process has undertaken an appraisal of the key environmental constraints present at each of the 5 sites and potential effects that may arise as a result of housing development at these locations. In this context the sites have been considered in relation to the SEA Framework of objectives and decision-making questions developed during SEA scoping (see Section 2.3) and the baseline information.

3.3.14. The tables below present a summary of this appraisal and provide an indication of each site's sustainability performance in relation to the five SEA objectives.

¹¹ The indicative housing capacity has been derived from the North West Leicestershire SHLAA (2019).

¹² Approximate site area. A small proportion of the site area along the western boundary may fall outside the NDP area.

¹³ Most of this site area falls outside the NDP area. The site area which falls within the NDP area consists of two land parcels. The indicative capacity has been calculated against the site area of the northern land parcel (1.2ha) as the eastern parcel is considered to have access constraints and thus unlikely to form part of the developable area.

Figure 3.1: Annotated SHLAA map showing sites identified and assessed as reasonable alternatives for the SEA
(Source: North West Leicestershire District Council SHLAA 2019)

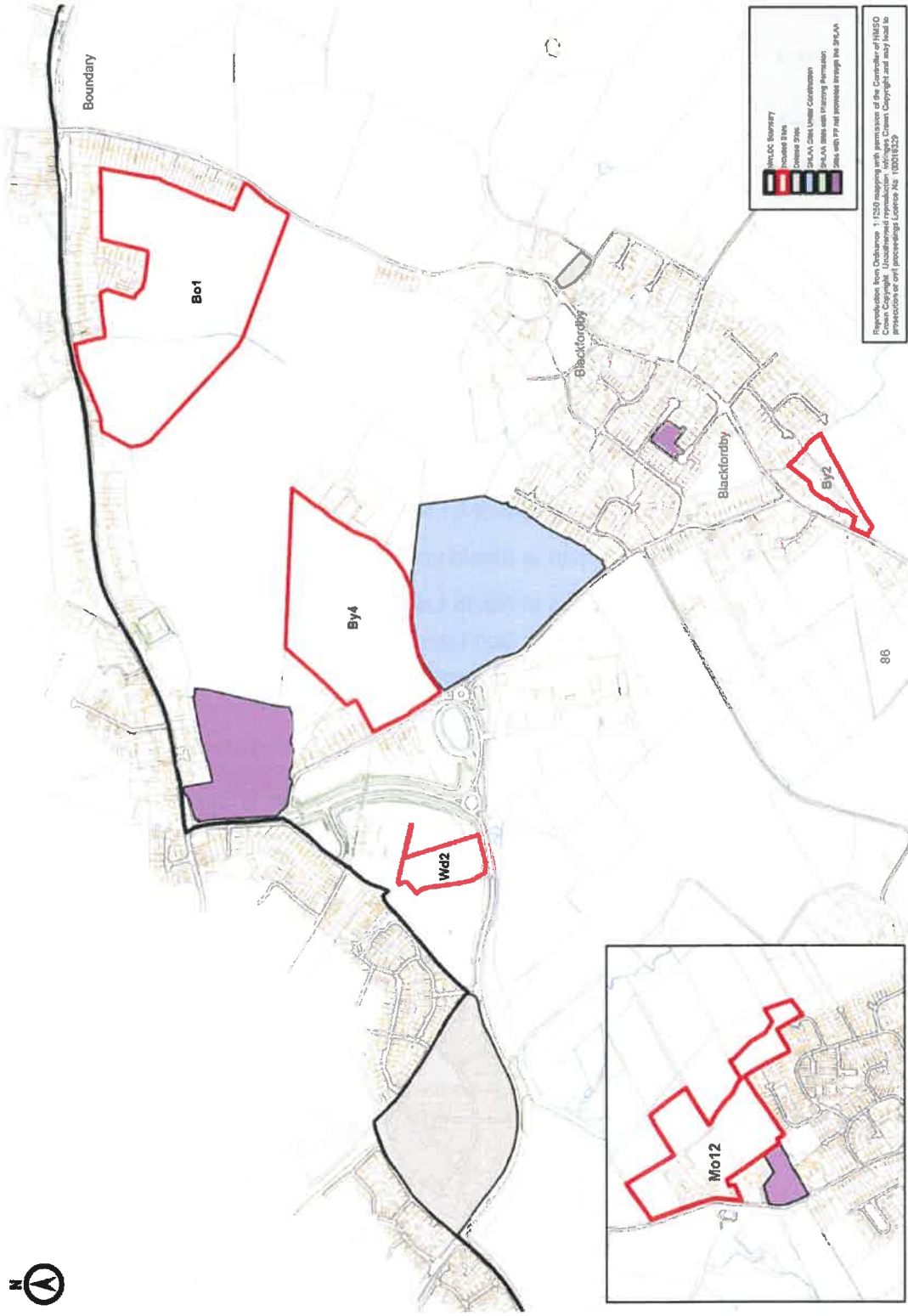


Table 3.2: Site 1: Bo1, Land at Heath Lane, Boundary

Site size: 10.7 ha

Biodiversity The site is within the catchment of the River Mease SAC. Otherwise, the site is not within or adjacent to any biodiversity designations. The site contains several mature trees and established hedgerow along its boundaries and a ditch which are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of ecological importance. The boundary trees and hedgerow are also likely to be of importance for ecological connectivity. Otherwise, the site mainly consists of arable farmland considered to be of more limited biodiversity value. There is potential for development to enhance the quantity and quality of existing habitats and to introduce new habitats and green infrastructure. This could potentially include opportunities for on-site biodiversity net gain, which is likely to be feasible due to the scale of the site and current conditions.

Climatic Factors The site does not fall within an area known to be at risk of fluvial flooding. Although the site contains a small linear area at risk of low surface water flood risk, development with adequate drainage is unlikely to exacerbate flood risk and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems could improve water discharge and increase long-term flood resilience.

Development on this site is likely to lead to continued high level of car dependency which is considered to be exacerbated on this site due to its poor access to local services and facilities in nearby large villages (Blackfordby and Woodville), although the site does benefit from good access to the strategic road network; including bus stops on Ashby Road serving nearby service centres with wider services and facilities and employment areas.

Historic environment The site is roughly 370m to the north of Blackfordby Conservation Area but the Conservation Area is on lower grounds and thus the extent of its setting is somewhat limited to the north. The northern boundary of the Conservation Area is further screened with established trees and hedgerow which is also considered to limit its setting to the north. There are no listed buildings or other known historic environment designations falling within the site itself, nor would development on the site directly affect the setting of assets that are further afield.

With the exception of a small cul-de-sac off Field Lane and a farmstead north of Ashby Road, the adjacent built character mostly consists of linear development along main roads. The development of the site will result in a substantial change in the character of the built-up area, although this character is not considered to be of historic significance.

Landscape The site is somewhat enclosed with linear built development to the north and east which limits some views from these directions. However, the site occupies a prominent position on higher grounds in the landscape and enjoys long distance open views particularly to the south and west. The site is not a logical extension to the existing settlements and the site is open in character; particularly to the south where the site is not bounded with landscape features. Whilst development on the site presents opportunities to enhance existing and introduce new landscape features to provide enclosure, development is still likely to represent a substantial intrusion of built development into open countryside and significantly change the character of the local landscape. In particular, the linear form of the surrounding built up areas would be severely altered.

Population and Housing The site has potential to make a significant contribution to the local housing needs of the area and is of an adequate scale to deliver affordable housing and a mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures. The site is distant from local services and facilities and does not fall within or adjacent to a large village with services including schools, shops and employment opportunities. However, the site is in close proximity to A511 Ashby Road which provides good road access to Ashby de la Zouch and Woodville and is a key bus route with services to and from Ashby de la Zouch, Swadlincote, Burton upon Trent and East Midlands airport. The large scale of the site also has potential to deliver new services and facilities which could enhance provision in the local area.

Key	
Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures	Significant positive effect
Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Positive effect
Neutral / no effect	Uncertain effects

Table 3.3: Site 2: By2, Land Rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby

Site size: 0.8 ha

Biodiversity The site is within the catchment of the River Mease SAC, which is under conditions to ensure that water quality does not deteriorate. Otherwise, the site is not within or adjacent to any other biodiversity designations. However, there is woodland to the south. The site is bounded by mature trees and established hedgerow, a Brook along the eastern boundary and contains areas with tall grasses. These habitats are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of ecological importance. The site could include a number of species such as nesting birds, although it is unclear if the site includes protected species. The site is also likely to be providing important ecological connectivity from the built-up area to open countryside and in an east to west direction.

There is potential for development to adversely affect existing habitats and any associated species directly through loss of habitats (especially from the unavoidable loss of tall grasses) or indirectly through disturbances. However, some effects can likely be mitigated through suitable design and buffering. The ecological connectivity of the site could also broadly be sustained by maintaining undisturbed connectivity along Shell Brook and hedgerows in east to west direction. Nevertheless, detailed ecological studies are required to fully understand the ecological value of the site which could increase the significance of effects or undermine potential for mitigation.

Due to the scale of the site and proposed number of dwellings, on-site biodiversity net gain might be more difficult to achieve.

Climatic Factors

The site falls within Flood Zone 1, but the site is locally known to have experienced flooding in the last 25 years. The site further includes areas at a low risk of surface water flooding with linear areas at high risk along the east and west boundaries. It may be necessary for future development to adopt a layout which has regard for this and to where possible incorporate sustainable drainage to transport water from areas at risk of surface water flooding, areas for water storage and natural infiltration and to slow the rate of run-off to Shell Brook (which should also reduce the risk of fluvial flooding).

The site benefits from being within walkable distance to the limited service offer in Blackfordby which should encourage active travel for some journeys such as to the primary school or open space. However, with the local provision being limited this site is likely to lead to continued high level of car dependency to nearby larger centres for wider services, facilities and employment.

Historic environment

The site is roughly 270m to the south west of Blackfordby Conservation Area but it is not considered to have any effects on its character or setting as the site is beyond an area of built development. There are no listed buildings, locally listed buildings or other known historic environment designations considered to fall within the zone of the sites development influence. The closest listed building is the Grade II listed Norrishill Farmhouse approximately 200m to the south west, which is well screened from the site and its character is broadly associated with the farmstead and its curtilage.

Landscape

The site is enclosed to the north and east by built development and somewhat along undeveloped parts of Drift Side and southern boundary by hedgerow and trees, which partially restrict views of the site and reduces its prominence in the landscape. Hedgerow and trees to the south further provide a strong natural definitive boundary which could be strengthened to better define and create a distinction between the built-up area and open countryside. However, the site does fall within an identified important view of the village from Drift Side stretching to higher grounds to the north of Blackfordby. Development on this site is likely to represent a natural extension to the existing built form. It is likely that development would require some loss of screening along Drift Side to provide adequate access (including visibility splays) to the site. It is unclear if this is likely to result in any substantial loss and it is likely that any adverse effects on landscape character can be adequately mitigated through new planting.

Population and Housing

The site has potential to make a positive contribution to the local housing needs of the area and is of an adequate scale to deliver a small amount of affordable housing and potentially a mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures. The site is located south of the Blackfordby village but adjacent to residential development and connected to the village by road and PROW which passes through the site. The site is therefore in relatively close proximity to services and facilities in the village. However, development on the site is unlikely to deliver onsite local services or facilities although some financial contributions towards existing local provision may be possible. Overall, a positive effect is likely.

Key

Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures



Significant positive effect



Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)



Positive effect



Neutral / no effect



Uncertain effects



Table 3.4: Site 3: By4, Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby

Site size: 6.6 ha

Biodiversity	<p>The site is within the catchment of the River Mease SAC. The site is also adjacent to a local wildlife site (to the west) and in close proximity to sites that could have ecological importance and be likely to contain BAP habitats and protected species. This includes Great Crested Newts which are known to be offsite nearby and therefore some mitigation would be required to avoid adverse effects.</p> <p>The site contains several mature trees and established hedgerow along its boundaries and a ditch which are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of ecological importance. The boundary trees and hedgerow are also likely to be of importance for ecological connectivity. Otherwise, the site mainly consists of arable farmland considered to be of lower biodiversity value. There is potential for development to enhance the quantity and quality of existing habitats and to introduce new habitats and green infrastructure. This could potentially include opportunities for on-site biodiversity net gain, which is likely to be feasible due to the scale of the site and its current agricultural nature.</p>
Climatic Factors	<p>The site falls within Flood Zone 1, but the site is locally known to have experienced flooding. The site further includes a linear area along Butt Lane at low to high risk of surface water flooding. It may be necessary for future development to adopt a layout which has regard for this and to where possible incorporate sustainable drainage to reduce the risk of unmanaged surface water flooding through measures such as areas for water storage and natural infiltration and green infrastructure.</p> <p>Development on this site is likely to lead to continued high level of car dependency which is considered to be exacerbated on this site due to its poor access to local services and facilities in nearby large villages (Blackfordby and Woodville).</p>
Historic environment	<p>The site is not located within the Blackfordby Conservation Area, and no listed buildings or other known historic environment designations are likely to be affected by development on this site.</p> <p>The site is large in scale and depending on the scale of development there is potential for development to cause some harm to the character of the built-up area along Butt Lane between Hepworth road and Forest road. This area broadly consists of linear development and houses which do not directly face each other. Development on this site is likely to therefore change this prevailing character of the area. However, potential effects on the built character are not predicted to be significant, as the built-up area is considered to have limited historic significance.</p>

Landscape The site is partially enclosed with built development and their curtilages along its boundaries but otherwise open in character particularly to the north, where the site is not bounded with landscape features. The site is gently sloping and prominent in the landscape with some distance open views, although views are somewhat restricted by higher grounds to the north, built development and screening along Butt Lane.

The site further forms an important gap between Blackfordby, linear development along Butt Lane and Woodville further afield. Development on this site is therefore likely to significantly alter the townscape character to the north west of Blackfordby and increase a sense of coalescence between Blackfordby and Woodville.

Whilst development on the site presents opportunities to enhance existing and introduce new landscape features to provide enclosure, development is still likely to represent a substantial intrusion of built development into open countryside and significantly change the character of the local landscape and townscape. These issues are likely to be exacerbated by housing development that is already underway on adjacent land

Population and Housing The site has potential to make a significant contribution to the local housing needs of the area and is of an adequate scale to deliver affordable housing and a mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures. The site is located to the north west of Blackfordby village on land between Blackfordby and nearby Woodville. Although well located by private car, this places the site distant to existing local services and facilities in both villages. However, development on the site is likely to deliver some limited local services or could likely make financial contributions towards improving existing provision.

Key

Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures

Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)

Neutral / no effect

Significant positive effect

Positive effect

Uncertain effects

Table 3.5: Site 4: Wd2, Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville

Site size: 2.85 ha (approximately as small proportion of site may fall outside NDP area)

Biodiversity	<p>The site is within the catchment of the River Mease SAC. The site is also adjacent to deciduous woodland to the west, a local wildlife site to the south and a candidate local wildlife site to the east. There are designated local wildlife sites further to the east and other sites likely to be of ecological importance and likely to contain BAP habitats and protected species nearby. The site is further bounded by and contains numerous mature trees and hedgerow which are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of ecological importance. The site is further likely to be supporting important ecological connectivity between habitats in an east to west direction.</p> <p>The site is known to include Great Crested Newts and the protected species have further been recorded in ponds in close proximity to the site. The site further has potential to include badgers and other protected species.</p> <p>The development of the site is likely to adversely affect ecologically important habitats and any associated species directly through loss of habitats or indirectly through disturbances (to both habitats onsite and adjacent). The development of the site is further likely to undermine ecological connectivity, particularly between habitats to the east and west of the site. Some adverse effects are likely despite mitigation. The proposed level of growth on site, combined with its high ecological value could make biodiversity net gain more difficult to achieve on site.</p>
Climatic Factors	<p>The site does not fall within an area known to be at risk of fluvial flooding. The site does contain a small area at risk of low surface water flood risk and an area at high risk to the east. Development would need to be designed to ensure it does not exacerbate surface water flood risk, which could be addressed through suitable layout, potential incorporation of sustainable urban drainage and green infrastructure. This could improve water discharge and increase long-term flood resilience.</p> <p>Development on this site is likely to lead to a continued high level of car dependency which could be exacerbated on this site due to its poor access to local services in Woodville and Blackfordby. This is likely to limit opportunities for non-recreational active travel.</p>
Historic environment	<p>The site is not located within the Blackfordby Conservation Area, and no listed buildings or other known historic environment designations are present in the setting of the site. The site also does not accord well with the established built-up area to the north west, but this is not predicted to have any effects on the historic environment objective.</p>
Landscape	<p>The site is strongly defined by important landscape features including trees and hedgerows which provide the site with some enclosure and reduces its visibility particularly to the east. However, the site still enjoys open views, particularly to the south and west. The site is detached from the existing built area and development is likely to not conform with the character of the existing built form. Development on this site is therefore likely to harm the character of the open landscape and the character of the built form to the south east of Woodville through an unsensitive and unnatural extension.</p>

Population and Housing The site could make a positive contribution to the local housing needs of the area and is of an adequate scale to deliver a small amount of affordable housing and potentially a mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures. The site is located to the south east of Woodville village on a land parcel which is unlikely to integrate positively with the established community and far from existing services and facilities in Woodville and Blackfordby. The scale of the site is also unlikely to deliver new onsite services and facilities, although some financial contributions towards existing local provision may be possible. Overall, a minor positive is predicted.

Key

Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures		Significant positive effect
Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Positive effect
Neutral / no effect		Uncertain effects

Table 3.5: Site 5: Part of Mo12, Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira

Site size: 2.3 ha (approximately including both parcels)

Biodiversity The site is within the catchment of the River Mease SAC. The site is also adjacent to woodland to the east and in close proximity to deciduous woodland to the west. The site is further bounded by established hedgerow which are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of significant ecological importance.

Several protected species and small mammals have been observed onsite including Badgers and Moths. The site is further likely to be supporting important ecological connectivity between habitats and across the open countryside.

There is potential for development to adversely affect existing habitats and any associated species directly through loss of habitats or indirectly through disturbances. However, some effects can likely be mitigated through suitable design and buffering, subject to the nature of potential effects which are unknown at this stage and would require further survey work. The development of the site is also likely to undermine ecological connectivity between habitats and across the surrounding open countryside. Some adverse effects are likely despite mitigation.

Climatic Factors The site does not fall within an area known to be at risk of fluvial flooding. Although the site does contain a small area at high surface water flood risk to the east. Development would need to be designed to ensure it does not exacerbate surface water flood risk, which could be addressed through suitable layout, potential incorporation of sustainable urban drainage and green infrastructure.

Development on this site is likely to lead to continued high level of car dependency which is considered to be exacerbated on this site due to its poor access to local services (other than a primary school) in Norris Hill and Blackfordby. This is likely to limit some opportunities for non-recreational active travel.

Historic environment The site is not located within the Blackfordby Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings, locally listed buildings or other known historic environment designations considered likely to be affected by development. The closest designated heritage asset is the Grade II listed Norrishill Farmhouse approximately 120m to the north west which is somewhat screened from the site with trees and hedgerows and its character is broadly associated with the farmstead and its curtilage. Negative effects are therefore not likely.

Landscape	<p>The site is partially enclosed with woodland to the east and the northern parcel of the site is further enclosed by a farmstead to the south but otherwise the site is open in character, particularly to the north (of the northern parcel) and east where the site is mostly bounded by low hedgerows.</p> <p>The site is detached from the existing built area and development is likely to not conform with the character of the existing built form. Development on this site is therefore likely to harm the character of the open landscape and the character of the built form to the north of Norris Hill through an unsensitive and unnatural extension. If the eastern parcel of the site area which falls in Blackfordby NDP area is also developed, this is further likely to result in an unorthodox pattern of development and cause harm to landscape character.</p>	
Population and Housing	<p>The site has potential to make a positive contribution to the local housing needs of the area and is of an adequate scale to deliver a small amount of affordable housing. The site is located to the north of Norris Hill village on land parcels separate to the built-up area and therefore is unlikely to integrate positively with the established community and some existing services and facilities in Norris Hill and Blackfordby. The site does however benefit from good walkable access to Moira Primary School. The scale of the site is also unlikely to deliver new onsite services and facilities, although some financial contributions towards existing local provision may be possible. Overall, a minor positive is predicted.</p>	

Key		
Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures		Significant positive effect
Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Positive effect
Neutral / no effect		Uncertain effects

Summary of SEA site appraisal findings

3.3.15. Table 3.6 presents a summary of the findings of the SEA assessment of the site options.

Table 3.6: Summary of the SEA site appraisal findings

Site	Biodiversity	Climatic Factors	Historic environment	Landscape	Population and Housing
Site 1: Bo1, Land at Heath Lane, Boundary					
Site 2: By2, Land Rear of 31 Main St, Blackfordby					
Site 3: By4, Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby					
Site 4: Wd2, Land at Hepworth Rd, Woodville					
Site 5: Mo12, Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira					
Key					
Significant adverse effect / adverse effects despite mitigation measures		Significant positive effect			
Adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Positive effect			
Neutral / no effect		Uncertain effects			

3.3.16. All site options fall within the catchment of the River Mease SAC and thus have potential to adversely affect the water quality and the integrity of the river through insensitive design. Survey work carried out by the Environment Agency has revealed that the quality of the water in the river was poor, mainly due to high phosphorous levels. With agriculture being a major source of phosphate, the change of use of sites currently in agricultural use could make a minor positive contribution towards reducing phosphorous levels in the River Mease. Otherwise, adverse effects can likely be avoided on these sites if developed in accordance with the provisions set out in the Water Quality Management Plan.

3.3.17. Sites 1 and 3 contain some habitats of ecological importance and Site 3 further falls in close proximity to a local wildlife site. However, the scale of these two sites presents opportunities for development to enhance the quantity and quality of existing habitats (which are predominantly agricultural land), introduce new habitats and green infrastructure and achieve biodiversity net gain. Therefore, positive effects are predicted for these sites. In the contrary, Sites 4 and 5 fall adjacent or in close proximity to a number of ecologically-rich habitats and contain a number of ecologically important habitats and protected species. Development on these sites would likely result in the loss of important potential BAP habitats and cause irreversible harm and disturbances to adjacent BAP habitats and protected species. Similarly, Site 2 includes an ecologically-rich corridor along Shell Brook, other ecologically important habitats and supports important ecological connectivity. It is unclear if a net gain in biodiversity can potentially be achieved on site.

3.3.18. In regard to climate change mitigation, the site options fall within Flood Zone 1 although locally Sites 2 and 3 are known to have experienced flooding. All site options include areas at risk of surface water flooding, but this is considered to be negligible for Site 1. All site options have potential to incorporate sustainable urban

drainage and green infrastructure to help manage flood risk, with the large scale of Sites 1 and 3 presenting opportunities for more comprehensive infrastructure.

- 3.3.19. With limited local provision of services and facilities, employment and poor public transport provision, the NDP area is considered to have a high dependency on the private car. This is considered to be exacerbated on all site options other than Site 2, due to their poor access to local services and provision in nearby villages with the partial exception of Site 5 which falls within good walkable access to a primary school. Cumulatively, for both climate change mitigation and adaptation, the site options are not predicted to result in significant effects and are predicted to have neutral effects.
- 3.3.20. The site options do not fall within the Blackfordby conservation area, contain any features of historic significance or considered to fall within the setting of nearby heritage assets. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted for all site options on the historic environment objective.
- 3.3.21. With limited opportunities for infilling in Blackfordby, most site options are likely to result in some harm to landscape character through the extension of the built-up area and from visibility from public vantage points. Notably, development on Site 3 will result in the infilling of an important gap between Blackfordby village and development along Butt Lane and thus increase a sense of coalescence between Blackfordby and Woodville. Built development on Sites 4 and 5 is also predicted to cause harm as these sites are somewhat detached from the existing main built area and development is likely to not conform with the character of the existing built form. These site options and Site 1 further would represent a substantial intrusion of built development into open countryside. In the contrary, neutral effects are predicted for Site 2 as the site benefits from strong definite boundaries and represent a natural extension to the existing built form.
- 3.3.22. All site options perform positively against the Population and Housing objective given they all will make a positive contribution towards meeting the housing needs of Blackfordby and are of an adequate scale to deliver affordable housing. Sites 1 and 3 have potential to make significant contributions towards housing delivery, however these site options are located distant to key local services and facilities and despite their large scale, are unlikely to result in a substantial increase in local provision.
- 3.3.23. In conclusion, Site 2 is likely to have broadly neutral effects on the assessed SEA objectives other than for the Population and Housing objective for which a positive effect is predicted, as with all site options. Whilst a significant negative effect is predicted for Biodiversity, this is mainly due to the loss of tall grasses which cover parts of the likely developable area of the site and inevitable disturbances to ecological connectivity. Otherwise, it is envisaged that adequate buffering and other mitigation measures should safeguard some existing ecologically important habitats (in particular those along Shell Brook) and ecological connectivity can likely be sustained. It should however be noted that the likely effects (including mitigation) are dependent on the design of development and detailed ecological studies to fully understand the ecological value of the site. Therefore, there is potential for unsensitive design or any currently unknown habitats or presence of species to cause significant adverse effects on the Biodiversity objective.
- 3.3.24. Sites 1 and 3 are predicted to have mainly positive and neutral effects but development on these sites are predicted to cause significant irreversible harm to landscape character. This is partially also because the scale of growth is much higher than Site 2. Coalescence effects predicted for Site 3 can unlikely be avoided other than under a very low development density. The allocation of a small part of Site 1 along Heath Lane could likely avoid significant adverse effects on landscape

character. However, this would also require the partial use of other site options to meet the housing target.

- 3.3.25. Other site options are considered to perform less favourably against the assessed SEA objectives.

Outline reasons for the selection or rejection of site options

- 3.3.26. The Blackfordby NDP Steering Group seek to allocate Site 2 (Land Rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby). The site has been selected as it has scored as the most sustainable option in the site assessment exercise undertaken by the NDP Steering Group. Consideration has also been given to its performance against the assessed SEA objectives. The site is also considered to have strong public support and considered to be of an appropriate scale to meet the housing requirement compared to other site options.

- 3.3.27. Outline reasons for the selection or rejection of site options are set out in **Table 3.3** below.

Table 3.3: Outline reasons for selection or rejection

Ref	Location	Rationale
1	Land at Heath Lane, Boundary	<p>The location is fully outside of current settlement has no relationship with it. The site is highly visible and has no connectivity with the village, it is classified as countryside in the adopted local plan.</p> <p>The site is a combination of grade two and grade three agricultural land as classified by Natural England. The Eastern half of the site is grade two, this is land of a very good quality. National planning guidance is to "usually" refuse consent on this important land in line with the Natural England best practise recommendation.</p> <p>Open long distance panoramic views are found to three boundaries of the site, the location is very rural and traditional in character and development would cause substantial harm to this very high-quality rolling landscape.</p> <p>The ditch and trees are habitats for BAP species, badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals sighted.</p> <p>1.5 A large negative impact from the traffic generated by this very large number of residential units in this edge of settlement location.</p> <p>No adequate vehicular access is in place and although it could possibly be provided from Heath Lane it is noted that Leicestershire County Council (the highways authority) do not accept Blackfordby as a sustainable transport development location.</p>
2	Land Rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby	<p>The site is grade four agricultural land, this is agricultural land classified by Natural England as of a poor quality.</p> <p>Minimal landscape and visual impact, an enclosed site adjacent to the current envelope.</p> <p>At the opposite end of the village to the current Blackfordby conservation area and as predominantly new housing is found nearby the development of the site would not have a detrimental effect upon its historical character and setting.</p>

A relatively small negative effect on vehicular movements due to the reasonably small number of units.

Although no adequate current vehicular access it should be possible to agree an adequate visibility splay to meet Highways safety requirements, despite the slightly adverse curve in the main road. Significant dialogue with Highways engineers is required and access will involve significant improvement.

The nearest bus stop is very close at less than a 150m walk from the centre of the site.

3	Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby	<p>The location is fully outside of the current settlement and has no relationship with it. The site is highly visible and has no connectivity with the village, it is classified as countryside in the adopted local plan.</p> <p>Open panoramic views are found to three boundaries of the site, the location is very rural in character and development would cause substantial harm to this high-quality landscape.</p> <p>The ditch and trees are habitats for BAP species, badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals sighted.</p> <p>Although the site is outside of the conservation area the scale and location of this proposal would undermine its character and setting.</p> <p>A large negative impact on vehicular movements from this large number of units in this edge of settlement location. Ancient bell pits are dotted around the site and these may be of archaeological merit.</p> <p>A PROW crosses through the very centre of the site and this is a part of a long-distance route so will be difficult to re-route in a sensitive manner. Re-routing could possibly be accommodated in a sensitive design solution.</p>
4	Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville	<p>The location is fully outside of the current built form and has no relationship with it, being nearer to a South Derbyshire DC new build estate. The site has no connectivity with Blackfordby village and is classified as countryside in the NWLDC adopted local plan.</p> <p>Open views are found to two boundaries of the site, the location is rural and traditional in character and development would cause substantial harm to this high-quality landscape.</p> <p>The great crested newt has been confirmed on this site in a large historical dew pond and badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals have all been observed.</p> <p>The site is within the NWLDC minerals consultation area as coal is found on or near to the surface, so a full professional survey is required. Hepworth's is nearby and poses a contamination/leaching risk that also needs to be evaluated.</p> <p>The site is used for leisure purposes and is popular with dog walkers.</p>
5	Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira	<p>The location is fully outside of the current built form and has no relationship with it, being nearer to Moira village. The site has no connectivity with Blackfordby village and is classified as countryside in the adopted local plan.</p>

Open views are found to three boundaries of the site, the location is rural and traditional in character and development would cause substantial harm to this high- quality landscape.

The site sits within the National Forest and is adjacent to a densely wooded area. The boundaries are planted with hedgerow of a high quality. All of these features will require protection.

The site is host to BAP species, badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals sighted.

A large negative impact on vehicular movements from this large number of units in this sensitive location.

No adequate vehicular access in place although it could be provided from Blackfordby Lane the SHELAA from NWLDC states this may require the support of a third- party landowner, it should be noted that LCC do not accept Blackfordby as a sustainable transport development location.

A walking distance of more than a kilometre to the village centre.

The site is within the NWLDC minerals consultation area as coal is found on or near to the surface, so a full professional survey is required.

4. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1. The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the Regulation 14 version of the Blackfordby NDP.

4.2 Current approach in the Neighbourhood Plan and the development of Neighbourhood Plan policies

Blackfordby NDP Policies

General

G1 Limits to Development

G2 Design

Housing

H1 Residential Site Allocation

H2 Housing Mix

H3 Windfall Sites

H4 Affordable Housing Provision

Natural and Historic Environment

ENV1 Protection of Local Green Space

ENV2 Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance

ENV3 Important Open Spaces

ENV4 Built Environment: Non-designated Key Buildings

ENV5 Ridge and Furrow

ENV6 Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

ENV7 River Mease Special Area of Conservation

ENV7 Protection of Important Views

ENV8 Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure

ENV9 Area of Separation

Community Facilities and Amenities

CFA1 Community Facilities and Amenities

Employment

BE1 Support for Existing Businesses and Employment Opportunities

BE2 Support for New Businesses and Employment

BE3 Home Working

BE4 Tourism

BE5 Broadband Infrastructure

Transport, Connectivity and Traffic Management

TR1 Traffic Management

TR2 Footpaths

TR3 Electric Vehicles

4.3 Approach to the appraisal

- 4.3.1. The appraisal is structured under each of the SEA Objectives that are set out in the SEA Framework.
- 4.3.2. For each Objective, 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.¹⁴ So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.
- 4.3.3. Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately. The ability to predict effects accurately is limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

4.4 SEA Objective 1: Biodiversity

- 4.4.1. There are no internationally or nationally designated statutory sites within the NDP area; however, the NDP area falls within the National Forest and within the catchment of the River Mease SAC. The Blackfordby NDP therefore seeks to protect the integrity of the River Mease SAC through Policy G2 (Design) which requires development within the catchment of the SAC to 'demonstrate that there is sufficient headroom capacity available at the Wastewater Treatment Works to which it is proposed that flows from the development will go, and that the proposed development is in accordance with the provision of the Water Quality Management Plan'. This includes infrastructure or water quality improvements proposed in developer contributions and 'exceptionally where as part of the development it is proposed to use a non-mains drainage solution for the disposal of foul water and this is supported by the Environment Agency, development will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development, on its own and cumulatively with other development, will not have an adverse impact, directly or indirectly, upon the integrity of the river Mease SAC'. The policy further requires development to be 'phased in line with the provision of capacity to treat wastewater to a sustainable level'.
- 4.4.2. The NDP area contains locally designated wildlife sites and a variety of BAP Priority Habitats and Species. These include Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), deciduous woodland, broadleaved woodland, semi-improved grassland and other areas of woodland. The Blackfordby NDP therefore sets out provisions to help limit potential effects of new development on biodiversity interest in the NDP area. Specifically, Policy ENV2 (Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance) identifies sites containing natural features of ecological importance and requires the 'significance and value' of the species or habitats to be 'balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or destroy them'. Policy ENV6 (Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity) further seeks development to 'safeguard locally significant habitats and species, especially those protected by relevant English and European legislation, and, where possible, to create new habitats for wildlife'. The policy also identifies and seeks to safeguard ecological connectivity along two wildlife corridors across the NDP area.
- 4.4.3. The NDP sets out a number of design measures to protect and enhance biodiversity. Policy G2 (Design) requires all commercial and residential development to 'integrate bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites'; hedges that also maintain

¹⁴ *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*

habitat connectivity for hedgehogs; and security lighting to follow curfew hours between March and October to protect bats. The policy further requires commercial and residential development to use sustainable urban drainage and for this to be managed and maintained and 'linked into wider initiatives to enhance green infrastructure, improve water quality and benefit wildlife or contribute to the provision of the ecosystem service'. Similarly, Policy H3 (Windfall Sites) supports development on infill and redevelopment sites where the site 'retains existing important natural boundaries and features such as gardens, trees, hedges, footpaths and streams'. Such measures should help safeguard existing and encourage the provision of new ecologically-rich habitats.

- 4.4.4. The NPPF (2019) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks', with paragraph 32 outlining that local plans and spatial development strategies should demonstrate how opportunities for net gains have been addressed. While the NDP policies seeks to maintain and enhance existing ecologically-rich habitats, it is considered that the plan could be improved to require biodiversity net-gain for all development proposals, reducing the potential for residual adverse effects on the local environment. Securing net gain could include measures such as enhancing ecological connectivity particularly along and to the wildlife corridors identified in Policy ENV6, on-site habitat restoration and habitat re-creation.
- 4.4.5. The protection of biodiversity features is supported by policy provisions which safeguard open spaces. For example, Policy ENV1 (Protection of Local Green Space) designates three sites within the NDP area for their character, recreational and amenity value, with development not permitted 'other than in exceptional circumstances'. Similarly, Policy ENV3 (Important Open Spaces) designates nine sites including those designated as local green spaces for their high value for 'sport, recreation, amenity, tranquillity or as green spaces within the built-up area'. Development proposals that result in the loss or cause significant adverse effects to them 'will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable location' or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the local community. The protection of these natural and semi-natural spaces will strengthen locally important areas of biodiversity and aid connectivity through maintaining natural features and ecological corridors.
- 4.4.6. In this context, Policy ENV9 (Area of Separation) requires development proposals on the defined site that form an area of separation between Blackfordby village and built development along Butt Lane to maintain and where possible enhance the separation between these areas. The defined site is adjacent to a local wildlife site and other sites likely to be supporting BAP habitats and priority species and contains several mature trees and established hedgerow along its boundaries and a ditch which are potential BAP habitats and likely to be of ecological importance. Requirements for development to maintain and where possible enhance separation encourages low density development which should help safeguard existing habitats and ecological connectivity and provide some opportunities for enhancements. Similarly, Policy ENV5 (Ridge and Furrow) identifies and seeks to safeguard sites with ridge and furrow features. Some of these sites include potential BAP habitats and may be of ecological importance. Safeguarding these sites should also help sustain ecological connectivity to the south west of Blackfordby, particularly along Shell Brook and nearby woodland.

- 4.4.7. In terms of the housing allocation (Policy H1), the site is not within or adjacent to any biodiversity designations, but is bounded by mature trees and established hedgerow, Shell Brook which forms a natural corridor along the eastern boundary and contains areas with tall grasses which are all potential BAP habitats. The site is also likely to be supporting a number of species such as nesting birds, although it is unclear if the site includes protected species. The development of the site will result in the loss of tall grasses which cover parts of the likely developable area of the site, are potentially of important biodiversity value and support ecological connectivity across the site. The scale of the site and proposed number of dwellings is also likely to make it unfeasible to achieve on-site biodiversity net gain.
- 4.4.8. It is probable that ecological connectivity can be sustained by maintaining and where possible enhancing hedges and green infrastructure along the northern and southern boundaries of the site (for east to west connectivity) and along Shell Brook. Requirements in Policy G2 for residential development to protect and enhance hedges and in Policy ENV6 to protect an identified wildlife corridor along Shell Brook should help sustain and possibly enhance ecological connectivity. However, more certain effects can likely be achieved through measures in Policy H1 for development to protect, buffer and where possible enhance existing boundary hedges, trees and habitats and maintain undisturbed ecological connectivity.
- 4.4.9. The NDP further is not supported by detailed ecological studies to fully understand the ecological value of the site. Therefore, there is potential for development to cause irreversible harm to any currently unknown habitats or species presence on site. However, such effects could potentially be mitigated by requiring development proposal for the housing allocation to be supported by an ecological survey including a survey of protected species. Whilst this requirement is pre-established for sensitive sites and developments, this requirement should help ensure the likelihood and level of presence of protected species and other species onsite is understood from the offset which can support mitigation measures to be considered earlier within the design process.

Overall (cumulative) effects

- 4.4.10. It is considered that the Blackfordby NDP is predicted to have a **minor negative effect** on Biodiversity. The NDP seeks to protect a number of natural and semi-natural spaces including sites known to be of ecological importance. The plan further sets out a number of protection measures to mitigate potential adverse effects of development on biodiversity. However, cumulatively, the NDP does not significantly deviate from the baseline protection already afforded in Blackfordby through statutory measures and national and local planning policy. Furthermore, key opportunities to achieve environmental net gain and comprehensively mitigate potential adverse effects of the housing allocation on important habitats and ecological connectivity are missed.

4.5 SEA Objective 2: Climatic Factors

- 4.5.1. In terms of climate change mitigation, the proposed housing growth set out in Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation) will result in an increase in the built footprint of Blackfordby village and likely stimulate additional traffic flows. This is further likely due to the limited provision of employment, community services and facilities including but not limited to health facilities, secondary education and leisure facilities in the NDP area. Therefore, some increases in green house gas emissions as a result of housing and subsequent local population growth is likely. However, given the scale of growth proposed (14 homes), and the likelihood of improvements to energy efficiency and the adoption of new technologies (including the ban on fossil fuel powered vehicles by 2030), this is not considered to lead to significant effects in relation to climate change mitigation. Furthermore, the proposed housing allocation is located adjacent to the built-up area of Blackfordby and in a walkable proximity to community services and facilities in the village, reducing some potential pressures on the private car.
- 4.5.2. A key focus of the NDP is to manage vehicular traffic and promote sustainable travel. Notably, Policy TR1 (Traffic Management) requires development to 'be designed to minimise additional traffic generation and movement'; consider 'improvement and where possible the creation of footpaths and cycleways to key village facilities'; and to introduce 'traffic calming measures' in the surrounding area where a new development will create a significant increase in traffic. Policy CFA1 further sets out similar requirements for new community facilities. Seeking to minimise additional traffic generation and where possible improve or increase footpaths and cycle routes should encourage more active and sustainable forms of travel locally. This is reiterated through Policy TR2 (Footpaths) which supports development where it would provide connections to existing and increase the footpath network. This will support climate change mitigation through encouraging the uptake of sustainable travel and modal shift, helping to limit greenhouse gas emissions from transport in the NDP area.
- 4.5.3. Policies which seek to protect existing and support new businesses and employment opportunities locally including home working and improvements in broadband infrastructure (Policies BE1-BE3, BE5 and G2), should also reduce the need to travel and reliance on less sustainable transport modes. This should indirectly help support climate change mitigation, although the effects are likely to be minor and not significant.
- 4.5.4. The NDP sets out criteria for the design of new residential and employment development. Policy G2 (Design) sets out that development 'should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology such as solar panels and rainwater harvesters'. Whilst this should support climate change mitigation, the policy does not set out specific requirements to support design features that improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. In this respect, the NDP policies are not greatly different to those already set out in the Local Plan (and supporting design documents) with regards to sustainable design.
- 4.5.5. Policy TR3 (Electric Vehicles) further seeks to support the transition to electric vehicle use by requiring housing development to provide 7KW cabling in the 'most practical point in the home to facilitate subsequent installation of a home electric charging point'. Communal vehicular charging points with universal access is further supported where it does not negatively impact on the availability of existing parking. This should help ensure new housing developments are designed to integrate important electric charging infrastructure for vehicles and support the installation of new charging infrastructure in the village over the long term. This policy requirement

builds upon the Adopted Local Plan policies regarding climate change and is therefore likely to support the transition away from fossil fuel powered vehicles and support climate change mitigation at a localised scale. These are minor positive effects.

- 4.5.6. Similarly, Policy ENV8 (Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure) supports small-scale renewable energy technologies and large and medium scale turbine developments when in conformity with Local Plan Policy CC1. The policy does not quantify what is considered small-scale and therefore the effects are uncertain. The policy further reiterates requirements set out in Local Plan Policy CC1 and does not seek to alter the baseline other than supporting small-scale technologies ahead of all scales. Therefore, neutral effects are likely in this respect.
- 4.5.7. In terms of climate change adaptation, Policy G2 (Design) recognises flood risk as a key issue for parts of the NDP area and requires development to 'incorporate sustainable drainage systems such as balancing ponds to retard surges and to minimise the vulnerability to flooding and climate change unless they are not financially viable and alternative mitigation methods are available, or the SuDS scheme will itself adversely affect the environment'. The policy further encourages SuDS to integrate with wider initiatives to enhance green infrastructure, ecology and improve water quality and requires a management plan to be set out in accordance with national policy. This aligns with the protection afforded in the Local Plan. In terms of the housing allocation proposed in the Blackfordby NDP, the site falls within Flood Zone 1 which is a low risk of flooding, but the site is locally known to have experienced flooding in the last 25 years. Whilst Policy H1 does not directly set out measures to mitigate flood risk, measures in Policy G2 and national and Local Plan policies which underpin the policy should help mitigate adverse effects.
- 4.5.8. Policy G2 further requires development within the catchment of the River Mease SAC to demonstrate sufficient capacity at the wastewater treatment works and is in accordance with the provisions of the water quality management plan. Whilst in principle this should increase flood resilience, the policy does not require anything above the existing baseline established by the Local Plan.
- 4.5.9. The issue of climate change adaptation is addressed in the NDP through the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure. Notably, Policies ENV1-ENV3 and ENV6 protect green and open spaces, significant habitats and species including ecological connectivity and sites of ecological importance. Protecting and enhancing green infrastructure both within and beyond the built-up area of Blackfordby should support local adaptability to climate change through helping to regulate extreme temperatures and surface water run-off and supporting the ability of species and biodiversity to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Overall (cumulative) effects

- 4.5.10. The Blackfordby NDP sets out a number of policy measures which should contribute positively towards addressing climate change. This includes detail in relation to broadband provision (which enables home working) and support for electric vehicle charging. The NDP also identifies open spaces and seeks to protect locally important areas in terms of Green Infrastructure, which is positive for adaptation. However, these measures are predicted to have minor effects. For other policies, the NDP does not significantly deviate from the baseline protection already afforded to Blackfordby through statutory measures and national and local planning policy. This reduces the significance of effects from some policy measures which are positive in principle. Therefore, the NDP is considered to have a residual **minor positive effect** on climate change.

4.6 SEA Objective 3: Historic Environment

- 4.6.1. The NDP area has a rich historic environment, recognised through the diversity of features and areas which are nationally and locally designated for their heritage interest. This is reflected by policies which have a focus on conserving and protecting the significance of buildings, structures and features of architectural or historic interest and their settings. Policy G2 (Design) seeks to achieve this by stating that all development should 'reflect the character and historic context of existing developments in Blackfordby. However, contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be robustly demonstrated without detracting from this historic context'. The policy further requires development to 'enhance the character of the area in which it is situated if carried out sensitively, particularly around the Conservation Area' and 'proposals should clearly show how the general character, scale, density and layout of the site fits in with the character of the surrounding area and incorporate local materials where possible'.
- 4.6.2. Policy ENV2 (Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance) identifies a number of locally valued historical features that are 'extant and have visible expression (or there is proven buried archaeology on the site)' and affords a level of protection by requiring development to be 'balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or destroy them'. Whilst requiring development that would harm features of historic significance to be offset against local benefit should afford an additional layer of protection above the established baseline, this protection is not afforded to all known heritage assets in the NDP area and the policy does not set out measures to encourage development proposals to be focused on the protection and where possible enhancements of historic features ahead of demonstrating local benefit.
- 4.6.3. Policy ENV4 (Non-designated Key Buildings) identifies and designates thirteen buildings of local architectural and heritage interest and states that their 'features and settings will be protected wherever possible' and requires proposals to 'be balanced against their significance as buildings of architectural or historic merit'. Identifying and protecting building and structures of local heritage interest should make positive contributions towards conserving the historic environment and local features of historic importance. However, opportunities for more significant positive effects are missed as the policy does not seek any enhancements to these heritage assets and the protection afforded is limited as the policy does not set a clear presumption in favour of their protection or require substantial public benefit to offset any harm or loss of the heritage asset.
- 4.6.4. The character and heritage of Blackfordby is intertwined with its historic importance as a centre for agriculture. This is evident through ridge and furrow features across a number of land parcels to the south of the village. Policy ENV5 (Ridge and Furrow) identifies a number of sites with these historic earthworks and seeks to avoid development on the identified sites with ridge and furrow features where it would result in damage or loss. This broadly aligns with national and local planning policy, but the identification and safeguarding of these non-designated heritage assets will afford them additional protection. Policy G1 (Limits to Development) is also likely to have similar effects.
- 4.6.5. Effects of development on the local historic environment and villagescape are likely to be further managed through the implementation of Policy ENV7 (Protection of Important Views) which seeks to protect views important to the setting and character of Blackfordby including views of heritage assets (and their setting) and views that contribute towards the character of the built environment. Similarly, Policy G2 (Design) seeks to ensure that 'development does not disrupt the visual impact of the street scene or adversely affect any wider landscape views'. The character of the built environment, particularly to the north west, is further conserved by Policy ENV9

(Areas of Separation) which seeks to restrict development on an identified site that if developed could affect the open character between the main village of Blackfordby and the linear built-up area along the northern part of Butt Lane, thus protecting the built character and setting of Blackfordby and reducing a sense of coalescence with Woodville.

- 4.6.6. Green and open spaces within Blackfordby village are considered to make positive contributions towards the setting of key heritage assets and the historic character of the built environment. Policies ENV1 and ENV3 seek to protect a number of important green and open spaces in Blackfordby which include those in the vicinity of the Church of Saint Margaret of Antioch and Blackfordby Methodist Church which are considered to be intrinsic to the character of these important heritage assets.
- 4.6.7. Policies BE2-BE4 further require employment development to be 'of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and environment of the village itself and the Plan Area' and 'contribute to the character of the local built environment'. The policies also seek to ensure any extensions of free-standing building for home working is designed to 'not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction' and for tourism development to not have 'detrimental effect on the distinct rural character of the Plan Area'. These policies positively respond to protecting the distinct character of heritage assets and the built environment of Blackfordby.
- 4.6.8. The quantum and distribution of growth proposed through a Neighbourhood Plan can be a key determinant of the nature of effects on a plan area's historic environment. It is important for new development not to detract from the vibrancy or cause harm to historic character, though there can also potentially be opportunities for new development to enhance historic character as well.
- 4.6.9. The Blackfordby NDP proposes distributing housing growth on a single site adjacent to the built-up area to the south of the village on Land Rear of 31 Main Street (Policy H1). The site is not located close to or considered to fall within the setting of any known heritage assets or features of historic importance. Whilst there is a Grade II listed building (Norrishill Farmhouse) approximately 200m to the south west of the housing allocation, the heritage designation is well screened from the site and its character is broadly associated with the surrounding farmstead and its curtilage. The site is further strongly defined by landscape features and relates well to the built-up area and thus is not likely to have adverse effect on the built character and villagescape of Blackfordby. Therefore, it is not anticipated that development of the housing site would lead to adverse effects on the historic environment.

Overall (cumulative) effects

- 4.6.10. Overall, the NDP policies take a proactive approach in conserving the distinctive character and heritage interests of Blackfordby. This is recognised through its focus on safeguarding protected features (both designated and non-designated) and their settings and ensuring that development respects the character of the existing townscape and surrounding countryside.
- 4.6.11. The protection afforded to historic features should help conserve their historic importance in the long-term. However, this does not deviate significantly from the statutory protection already afforded to these designated and non-designated assets and that provided in the Local Plan. Notably, the NDP does not set out any measures to require enhancements to historic features including those identified and not identified in the plan which undermines its potential to deliver positive effects. Overall, the NDP is considered to have an **uncertain minor positive effect** on the Historic Environment objective.

4.7 SEA Objective 4: Landscape

- 4.7.1. Whilst Blackfordby does not fall within or in close proximity to any statutory national landscape designations, the area does fall within the National Forest and the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield (71) National Character Area. At a localised scale, the NDP area falls across two landscape types ('enclosed farmlands' and 'coalfield village farmlands') for which management guidelines have been set out by Leicestershire County Council¹⁵. The landscape character across the NDP area is known to consist of a broadly open landscape with some distant views. The Blackfordby NDP seeks to protect locally important views through Policy ENV7 (Protection of Important Views) which identifies three views important to the setting and character of the village and requires development to not result in significant harm.
- 4.7.2. The protection of local landscape character and appearance is further supported through a number of policies that set out measures that directly or indirectly protect and seek to enhance landscape character and sensitivity. Policy G2 (Design) requires development to be 'enhanced by landscaping with existing trees, elevations and hedges preserved whenever possible to promote biodiversity. Wherever possible, plots should be enclosed by native hedging, wooden fencing or walls in keeping with the local style'. This should help reduce some impacts on landscape and townscape character through supporting sensitive design.
- 4.7.3. Policy ENV8 (Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure) supports 'small-scale renewable energy technologies' and reaffirms Local Plan Policy CC1 requirements that large and medium scale turbine development would only be supported where the site lies within an area identified as potentially suitable for turbines (according to the Local Plan policies map) and where there is support from the local community. Against the baseline established by the Local Plan Policy CC1, Policy ENV8 encourages small scale energy infrastructure ahead of all scales. This should reduce the likelihood of large scale infrastructure which could potentially have greater visual impact and effects on landscape character. The policy could however be strengthened by reaffirming requirements under Local Plan Policy CC1(b) by requiring all proposals to be accompanied with a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and by requiring a comprehensive restoration of land following use including a net improvement in the landscape quality of the site where feasible and appropriate.
- 4.7.4. Similarly, Policy BE5 (Broadband Infrastructure) supports improvements to the mobile telecommunication network and broadband infrastructure. The policy seeks to encourage shared use of new masts and requires above ground network installations to be 'sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the landscape and not be in or near to open landscapes'. This should help protect existing landscape character by avoiding unnecessary infrastructure and encouraging new infrastructure in less sensitive locations. However, similar to Policy ENV8, greater positive effects can potentially be secured by requiring all development proposals to be accompanied with a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and to demonstrate how landscape impacts have been minimised.
- 4.7.5. The intrinsic qualities of the local landscape are afforded a level of protection through the Blackfordby NDP policies which recognise the importance of green and open spaces (including natural and semi-natural spaces) both within and outside the built area. Policies ENV1 and ENV3 designates three sites as local green space and identifies nine sites as important open space and seek to restrict development that would result in their loss or would cause an adverse effect. These policies designate and protect areas and features which contribute positively towards maintaining the

¹⁵ Leicestershire County Council (2008) Charnwood Forest Landscape and Settlement Character Area.

rural built character of Blackfordby village and are intrinsic to the landscape character. In this context, Policy ENV9 also protects the open landscape character between Blackfordby village and the linear built-up area to the north west along Butt Lane. Coalescence with the built-up area could further increase the sense of coalescence with Woodville which should be avoided.

- 4.7.6. Effects of development on the landscape character and setting are likely to be further managed through the implementation of Policy G1 (Limits to Development), which sets out a settlement boundary for Blackfordby village and seeks to control development in the open countryside in line with local and national planning policies. Policy BE2 (Support for New Businesses and Employment) further seeks to manage employment development beyond the settlement boundary by requiring development to 'fall within the limits of development for Blackfordby, unless it relates to small scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of commercial/employment related development appropriate to a countryside location or there are exceptional circumstances'. This should afford additional protection to the countryside which should help preserve the existing character of the village and the openness of the surrounding landscape.
- 4.7.7. In regard to housing allocations, Policy H1 allocates land rear of 31 Main Street for up to 14 units. The potential impacts of this level of density on landscape and townscape character are unclear. Nevertheless, the site is enclosed with built development to the north and east and defined by hedgerow and trees along the southern boundary and undeveloped parts of Drift Side. The site therefore relates well to the built-up area and the strong built and natural boundaries reduce its prominence in the landscape and restrict some views of the site. The site does however fall within an identified important view of the village from Drift Side stretching to higher grounds to the north of Blackfordby. The development of the site would also require some loss of screening along Drift Side to provide adequate access (including visibility splays) to the site. However, Policy H1 does not set out any measures to mitigate potential adverse effects on landscape character and visual impact. The unmanaged development of the site has potential to cause minor adverse effects by not protecting existing landscape features and not securing potential mitigation measures required to avoid harm, although any significant harm can likely be avoided by safeguarding measures set out in local and national planning policy.
- 4.7.8. Whilst housing growth beyond the existing built-up has the potential to set precedent for further development to the south, which may further alter the existing character of the village, and lead to adverse effects on the wider landscape. Such effects are considered to be indirectly mitigated through Policy ENV5 (Ridge and Furrow) which seeks to safeguard a number of land parcels from development which fall adjacent or in close proximity to the housing allocation where it would harm historically important archaeological features on these sites. Although, this is not significant as Policy G1 also limits growth beyond the existing built-up area.

Overall (cumulative) effects

- 4.7.9. Overall, it is considered that the Blackfordby NDP provides a good framework for the protection and enhancement of the local landscape. The NDP is likely to have residual **neutral effects** on landscape. However, improvements to policy to require development proposals with potential to have landscape impacts to be accompanied with a LVIA and to ensure the proposed housing allocation do not have adverse impacts on landscape character and on the identified important view could potentially result in a residual minor positive effect on landscape.

4.8 SEA Objective 5: Population and Housing

- 4.8.1. When taking committed developments into account, Blackfordby does not have an unmet housing need for the period 2011-2031. However, Policy H1 of the NDP seeks to allocate a site for 14 dwellings, which is over and above the housing need identified at the strategic level. Given that this would exceed the locally objectively assessed housing needs, positive effects are predicted for the housing objective. Policy H3 (Windfall Sites) further supports infill housing where it does not cause adverse effects which should support windfall development in the long-term. Whilst positive, the scale of effects are predicted to be minor, given that the vast majority of housing delivery in the plan period is already in the pipeline.
- 4.8.2. The accompanying housing policies support the delivery of affordable housing for local needs. In this respect, Policy H4 (Affordable Housing Provision) requires development to provide affordable housing 'in line with Local Plan requirements'. Whilst this should help support affordable housing delivery in the local area, the requirement is in accordance with the Local Plan requirements and thus is not predicted to have any significant effects beyond the established baseline.
- 4.8.3. Policy H4 further gives affordable housing priority to those first in priority housing need and 'with a connection to the Plan Area'. This includes people who were born in the NDP area, have previously lived or worked in the NDP area or have close family ties to Blackfordby. This is predicted to enhance housing provision within the existing community by improving local people and workers access to housing within the NDP area.
- 4.8.4. In terms of the delivery of a mix of housing, Policy H2 (Housing Mix) requires new housing development to 'provide a mixture of housing types specifically to meet identified local needs in Blackfordby'. The policy further requires development proposals to 'concentrate on providing 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings, including where feasible bungalows for older people... mixed with some 3 bed dwellings'. This will lead to long term positive effects through delivering the type and size of new housing that reflects local need and contributes towards widening of choice. However, the policy wording is unclear on the proportion of each type and size of housing required in the NDP area. This could somewhat undermine the effectiveness of the policy in achieving a mix of housing types and sizes to meet the housing need required in the NDP area.
- 4.8.5. The NDP sets out a number of measures to ensure it maintains Blackfordby as an active and thriving place to live and to ensure existing and new communities have good access to local services and facilities. Notably, this is addressed through Policies ENV1, ENV3 and CFA1 which proactively seek to protect and enhance the community offer, including through protecting community facilities and green and open spaces. Policies BE1-BE5 which seek to safeguard existing and support new employment, support tourism and broadband infrastructure delivery are likely to deliver long-term positive effects by supporting sustainable new communities through new employment opportunities, local services and facilities.
- 4.8.6. Policy H1 allocates land rear of 31 Main Street for housing. The site benefits from good walkable access to a range of social and leisure, transport, and green infrastructure in the village.

Overall (cumulative) effects

- 4.8.7. Overall, the Blackfordby NDP is predicted to have residual **minor positive effects** on population and housing. It is predicted that the NDP will support the various needs of the local community, addressing local housing needs and safeguarding the local access to services and facilities. However, the scale of these effects is not considered to be significant.

4.9 Conclusions at this current stage

Summary of effects

- 4.9.1. This section summarises the overall effects of the Plan against each of the SEA Topics. It is important to differentiate between significant effects, which are predicted to lead to changes in the baseline position, and those effects that are broadly positive or negative, but are less likely to lead to substantial changes.
- 4.9.2. Table 4.1 summarises the overall effects of the policies within the draft NDP for each SEA topic.

Table 4.1: Summary of overall effects for each SEA Topic.

<i>Biodiversity</i>	<i>Climatic Factors</i>	<i>Historic Environment</i>	<i>Landscape</i>	<i>Population and Housing</i>
Minor Negative	Minor Positive	Uncertain Minor Positive	Neutral	Minor Positive

- 4.9.3. The plan is broadly predicted to have positive effects, with a minor negative effect likely for Biodiversity mainly due to the potential for the housing allocation to have adverse effects on important habitats and ecological connectivity and to not be of a scale with the amount of development proposed to achieve environmental net gain.

4.10 Recommendations

- 4.10.1. A number of recommendations have been identified to enhance the positive effects of the draft NDP and mitigate any negatives. These are summarised below:
- It is considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to better support energy efficiency and reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in new development. This could include specific requirements to supporting design features that improve energy efficiency and reduces carbon dioxide emissions. This is of particular relevance given the climate emergency declared by North West Leicestershire District Council in 2019.
 - It is also considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to require development proposals where possible to enhance the historic features and significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings. The policy could further be strengthened by requiring development proposals to demonstrate how proposals would result in a net enhancement to the historic significance of heritage assets and their setting.
 - Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation) can be improved by requiring development proposals to protect, buffer and where possible enhance existing boundary hedges, trees and habitats and maintain undisturbed ecological connectivity. It is also recommended that the policy requires development proposals for the housing allocation to be supported by an ecological survey including a survey of protected species and to demonstrate how development would not cause harm or the loss of ecologically significant habitats, constrain ecological connectivity or displace without adequate mitigation any species present on site. The policy should also seek to encourage environmental net gain in accordance with the aspirations of the NPPF.

- Policy H1 can further be improved by affording protection to important existing landscape features and setting out a presumption against their harm. This includes safeguarding and where possible enhancing the natural corridor along Shell Brook and natural boundary screening along the southern boundary and undeveloped parts of the boundary along Drift Side. It is also recommended that planning proposals are required to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that demonstrates that the proposed scheme would not cause substantial harm to landscape character and the identified important view and that any adverse effects on landscape have been adequately mitigated. The LVIA should further demonstrate how any associated planting accords with landscape character, uses native species and where possible results in a net landscape gain.
- Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could be strengthened by allowing development proposals the option to deviate from the requirement set in the latest evidence underpinning the plan when supported with an assessment on housing need that demonstrates a local unmet need for the proposed housing mix. This should ensure the policy is flexible to changes in housing need in the long term.
- Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could further be strengthened by setting out the proportion of housing types and sizes to ensure new housing reflects local need and contributes towards the widening of choice.
- Policy ENV2 (Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance) could be strengthened by setting out a presumption against development on the identified sites of high significance for their environmental features and to require any development proposals to demonstrate and achieve environmental net gain, guided by the principles set out in the NPPF (2019).
- Policy ENV4 (Non-designated Key Buildings) should seek to afford greater protection to the identified features of local architectural and heritage interest by setting out a presumption against the loss or harm to the heritage asset unless if it can be demonstrated that the public benefit of the development proposal significantly outweighs the harm caused. The policy should further require development proposals to achieve enhancements to the significance of these heritage assets including their setting.
- Policies ENV8 and BE5 could be strengthened by requiring development proposals to be supported with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to provide an assessment of the landscape significance of the site and the likely impact of development. Policy ENV8 could further be improved by requiring a comprehensive restoration of land following use including a net improvement in the landscape quality of the site where feasible and appropriate.

4.10.2. It is considered that the above changes would help improve the performance of the NDP. Recommendations were also made to the NDP at the scoping stage of the SEA. These are set out in the Scoping Report attached as Appendix A to this report.

4.11 Monitoring

4.11.1. There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any

unexpected effects. The SEA has not identified any potential for significant effects that would require closer review or monitoring.

5. What are the next steps?

- 5.1.1. A round of consultation (Regulation 14) will be undertaken on the draft Plan, and this will be accompanied by the Environmental Report.
- 5.1.2. Following consultation, the Blackfordby NDP will then be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (North West Leicestershire District Council), for its consideration with the Environmental Report.
- 5.1.3. North West Leicestershire District Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the Blackfordby NDP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.
- 5.1.4. Subject to the District Council's agreement, the NDP will then be subject to independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the plan is appropriate having regard to national policy and whether it is in general conformity with local policies.
- 5.1.5. The Examiner will be able to recommend that the Blackfordby NDP is put forward for a referendum, or that it should be modified or that the proposal should be refused. North West Leicestershire District Council will then decide what should be done in light of the Examiner's report. Where the report recommends modifications to the plan, North West Leicestershire District Council will invite the Blackfordby NDP Steering Group to make modifications to the plan, which will be reflected in an updated Environmental Report. Where the Examiner's Report recommends that the proposal is to be refused, North West Leicestershire District Council will do so.
- 5.1.6. Where the examination is favourable, the Blackfordby NDP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by North West Leicestershire District Council.
- 5.1.7. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to North West Leicestershire District Council with a request it is 'made'. Once 'made', the Blackfordby NDP will become part of the Development Plan for the district.

Appendix A - Scoping Report



Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment
Scoping Report

Ashby de la Zouch Town Council

June 2020

Quality information

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Acronyms

ALP	Ashby-de-la-Zouch Local Plan
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
ASR	Air Status Report
ATC	Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Council
BNP	Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LEP	Local Economic Partnership
LNR	Local Nature Reserves
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NWLC	North West Leicestershire Council
NWLP	North West Leicestershire Local Plan
ONS	Office for National Statistics
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Blackfordby ward of Ashby de la Zouch is in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the sustainable future growth of the village of Blackfordby, covering the period 2019-2031. AECOM has been commissioned to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan (henceforward referred to as BNP) on behalf of the Ashby de la Zouch Town Council.
- 1.1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the area shown in figure 1.1 and covers Blackfordby Ward; an area within the civil parish of Ashby de la Zouch. Blackfordby was designated as a Neighbourhood area in 2018. The village lies in the northwesternmost corner of Leicestershire about 3.2 km north of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and 3.2 km southeast of Swadlincote.
- 1.1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted Nov. 2017). When 'made' the BNP will form part of the North West Leicestershire Local Development Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. The Local Plan effectively provides an overarching strategic direction for development in North West Leicestershire District whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.
- 1.1.4 The BNP was screened by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC). The council and Natural England determined that significant effects could arise in relation to the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The NP is intending to allocate one site for residential development of up to 14 homes; the site is within the Mease Catchment.

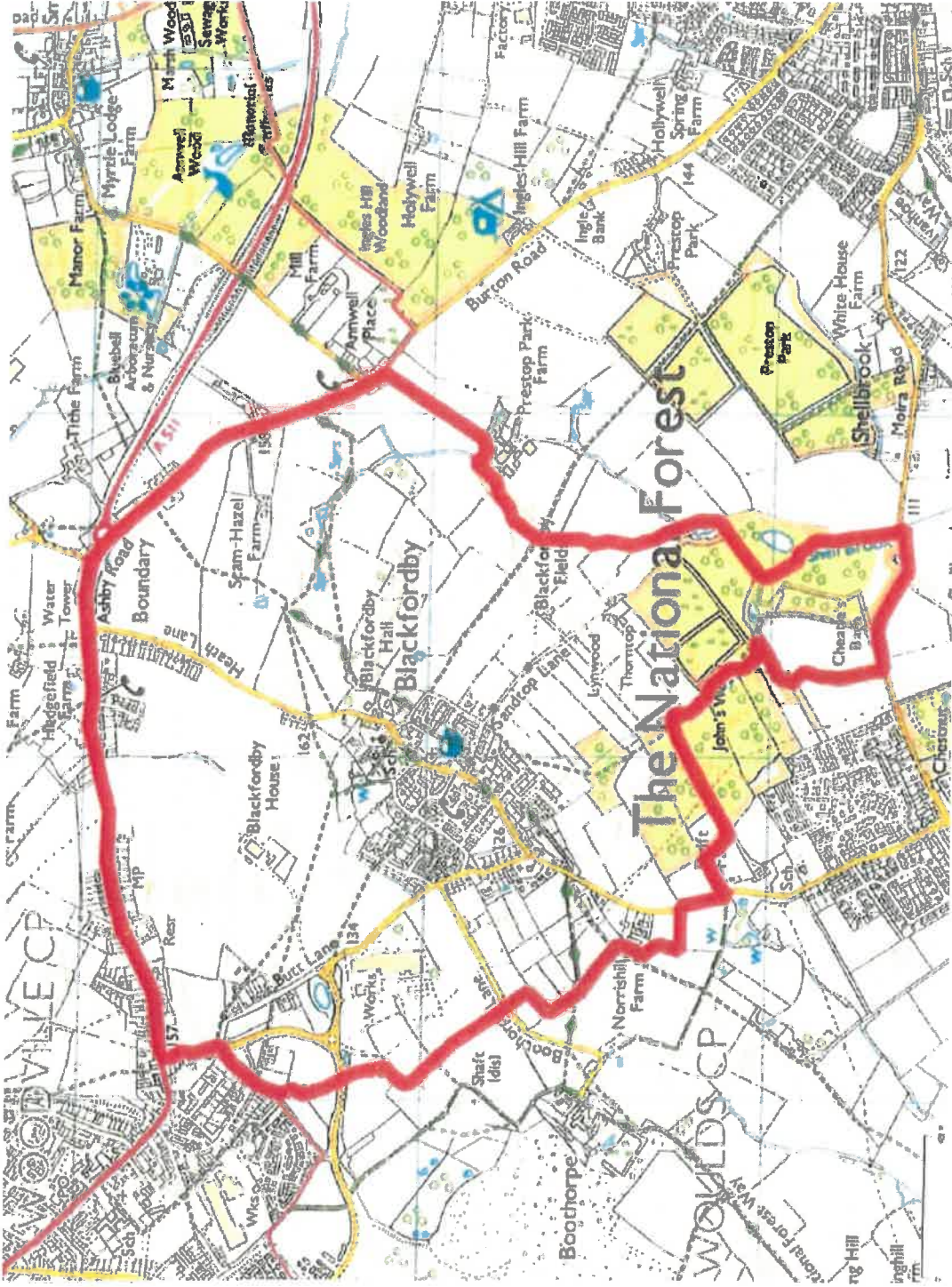
1.2 The Scope of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 1.2.1 The Blackfordby Neighbourhood Development Plan intends to allocate a site for housing development. Other themes to be considered within the BNP include; the built environment, community facilities, transport, sustainability and employment.
- 1.2.2 At present it is anticipated that the ATC will allocate a housing site within the BNP for approximately 14 additional homes. This this will be tested during the NP plan making process.
- 1.2.3 The Key information relating to the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan is presented in the table below (Table 1-1).

Table 1.1 Key facts relating to the Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Responsible Authority	Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Council
Title of Plan	Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan
Subject	Neighbourhood Planning
Purpose	The Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan is provided by the current North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.
Timescale	To 2031
Area covered by the plan	The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the ward of Blackfordby in the civil Parish of Ashby-de-la-Zouch which is in North West Leicestershire District of Leicestershire, England. It is located approximately 3.2 km north of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and 3.2 km southeast of Swadlincote.
Summary of content	The Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and a range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Plan contact point	Melanie Mitchell, Deputy Town Clerk; Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Council Email: melaniemitchell@ashbytowncouncil.org.uk

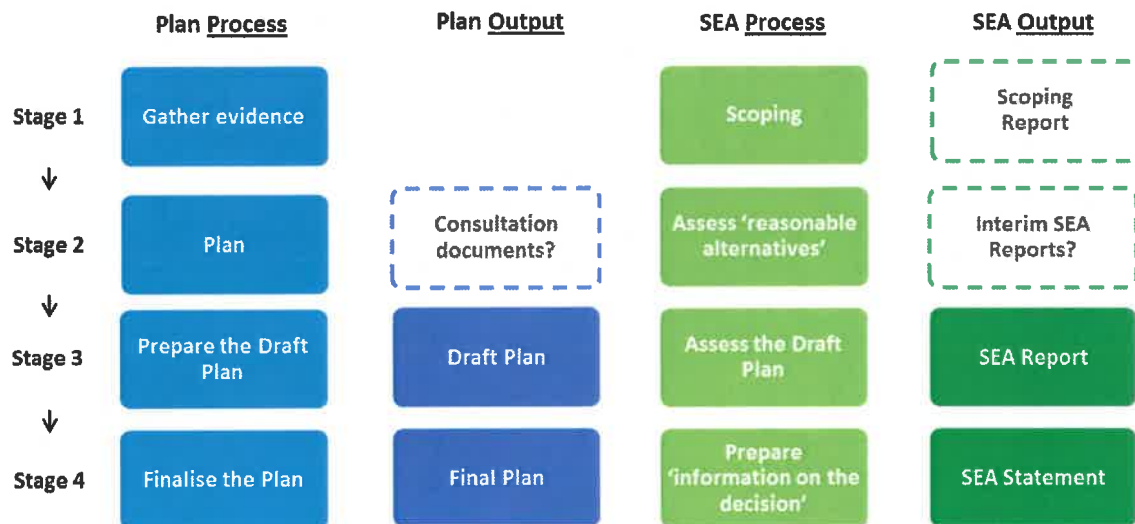
Figure 1.1: The Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Area



1.3 SEA explained

- 1.3.1 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects.
- 1.3.2 The European Directive 2001/42/EC¹ requires certain plans to be subject to a SEA. This Directive is realised in the UK through Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (otherwise known as the SEA Regulations). These Regulations require an environmental assessment to be carried out on certain plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment. The plan has been determined to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. To meet this requirement, the plan is undergoing a SEA process which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.
- 1.3.3 SEA can be viewed as a four-stage process that produces a number of statutory and non-statutory outputs. As illustrated in Figure 1.2 below, ‘Scoping’ is a mandatory process under the SEA Directive, but the publication of a scoping report is a voluntary (but useful) output.

Figure 1.2: SEA as a four step process



¹ Directive 2001/42/EC: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-legalcontext.htm>

1.4 Introduction to scoping

- 1.4.1 One of the first stages in the SEA process is to establish what the key issues are that the appraisal should focus on. This is called 'scoping', and involves a review of relevant policies, plans and programmes (a 'contextual review') and information about the current and future state of the environment, economy and social factors (the 'baseline'). This information is then used to set out a framework for undertaking strategic environmental assessments as the plan is developed.
- 1.4.2 The Regulations² require that certain statutory bodies are consulted on the scope of a SEA. This can be done in a number of ways, but most often a Scoping Report is produced that presents the key information and a methodology for how future appraisals will be undertaken. Statutory Consultees have 5 weeks to comment on the scope of the appraisal. In England, the statutory consultees are Natural England, The Environment Agency and Historic England.
- 1.4.3 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:
- Defining the broader context for the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan and associated SEA (i.e. EU, UK Government and local policy and commitments), to summarise the regulatory and legislative landscape;
 - Establishing the baseline for the SEA, (i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Neighbourhood Plan) to help identify the plan's likely significant effects;
 - Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a focus of the SEA; and
 - Developing a SEA Framework comprising objectives and appraisal questions based on these issues, which can then be used to appraise the draft plan.

1.5 Structure of this Scoping Report

- 1.5.1 The outcomes of the scoping exercise have been presented under a series of broad environmental themes, as follows:
- Chapter 2: Air Quality;
 - Chapter 3: Biodiversity;
 - Chapter 4: Climatic factors (including Flood Risk);
 - Chapter 5: Historic Environment;
 - Chapter 6: Landscape;
 - Chapter 7: Land, Soil and Water Resources;
 - Chapter 8: Population and Housing;
 - Chapter 9: Health and Wellbeing; and
 - Chapter 10: Transportation.

² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- 1.5.2 The selected environmental themes reflect the ‘SEA topics’ suggested by Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive³. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects (drawing from local knowledge and understanding).
- 1.5.3 In accordance with the SEA Directive, the final chapters of the report summarise the overarching sustainability issues, set out the SA Framework and document the next stages in the process. To demonstrate a clear trail of how the SEA objectives have been identified each topic Chapter (which is scoped into the SEA) concludes with suggested objectives and supporting criteria for inclusion in the SEA Framework.

³ The SEA Directive is ‘of a procedural nature’ (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on ‘*the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors*’ [our emphasis]

2. Air Quality

Focus of theme:

- Sources of air pollution
- Air quality hotspots
- Air quality management

2.1 Policy Context

- 2.1.1 The **Environment Act 1995**, covering England, Scotland and Wales, requires all local authorities in the UK to review and assess air quality in their area. If any standards are being exceeded or are unlikely to be met by the required date, then that area should be designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- 2.1.2 The **Clean Air Strategy**⁴ (2019) sets out the strategy for improving air quality, including goals to reduce exposure to toxic pollutants like nitrogen oxides, ammonia, particulate matter, non-methane volatile organic compounds and sulphur dioxide. For example, the strategy aims to reduce particulate matter emissions by 30% by 2020, and by 46% by 2030.
- 2.1.3 The **Air Quality Strategy**⁵ (2007) establishes the policy framework for ambient air quality management and assessment in the UK. The primary objective is to ensure that everyone can enjoy a level of ambient air quality which poses no significant risk to health or quality of life. The Strategy sets out the National Air Quality Objectives (NAQOs) and government policy on achieving these objectives.
- 2.1.4 The **National Planning Policy Framework**⁶ (NPPF) (2019) outlines the importance of sustainable development and infrastructure in improving air quality and subsequently the environment and public health.
- 2.1.5 The **Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance**⁷ (2018) issued by Defra for Local Authorities provides advice as to where the National Air Quality Objectives apply. These include outdoor locations where members of the public are likely to be regularly present for the averaging period of the objective (which vary from 15 minutes to a year).
- 2.1.6 Published in January 2018 by the UK Government, '**A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment**'⁸ sets out a number of goals and policies in order to help the natural world regain and retain good health. In this context, Goal 1 'Clean Air' and the policies contained within 'Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste' within the 25 year plan are relevant.

⁴ Defra (2019) Clean Air Strategy at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf

⁵ Defra (2007) Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland [online] available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/air/air-quality/approach/>

⁶ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁷ Defra (2018) Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance [online] available at: <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-TG16-February-18-v1.pdf>

⁸ HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

- 2.1.7 **NWLDC Air Quality Annual Status Report (2019)**⁹ identified road transportation as the main source of within town centres and at busy junctions. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is identified as the pollutant of most concern and is currently monitored throughout the district using diffusion tubes. The report lists 5 Air Quality Management Areas within North West Leicestershire county (AQMA) some of which showed exceedance of the annual mean air quality standard. However, none of the AQMAs are within the NP area, the nearest AQMA is in Coalville over 8 miles away.
- 2.1.8 **Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026** sets out how the transport authority, will seek to ensure that transport continues to play its important role in helping Leicestershire to continue to be a prosperous, safe and attractive County. LTP3 is made up of a long-term transport strategy with a vision for transport to 2026, supported by a rolling three year Implementation Plan. The LPT3 includes measures seeking to encourage modal shift from the private car towards public transport, walking and cycling
- 2.1.9 The **North West Leicestershire County Council Local Plan 2011-2031** (adopted 2017) Policy En6 (land and air quality) requires that development proposals within, or close to AQMAs, be supported by detailed assessments with appropriate mitigation measures identified to avoid adverse impacts.

2.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

- 2.2.1 Blackfordby is a small village Northwest of Leicestershire about 2 miles northwest of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and 2 miles southeast of Swadlincote. The village sits in a rural setting surrounded by countryside and the National Forest. The main source of air pollution in the area is from road traffic emissions. The Neighbourhood Plan area abuts the A511 to the north, a 21-mile stretch of mainly single-carriageway road which runs northwest from Markfield in Leicestershire, to Foston in South Derbyshire, linking the towns of Coalville, Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Burton upon Trent. Heath Lane connects the village to the A511 at Boundary, whilst Butt Lane/Hepworth Road connects the village with the A511 at Woodville.
- 2.2.2 There are five AQMAs in North West Leicestershire County; none is within the NP area, with the nearest AQMA location just over 8 miles away in Coalville.

Summary of future baseline

- 2.2.3 The traffic associated with roads surrounding Blackfordby, such as the A511, is likely to increase in volume with or without the BNP. This will adversely impact air quality in the area.
- 2.2.4 However, improvements in air quality may be experienced as a result of lower emission vehicles, which could offset any increases associated with traffic.

⁹ North West Leicestershire District Council 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report

2.3 Key headline issues

2.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Traffic and congestion have the potential to increase vehicular emissions and reduce air quality in the area (though low emissions vehicles could offset this to an extent).
- Increases in vehicular emissions are also likely to be offset by factors such as measures implemented through the Leicestershire LTP3 which encourage modal shift from the private car towards public transport, walking and cycling. The North West Leicestershire Local Plan also includes mitigation measures to reduce the impact of new development on the existing highway network.

2.4 Scoping outcome

- 2.4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is intending to allocate one housing site of up to 14 dwellings which is not expected to lead to a significant increase in car journeys on the local roads network.
- 2.4.2 The scale of development associated with the plan is such that any additional effects, taken in isolation, are not predicted to be significant.
- 2.4.3 There are no Air Quality Managements Areas in the Neighbourhood Plan area; consequently, air quality has been **SCOPED OUT** for the purposes of the SEA process.

3. Biodiversity

Focus of theme:

- Nature conservation designations
- Habitats and species
- Geodiversity

3.1 Policy Context

3.1.1 At the European level, the **EU Biodiversity Strategy**¹⁰ was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver an established new Europe-wide target to '*halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020*'.

3.1.2 The European Commission Guidance on **Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment**¹¹ (2013) suggests that an SEA should focus on ensuring 'no-net-loss of biodiversity' before considering mitigation and compensation. The assessment should also take account of 'ecosystem services' and the links between natural environment and economy.

3.1.3 **The NPPF (2019)** states that the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural environment including helping to improve biodiversity and using natural resources prudently. In support of this aim the framework states that plans should 'identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats' and should also 'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

3.1.4 The Government's '**A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment**'¹² (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. Actions proposed of relevance to the protection and promotion of biodiversity are as follows:

- Develop a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that have been lost from the countryside.
- Achieve a good environmental status of the UK's seas while allowing marine industries to thrive and complete our economically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas.
- Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.
- Support and protect international forests and sustainable agriculture.

¹⁰ European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5b1%5d.pdf

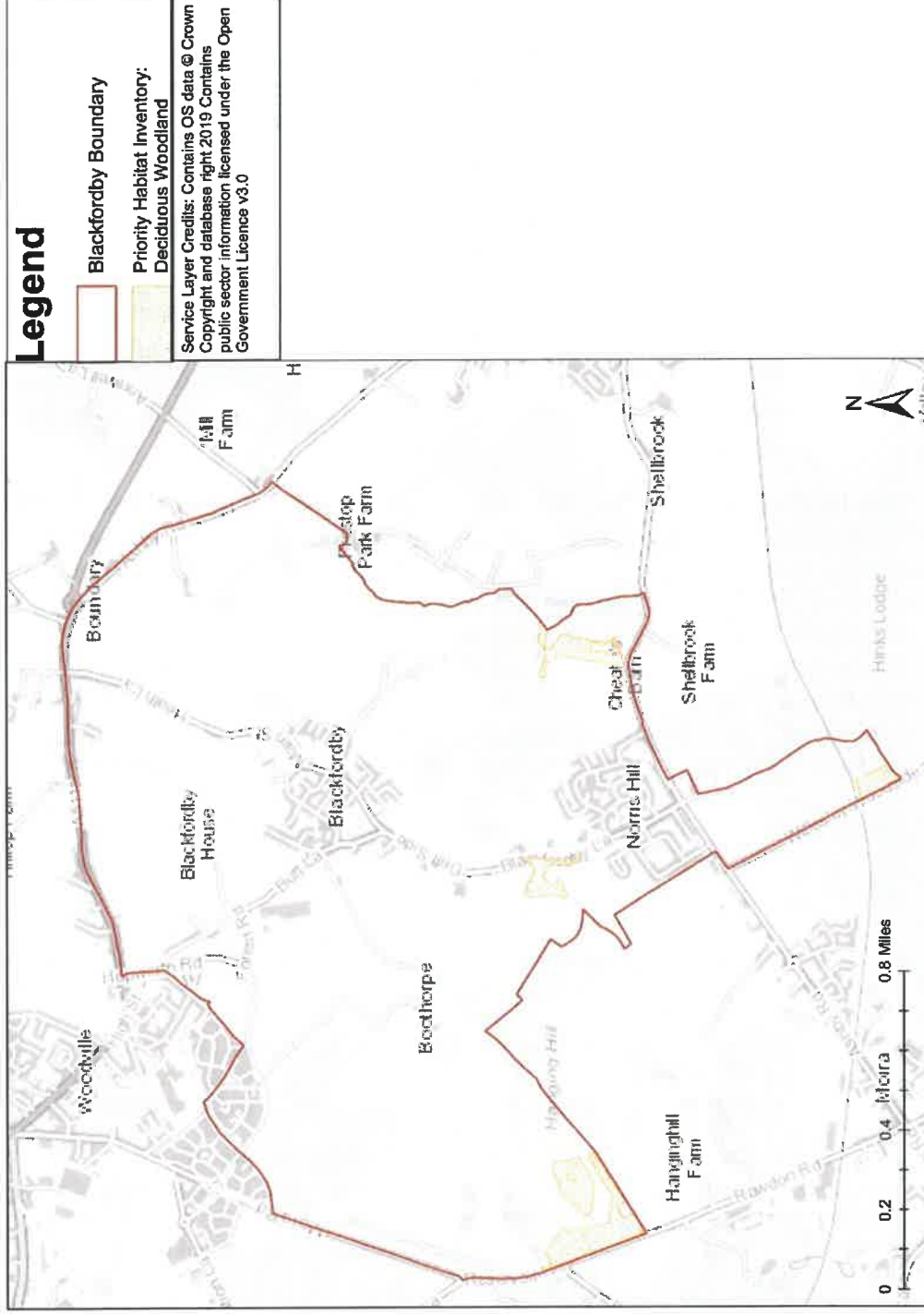
¹¹ European Commission (2013) Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment [online] available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/SEA%20Guidance.pdf>

¹² Defra (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

- 3.1.5 The Biodiversity 2020 strategy¹³(2011), published by the government, sets out objectives to deliver: a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation, to put people at the heart of biodiversity policy, to reduce environmental pressures, an overall improvement in the status of species and prevention of further human-induced extinctions and improved public knowledge of biodiversity.
- 3.1.6 The government's draft **Environment Bill** includes provisions to maintain the level of environmental protection once the UK leaves the European Union. In march 2019 the government confirmed that new developments must deliver an overall increase in biodiversity in order to achieve a 'biodiversity net gain'. This requirement was set out in the Environment Bill summer policy statement (July 2019). The bill is being considered by a Public Bill Committee which is expected to report its findings in May 2020.
- 3.1.7 At the local level the **Leicestershire Natural and Historic Environment (Local Nature) Partnership** was officially recognized by the government in 2012. Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) are partnerships of a broad range of local organizations, businesses and people who aim to help bring about improvements in their local natural environment.
- 3.1.8 **The North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011-2031** (adopted 2017) (NWLLP) **Policy En1** (Nature Conservation) supports development proposals which conserve, restore or enhance biodiversity in the district. Development resulting in significant harm to SAC, SSSI, important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS), LWSs, LNRs would be refused if impacts cannot be mitigated or compensated for. This also applies to Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats, river corridors and irreplaceable habitats such as Ancient Woodlands. New development will be expected to maintain existing ecological networks, landscape features (such as water courses, trees and hedgerows) for biodiversity, other green infrastructure and recreational uses.
- 3.1.9 **Policy En2 of the NWLLP** (River Mease Special Area of Conservation SAC) seeks to improve the quality of water in the River Mease SAC. Development within the Mease Catchment will be allowed where:
- There is sufficient capacity at the Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW) to treat flows from development and
 - Development is in accordance with the provisions of the Water Quality Management Plan including, where appropriate, the provision of infrastructure or water quality improvements proposed in the Developer Contributions Scheme.
 - In the event that there is no capacity available at the WwTW, or there is no capacity available within the Developer Contributions Scheme in operation at the time that an application is determined, or exceptionally where as part of the development it is proposed to use a non-mains drainage solution for the disposal of foul water and this is supported by the Environment Agency, development will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development, on its own and cumulatively with other development, will not have an adverse impact, directly or indirectly, upon the integrity of the river Mease Special Area of Conservation.

¹³ Defra (2011) Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services [online] available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf

Figure 3-1 Priority Habitat Network in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



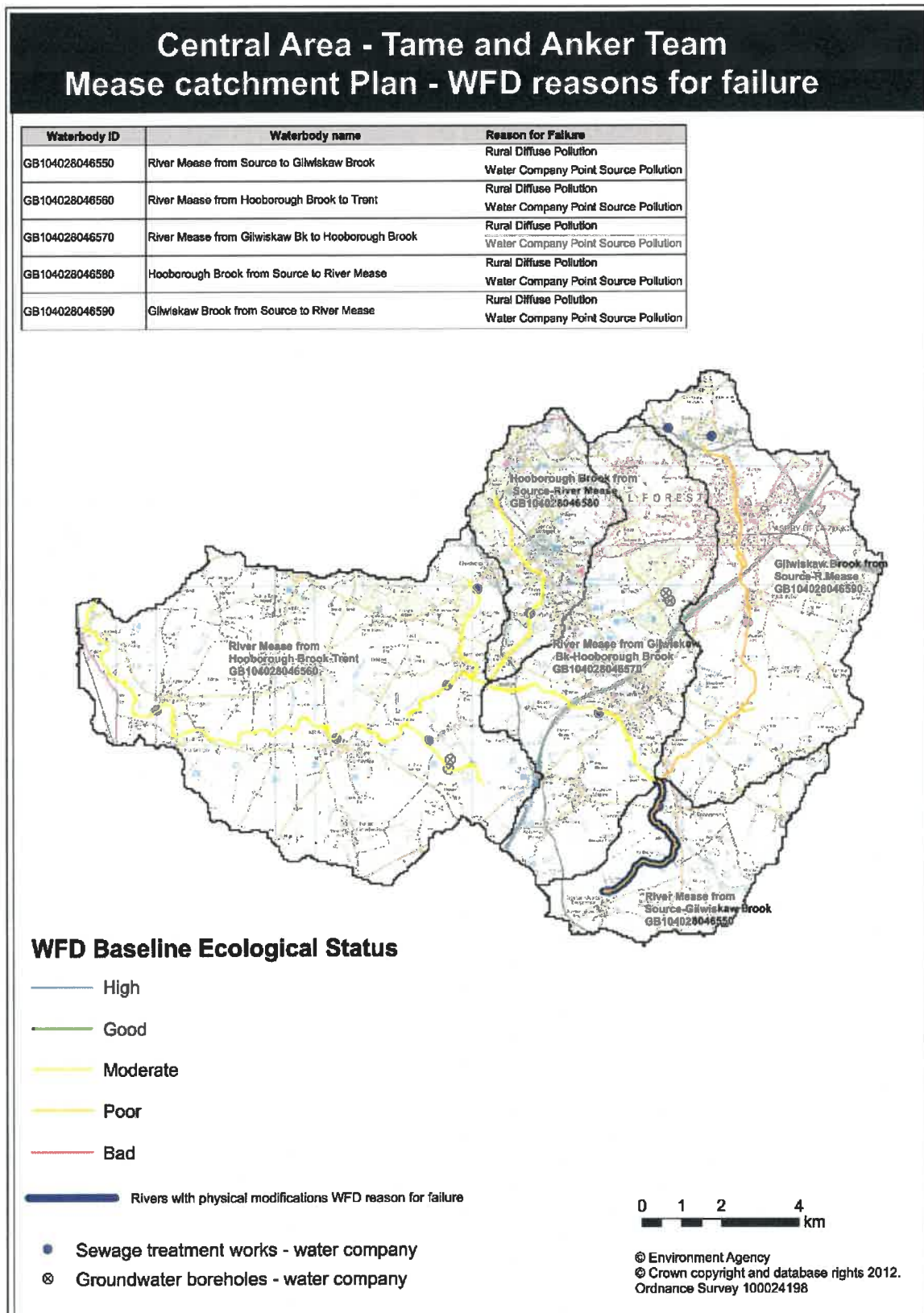
3.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

UK Protected Sites

- 3.2.1 Important areas of wildlife and habitat are conserved through legal designation in the UK. Protected sites are areas of land, inland water and the sea that have special legal protection to conserve important habitats and species. These include;
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for Birds and
 - Special Areas of Conservation (SACs),
 - Within the UK sites that are nationally important for plants, animals or geological or physiographical features are protected by law as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 3.2.2 The NP area is within the River Mease Catchment which designated as a Special Area of Conservation. The SAC boundary is approximately 2 miles (Pakington) from the southernmost boundary of the NP area. The Designated features of the Mease SAC comprise;
- The primary qualifying features (reasons for selecting the site as SAC) are due to the presence of small, bottom-living fish species; Spined loach, *Cobitis taenia* and Bullhead and *Cottus gobio*.
 - The other qualifying features (non-primary) include; Water courses of plain to montane levels with *R. fluitantis* (floating white flowered aquatic plant), Freshwater crayfish, *Austropotamobius pallipes* the *Lutra lutra* Otter.
- 3.2.3 The site conservation objectives for the Mease SAC aim to restore the integrity and extent of the habitats to ensure there is not net reduction in these habitats. Another key aim is to restore the natural nutrient regime to the river Mease including limiting levels of phosphorous.
- 3.2.4 There are no areas designated as Local Nature Reserves (LNR) or National Nature Reserves (NNR) in the NP area.
- 3.2.5 Priority habitats can also be identified outside of SSSI under Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) or Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreements or under the Forestry Commission (FC) 'Managed Woodland'.
- 3.2.6 There are some pockets of Woodland Priority Habitats of high spatial priority within the NP area. This includes an area of deciduous Woodland at; Southern boundary between George's Wood and John's Wood, an area between the Wavin Ltd Forestworks and Butt lane, South of Main St just before it joins Heath Lane and to the east at Scam Hazelwood and an area north of Prestop Park Farm. The southern part of the NP area falls within the National Forest Inventory.

Figure 3.2 River Mease Catchment Water Quality



Summary of future baseline

- 3.2.7 Atmospheric pollution (such as acid precipitation and nitrogen deposition) and increased flood risk that may arise as a result of climate change, could pose a risk to the habitats and species present within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 3.2.8 Development in the Neighbourhood Plan area could place increased pressure on areas of biodiversity value due to land take for development and an increase in population. An increase in population is likely to lead to an increase in leisure and recreational pressure and increased demand for natural resources such as water. New development may lead to an increase in disturbance through human activity, loss of habitat, increased predation (e.g. from domestic pets), atmospheric, land and water based pollution. In the absence of a Plan, development would be guided by the local plan, and there might be a reliance on ad-hoc developments.
- 3.2.9 However, habitats and species are likely to continue to be afforded protection through higher level planning policy and whilst these areas face increasing pressures from future development, planning policy should safeguard the most valued areas and protect ecological networks.

3.3 Key headline issues

3.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The NP area is with the River Mease Catchment and lies around 2 miles from the River Mease SAC and SSSI. Water quality in the Mease has deteriorated primarily due to high phosphorous levels. A Restoration Plan and Water Quality Management Plan are in place; supported by a Developer Contributions Strategy (DCS/DCS2). This is a scheme into which developers pay a direct contribution to restoring and maintaining water quality in the Mease. It aims to offset the additional phosphate contributions of development in the catchment and to fund the delivery of phosphate reduction activities and schemes.
- There are no NNR, LNR, SPAs, or Ramsar sites within or in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- There are several small areas of Woodland Priority Habitat and the National Forest south of the NP area. New development encroaching on these areas could lead to loss of habitats and associated biodiversity.

3.4 Scoping outcome

- 3.4.1 The SEA topic 'Biodiversity' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. Although limited scale development is being proposed in the NP; this will produce additional wastewater flows to sewage treatment works and create additional surface water run-off. It is important to ensure that there are no significant effects upon the River Mease SSSI/SAC.
- 3.4.2 There may also be opportunities to enhance ecological networks within the NP area and achieve net biodiversity gain.

3.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Biodiversity SEA theme?

3.5.1 The SEA topic 'Biodiversity' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 3.2 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 3.2: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Biodiversity

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support connections between habitats in the Plan area?• Avoid significant impacts on the River Mease SAC?• Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area?• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity?• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change?

4. Climatic factors (Flood risk and climate change)

Focus of theme:

- Greenhouse gas emissions;
- Effects of climate change; and
- Flood risk
- Climate change adaptation.

4.1 Policy Context

4.1.1 **The EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy¹⁴ was adopted in 2013**, which supports greater coordination between areas, particularly on issues that cross borders such as river basins. A key principle is to ensure that those most likely to be affected by climate change are able to take the necessary measures to adapt.

4.1.2 **The Carbon Plan¹⁵ (2011)** sets out the Government's plans for achieving the greenhouse gas emissions reductions committed to in the Climate Change Act 2008 and the first four carbon budgets. The Carbon Plan aims to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050, relative to levels in 1990.

4.1.3 As part of its environmental objective in achieving sustainable development, the **NPPF (2019)** contains a requirement to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy. The Framework also states that the 'planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change'. To achieve these aims new development should be planned to ensure appropriate adaptation measures are included (including green infrastructure) and should be designed, located and orientated as to help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

4.1.4 The Framework also seeks to direct development away from areas that are currently or likely in the future to be at highest risk of flooding. Where development is required in such areas, the 'development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere'.

4.1.5 The Government's '**A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment**' (2018)¹⁶ sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. The actions proposed pertaining to managing and addressing flood risk and climate change are;

- Take action to reduce the risk of harm from flooding and coastal erosion including greater use of natural flood management solutions.
- Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.

¹⁴ European Commission (2013) Climate Change Adaptation Strategy [online] available at: https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/docs/eu_strategy_en.pdf

¹⁵ DECC (2011) The Carbon Plan - reducing greenhouse gas emissions [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-carbon-plan-reducing-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2>

¹⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

- 4.1.6 **The Clean Growth Strategy¹⁷ (2017)** sets out a blue print for a low carbon future by outlining proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy. Key aims include accelerating the shift to low carbon transport and homes and enhancing the benefits and value of natural resources by preserving and establishing new natural assets such as forests, minimising avoidable waste and managing emissions from landfill.
- 4.1.7 **The North West Leicestershire SFRA Report (2015 update)¹⁸** evaluates the strategic flood risk assessment for the NWL region. The SFRA informs the allocation of sites for future development and flood risk management policies, within North West Leicestershire. The report concludes that the primary source of flood risk is fluvial arising from the rivers; Trent, Soar, Mease and Sence and their tributaries. Other sources include; surface water, sewers, canal infrastructure and groundwater arising from former coal mining areas. It goes on to say that climate change is predicted to cause an increase in future flood risk and this needs to be taken into consideration when designing risk mitigation and surface water management systems for new development.

4.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Greenhouse gas emissions

- 4.2.1 In relation to GHG emissions, source data shows that North West Leicestershire (as a whole) has significantly higher per capita emissions compared to the rest of the East Midlands region and to England as a whole (Table 4.1). The highest contributors to GHG emissions are the Industrial/ Commercial and Transport sectors. The figures also show a trend of decreasing per capita emissions from all sources. For example, the total per capita emissions figure for North West Leicestershire in 2017 is around 37% lower for than the figure for 2005.

¹⁷ DECC (2017) Clean Growth Strategy [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>

¹⁸ Atkins report: NWL SFRA (2015 update)

https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic_flood_risk_assessment_refresh_june_2015/SFRA%20Refresh%20June%202015.pdf

Table 4.1: Per capita local CO² emission estimates; industry, domestic and transport sectors (kt CO₂)¹⁹

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
North West Leicestershire							
Industrial & Commercial	9.0	7.9	6.7	5.9	5.7	5.5	5.0
Domestic	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	1.9	1.8
Transport	6.0	5.8	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.1	5.1
Total per capita	17.7	16.2	14.2	13.1	13.0	12.4	11.8
East Midlands							
Industrial & Commercial	4.3	4.0	3.3	3.2	3.3	2.8	2.5
Domestic	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.6
Transport	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3
Total per capita	9.5	8.9	7.8	7.4	7.5	6.7	6.2
England							
Industrial & Commercial	3.8	3.6	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.3	1.8
Domestic	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.6	1.5
Transport	2.3	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
Total per capita	8.5	8.1	7.0	6.6	6.6	5.7	5.1

¹⁹ National Statistics UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2017
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2017>

Effects of climate change

4.2.2 Climate change projections for the United Kingdom published as part of the UKCP18²⁰ programme provide detailed probabilistic projections of climate change. Although there is uncertainty in climate change predictions; the projected general trend is a move towards warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. However, natural variations mean that some cold winters, some dry winters, some cool summers and some wet summers will still occur. The following changes are likely to have taken place by 2070s. The changes mentioned below relate to an area in central England based on the 10-90th percentile range (low to high emissions) of emission scenario²¹:

- In UKCP18, the probabilistic projections provide local low, central and high changes across the UK, corresponding to 10%, 50% and 90% probability levels. These local values can be averaged over the UK to give a range of average warming between the 10% and 90% probability levels. By 2070, in the high emission scenario, this range amounts to 0.7°C to 4.2°C in winter, and 0.9°C to 5.4°C, in summer. For precipitation, corresponding ranges of UK average changes are -1% to +35% for winter, and -47% to +2% for summer, where positive values indicate more precipitation and negative values indicate reduced precipitation (drier summers).
- Hot summers are predicted to become more common, with the probability of a hot summer rising from the current 20-25% to up to 50% by the middle of the century.

4.2.3 Based on the above; in the future Blackfordby is likely to experience, a warmer climate, with drier summers and potentially wetter winters, which means that extreme events such as floods and droughts are likely to become less predictable and possibly more frequent.

Flood risk

4.2.4 Flood Zone 1 is defined as having a 'Low Probability' of flooding and incorporates areas where the annual probability of flooding is lower than 0.1% (a 1 in 1000 year flood event). Flood Zone 2 is defined as having a 'Medium Probability' of flooding, with an annual probability of flooding between 0.1% and 1.0% for fluvial flooding (between a 1 in 1000 year and 1 in 100 year flood event) or 0.1% and 0.5% for tidal and coastal flooding (between a 1 in 1000 year and 1 in 100 year flood event). Flood Zone 3 is defined as having a 'High Probability' of flooding, with an annual probability of beyond 1.0% for fluvial floods and beyond 0.5% for tidal and coastal floods.

4.2.5 As illustrated in Figure 4.1, most of the Neighbourhood Plan area falls in Flood Zone 1. To south east just outside the NP there are areas of Flood Zone 3 along Shell Brook.

²⁰ Further information on the UKCP18 programme is available from: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp>.

²¹ Projections from UKCP18 Climate Change Over Land, which correspond to two emissions scenarios (Low and High). The key characteristics of each of these scenarios are:

Medium emissions Scenario - describes a world that has rapid economic growth, quick spreading of new and efficient technologies, and a global population that reaches 9 billion mid-century and then gradually declines. It also relies on a balance between different energy sources.

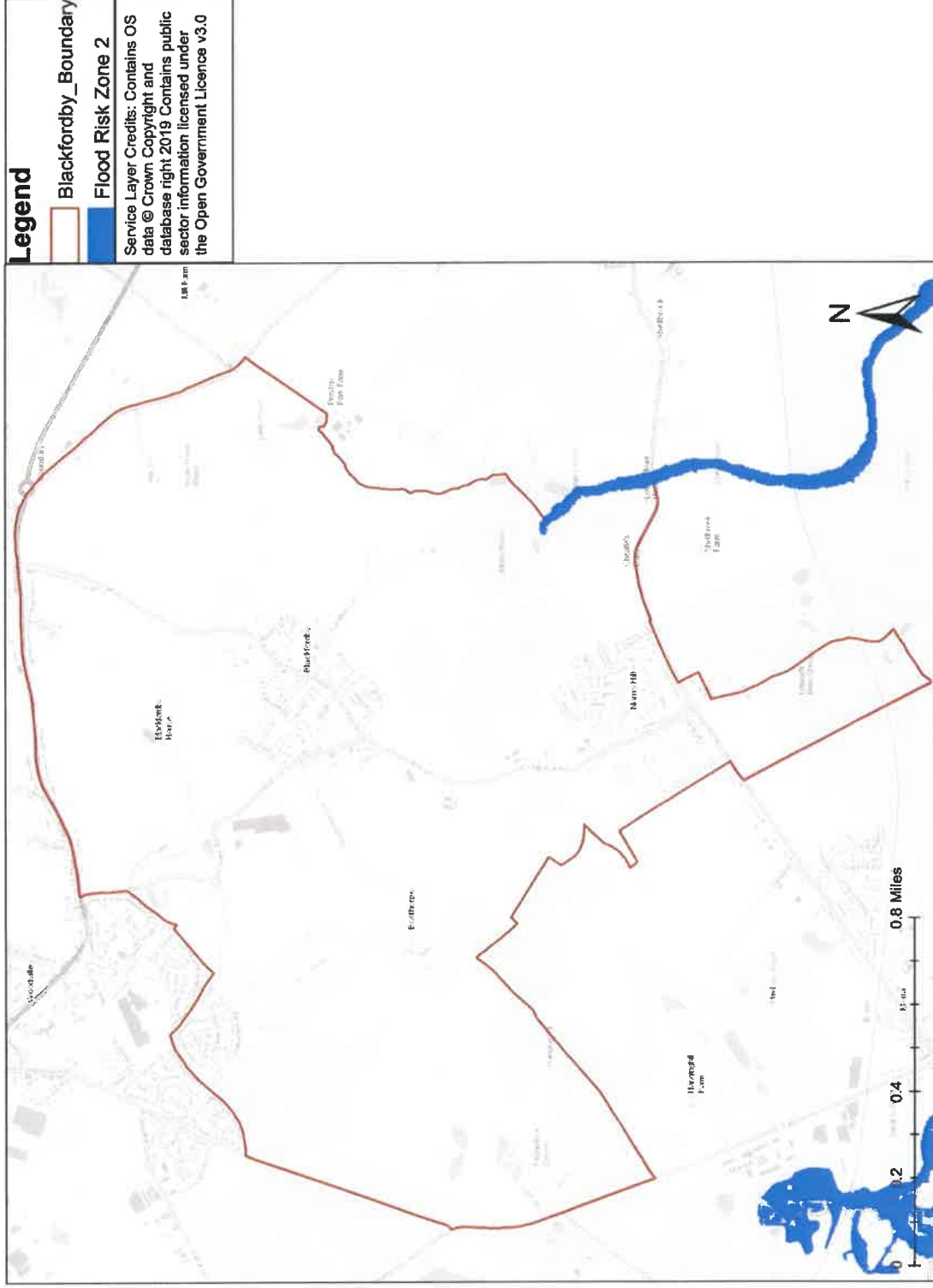
High emissions Scenario - similar economic and population trends as the Medium emission scenario but more emphasis on power generation from fossil fuels.

Low emissions scenario - represents a more integrated ecologically friendly world, characterised by clean and resource efficient technologies, and lower global greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate change adaptation

- 4.2.6 There is no baseline information or data relating specifically to climate change adaptation. However, there is range of green infrastructure within Blackfordby, such as, recreation grounds and public open space, that will benefit communities in terms of flood risk, hotter summers and wetter winters.

Figure 4.1: Flood Risk in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



Summary of future baseline

- 4.2.7 There is potential for climate change to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Such weather events are likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.
- 4.2.8 In terms of the exacerbation of climate change, GHG emissions could decrease through the adoption of energy efficient measures and cleaner energy (especially in transport and industry, which is a key contributor in the wider region). However, increases in population and the number of households could counteract this.
- 4.2.9 Flood risk at any specific location may be influenced by local factors such as existing formal or informal flood defences and the capacity of existing drainage systems or road/rail culverts. The adoption of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) and introduction of Green Infrastructure within development schemes may reduce the speed of surface water run-off and have positive effects in terms mitigating flood risk.
- 4.2.10 Development in any instance has the potential to exacerbate flood risk within and in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Plan area by increasing the volume of surface water run-off, or by introducing areas of hard standing which could increase the speed of surface water run-off. The risk would be greatest where development is located in the close proximity to, Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3, areas.
- 4.2.11 In the absence of the Plan, there will still be a need to satisfy policy measures relating to flood risk management.

4.3 Key headline issues

- 4.3.1 The key issues are as follows:
- Average CO₂ emissions per capita are declining in North West Leicestershire as a whole.
 - The Neighbourhood Plan area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1.
 - The likelihood of flooding from fluvial and non-fluvial sources could be exacerbated by development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, opportunities for mitigation exist in sustainable design and Sustainable Urban Drainage.

4.4 Scoping outcome

- 4.4.1 Climatic Factors have been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as climate change and flooding are an important national and local priority. There is the potential to explore how resilience to climate change can be enhanced as well as contributing towards flood risk mitigation.
- 4.4.2 With regards to climate change mitigation, it is unlikely that the Plan will have significant effects on levels of greenhouse gas emissions as the amount of growth involved is relatively minor. Furthermore, standards for energy and water efficiency are established nationally and at strategic level. The scope for the Plan to deliver substantial improvements is therefore unlikely to be significant.

4.1 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Climatic Factors SEA theme?

- 2.1.1. The SEA topic 'Climatic Factors' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 4.2 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 4.2: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Climatic Factors

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Support the resilience of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects on climate change including flooding	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding?

5. Historic environment

Focus of theme:

- Designated and non-designated sites, areas and features;
- The setting of heritage assets; and
- Archaeological features.

5.1 Policy Context

- 5.1.1 The **NPPF (2019)** sets out an environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment. The Framework provides a strategy to seek *‘the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect’*. It further states that heritage assets should be recognised as an *“irreplaceable resource”* that should be conserved in a *“manner appropriate to their significance”*, taking account of *“the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of conservation”*, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.1.2 Additionally, the **National Planning Policy Guidance** states that Neighbourhood Plans should include enough information, where relevant, *‘about local heritage to guide decisions and put broader strategic heritage policies from the local plan into action at a neighbourhood scale’* and *‘about local non-designated heritage assets including sites of archaeological interest to guide decisions’*.
- 5.1.3 The Government’s **Statement on the Historic Environment for England**²² (2010) sets out their vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life. Also, of note is the reference to promoting the role of the historic environment within the Government’s response to climate change and the wider sustainable development agenda.
- 5.1.4 The **NWLLP Policy He1; ‘Conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire’s historic environment’** seeks to ensure the conservation of NWL’s historic environment by requiring development proposals to conserve and enhance the significance of local heritage assets and their settings including views in and out of conservation areas. There will be a presumption against development that will lead to substantial harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset unless it can be demonstrated that public benefit outweighs such harm or loss.

²² DDCMS (2010) The Government’s Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-statement-on-the-historic-environment-for-england>

5.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.2.1 As illustrated on Figure 5.1, the NP area has a rich historical environment, containing numerous features, many of which are recognised through statutory designations. This includes listed buildings which are nationally designated, and a Conservation Area designated at the local level.
- 5.2.2 There are ten Grade II listed buildings the parish Church of St Margaret of Antioch, a public house, cottages and farmhouses.
- 5.2.3 There is a Conservation Area centred on Main Street around the junction with Well Lane.

Heritage at Risk

- 5.2.4 Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights some of the Grade I, Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. There are no heritage assets identified in the Heritage at Risk Register within the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, as the Register does not cover all Grade II listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, there may potentially be some locally important heritage assets at risk.

Conservation Areas

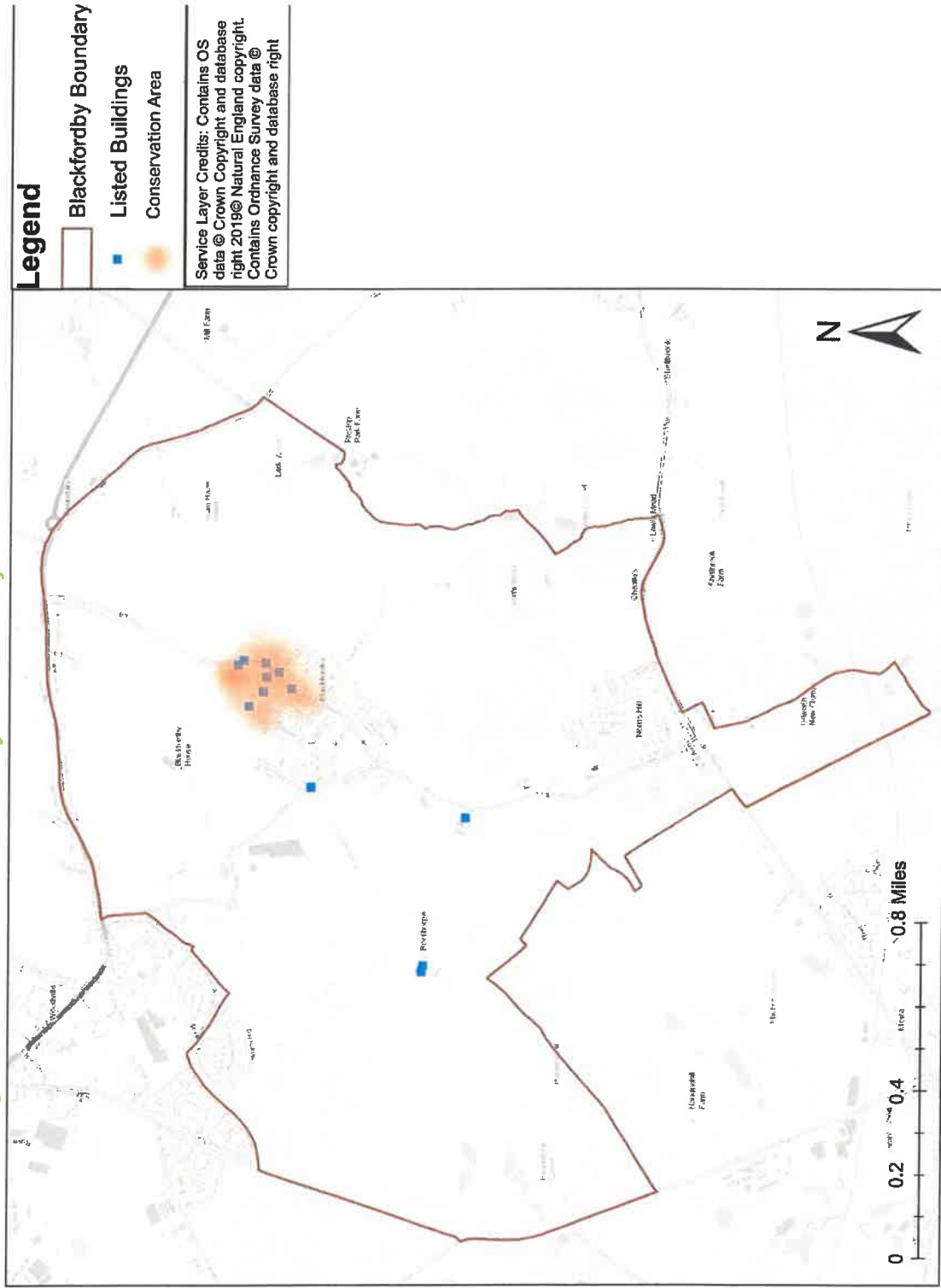
- 5.2.5 Conservation Areas are of special architectural and/or historic interest, the character of which is considered worthy of preservation and protection. The conservation area is concentrated around the Parish Church in the northern part of the village; centred on Main Street around the junction with Well Lane. There are eight buildings within the area which are grade II listed.

Archaeology and other historic records

- 5.2.6 Sites of potential below ground archaeological interest exist within the area. These include the areas around the Parish Church of St Margaret's of Antioch and the new Blackfordby Hall. There are over three hundred²³ archaeological and historical sites within the NP area. The majority being medieval and Roman, with the remainder primarily from the Iron age, bronze age and Anglo-Saxon.

²³ https://www.archiuk.com/cgi-bin/archi_new_search_engine.pl?search_location=TL%2013%2002&search_type=archi_town_search&pwd=freesearch@frees

Figure 5.1 Heritage Assets in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



Legend

- Blackfordby Boundary
- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Area

Service Layer Credits: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2019 © Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right

Summary of future baseline

- 5.2.7 New development in the Neighbourhood Plan area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets and upon the character of the townscape. This may lead to negative effects, such as the delivery of unsympathetic design and material choice. Conversely, it could lead to positive effects through redevelopment of derelict and underused land and buildings. In the absence of a plan, there is less of a planning direction for the Parish; meaning that negative effects may be more likely to occur.
- 5.2.8 It should be noted that historic environment designations and the historic environment based policies within the NWLLP, would offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings.

5.3 Key headline issues

5.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a considerable number of heritage assets including listed buildings and a conservation area, which could be affected by policies and proposals within the plan (either positively or negatively).
- An insensitive approach that does not seek to conserve and enhance heritage assets could result in the erosion of townscape quality.

5.4 Scoping outcome

- 5.4.1 Historic Environment has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon the setting of heritage assets and the character of the built and natural environment.

5.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Historic Environment SEA theme?

- 5.5.1 The SEA topic 'Historic Environment' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 5.1 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 5.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Historic Environment

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the built environment	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment?• Contribute to better management of heritage assets?• Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance?• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?

6. Landscape

Focus of theme:

- Landscape and townscape character and quality

6.1 Policy Context

6.1.1 The **NPPF** recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital. Importantly, great weight is to be given to protecting and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

6.1.2 The Government's '**A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment**' (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. Actions proposed of relevance to the conservation and enhancement of landscape character are as follows:

- Working with AONB authorities to deliver environmental enhancements.
- Identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement of all England's Natural Character Areas, and monitoring indicators of landscape character and quality.

6.1.3 The **North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (SFA)** assessed the value of the landscape around settlement fringes of Ashby de la Zouch and other settlements in the area. The study identified the most distinctive and important landscapes and those that are important for the setting of settlements. Blackfordby is within the northern part of Urban Fringe 8 (North western fringe of Ashby close to Holywell Spring Farm extending to the A511). Blackfordby is described as being on rising ground with young woodland along its fringes. Here the County Landscape character area is The Coalfield; comprising gently undulating landscape with effects of coal and clay working activities. It displays dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The Landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with generally low woodland cover. The land is part of the National Forest. The assessment scores the landscape quality value of this area as 4 (out of a maximum of 9) and visual quality value as 8 (out of 12).

6.1.4 Several policies in **NWLLP** seek to protect the landscape. For example; **Policy En1** expects new development to maintain existing landscape features; such as, water courses and waterways, disused railway lines, trees and hedgerows. **Policy EN3** (the National Forest) says that the area between Ashby, Measham and Swadlincote (which includes the NP area) will be recognised as the 'Heart of the National Forest'. The policy seeks to encourage tourism and leisure activities associated with the National Forest, including economic opportunities based on the woodland and environmental economy. Furthermore, linkages to nearby urban areas will be strengthened, and new development will be exemplars of sustainable design and construction, with an emphasis upon the use of Forest-themed construction materials where appropriate.

6.2 Baseline Summary

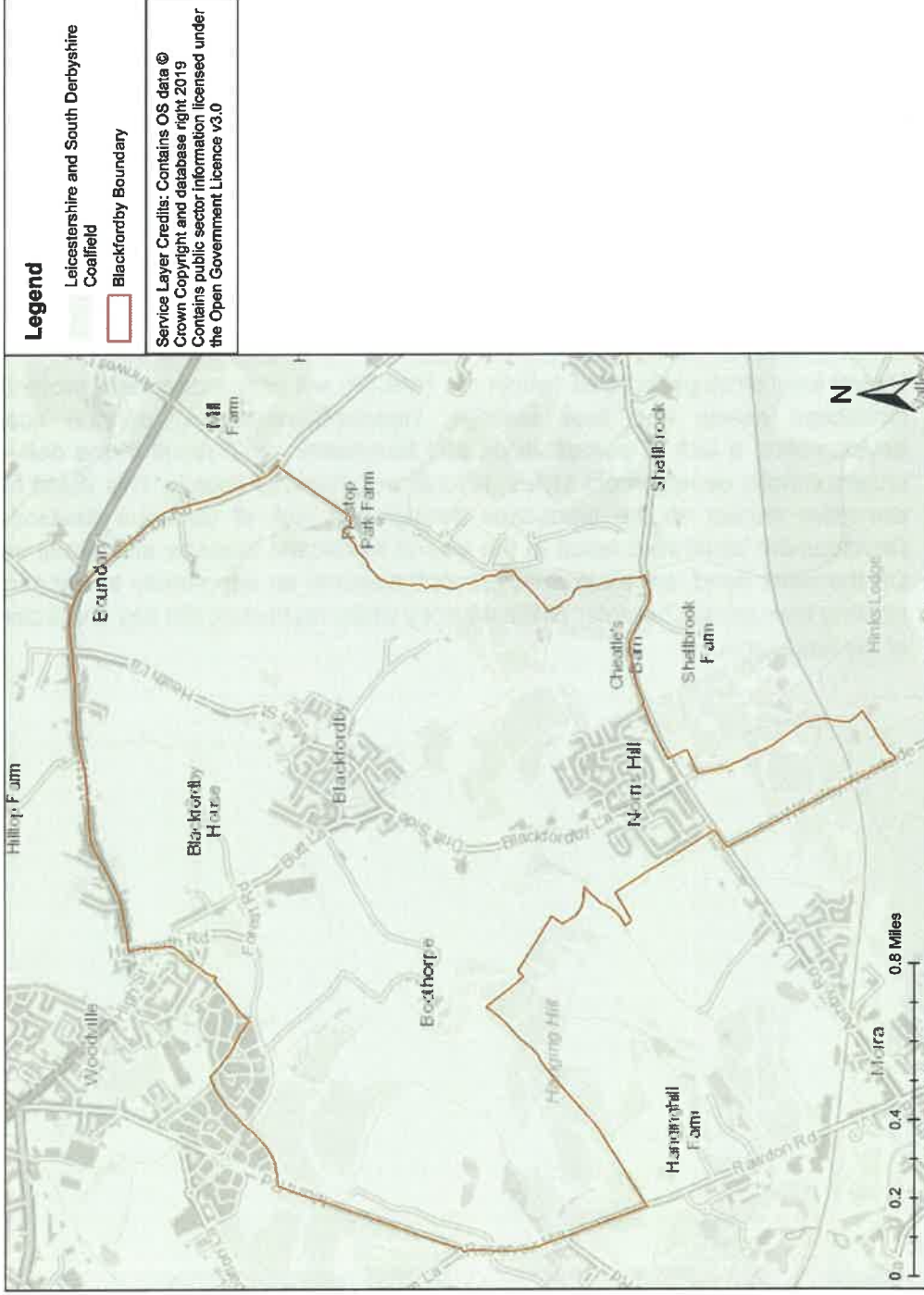
Summary of current baseline

- 6.2.1 The landscape character area (NCA) for Blackfordby is NCA 71 *Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield*. This is described as a plateau with unrestricted views of shallow valleys and gentle ridges (less pronounced to the south). To the east the land rises steeply, affording views of the Charnwood NCA. Ancient woodland straddles part of the boundary in the north. The river Mease SSSI and SAC forms part of the boundary with the Mease/ Sence lowlands NCA in the south-west and Leicestershire Vales NCA forms a less visually defined border in the south. Two *landscape types* are found in the NP area namely; enclosed farmlands and coalfield village farmlands.

Summary of future baseline

- 6.2.2 Higher level strategic policies (within the NWLLP) will offer a degree of protection to landscape assets and their settings. However, depending on the scale of development, a lack of overall vision and framework could result in the delivery of unsympathetic development styles, layouts and material choice. This could have a disruptive impact on the landscape through the lack of cohesive development. Development could also result in the loss of landscape features and visual impact. On the other hand, sensitive development presents an opportunity to enhance the existing townscape character of Blackfordby whilst respecting the key characteristics of the landscape.

Figure 6.1: Landscape Character in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



6.3 Key headline issues

6.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- There are no nationally or locally designated landscape areas (LLA and AAL) within the NP boundary.
- The policies of NWLLP offer a degree of protection to landscape assets and their settings, but insensitive development could have a disruptive impact on landscape.

6.4 Scoping outcome

2.1.2. Landscape has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon the character of landscapes, which also contributes to the rural setting of the village.

6.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Landscape SEA theme?

6.5.1 The SEA topic 'Landscape' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 6.1 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 6.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Landscape

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets? • Contribute to better management of landscape assets? • Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape? • Improve linkages to open space and the countryside?

7. Land, Soil and Water Resources

Focus of theme:

- Soil resource and quality;
- Watercourses;
- Water availability; and
- Water quality.

7.1 Policy Context

- 7.1.1 The EU's **Soil Thematic Strategy**²⁴ (2006) presents a strategy for protecting soils resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity and food safety.
- 7.1.2 The **NPPF** states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued soil and the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Policies should also prevent new and existing development from *'contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution'*. The Framework further stresses the importance for development to have adequate provision for water supply and wastewater. It also asserts that development should not have any detrimental effects on water quality.
- 7.1.3 In **Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England**²⁵ (2009), a vision is set out for the future of soils in the country. It suggests that changing demands on our soils need to be better understood and it must be ensured that appropriate consideration is given to soils in the planning process.
- 7.1.4 The **Future Water**²⁶ strategy (2011) seeks to achieve a secure supply of water resources whilst protecting the water environment. This means greater efficiency in water use, application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, managing diffuse pollution from agriculture, tackling flood risk and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 7.1.5 The Government's **'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'** (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. This includes using and managing land sustainably by protecting the best agricultural land, improving soil health and restoring and protecting peatlands. This also includes respecting nature by using our water more sustainably and requiring developments to bring about a net environmental gain which can include water quality.

²⁴ European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Strategy [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/three_en.htm

²⁵ Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available at: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/land/soil/documents/soil-strategy.pdf>

²⁶ Defra (2011) Future Water – The government's water strategy for England [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-water-the-government-s-water-strategy-for-england>

- 7.1.6 **The Leicester City and Leicestershire Strategic Water Cycle Study (2017)**²⁷ (WCS) to support and inform the Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) which sets out growth aspirations for the region. The WCS considered the potential water/ waste water and drainage infrastructure related constraints to future development within the region. The WCS concluded that development has the potential to cause a range of adverse environmental impact on the water environment and biodiversity features in the area and this should be appropriately assessed. Protecting sensitive water bodies from contamination of surface water runoff can be achieved through provision of wide vegetated zones adjacent to watercourses and SUDS to promote infiltration of surface runoff and contribute to aquifer recharge. Specifically, the WCS calls for all planning applications to include surface water drainage strategies demonstrating how SUDS will be used to protect receiving surface/ groundwater bodies from contamination whilst preventing increased flood risk. The WCS adds; *proximity to an environmental designation need not prevent development, however the onus is placed on the applicant for any site to prove that deterioration of the environment will not occur because of the proposed development.*

7.2 Baseline Summary

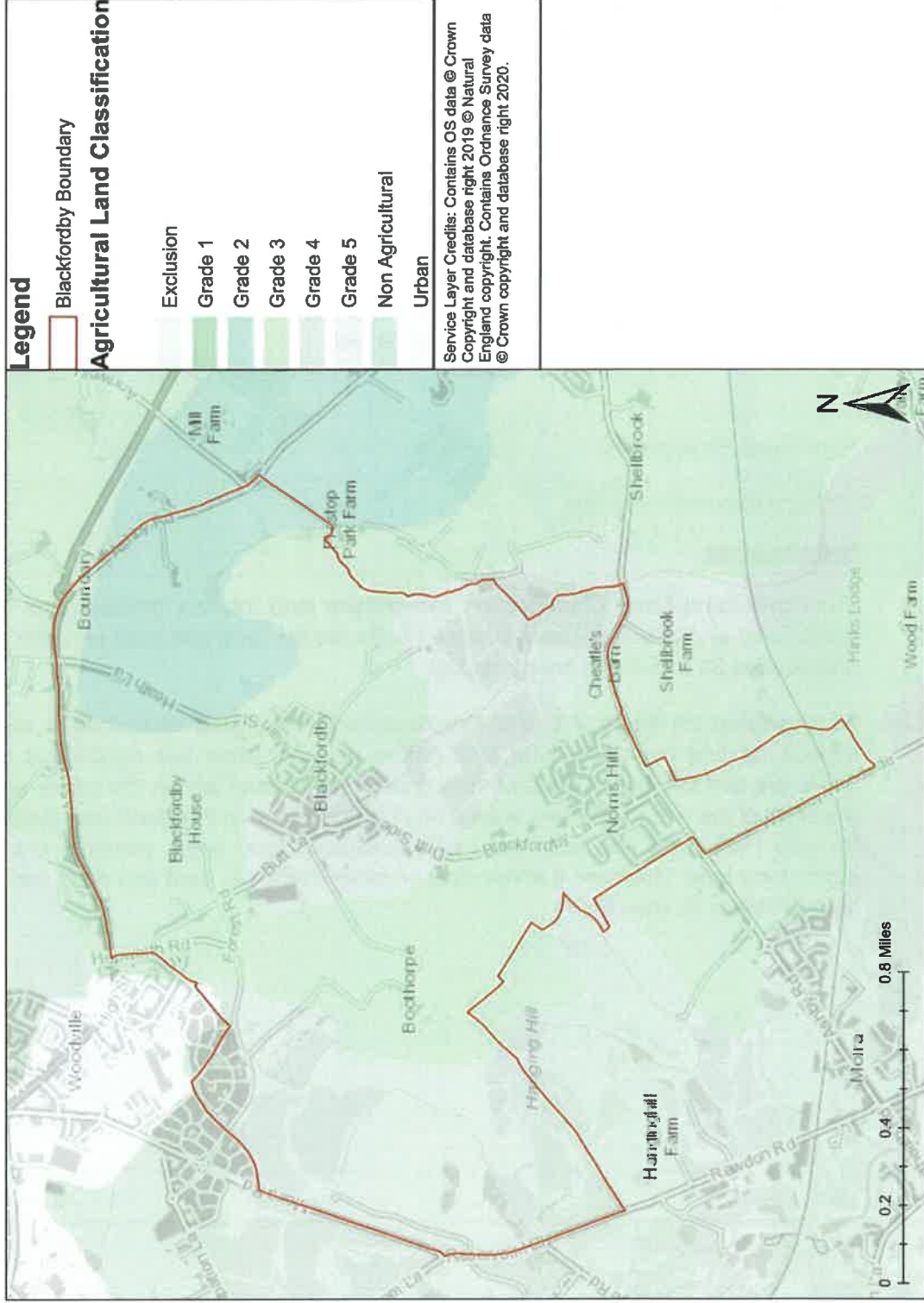
Summary of current baseline

Soil resources

- 7.2.1 The Agricultural Land Classification categorises land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'). Where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.
- 7.2.2 As illustrated on figure 7.1, the Neighbourhood Plan area comprises a mix of agricultural and non-agricultural land (urban use and other non-agricultural use). There are two sections of Grade 5 (low quality) agricultural land in the centre and to the West of the NP area. There is an area of grade 2 land to the North east (between Prestop Park farm and Boundary) with remaining land being primarily grade 3 agricultural land. However, it is not clear whether this is 3a; best and most versatile land (BVM) or 3b (non BMV).

²⁷ JBA Consulting Report; https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf

Figure 7.1 Agricultural Land Classification in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



Watercourses

- 7.2.3 The NP area falls within the Mease Rivers Operational catchment with two main water bodies; the Hooborough Brook from source to river Mease and Mease from Gilwiskaw Bk to Hooborough Brook. Both water bodies are classified as 'Moderate' Overall and 'Good' in terms of Chemical quality (Cycle 2 WFD)²⁸. The reasons for not achieving 'Good' overall status are; poor nutrient management (high phosphate levels) and land drainage in the Agriculture and rural land management category and mining and quarrying associated with historic coal mining activities. The objective is to achieve 'Good' overall status by 2027.
- 7.2.4 The river Mease is a designated site of special scientific interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its valuable fish species and aquatic plants. However, the area is failing to achieve 'Good' ecological status primarily due to high phosphate levels which have a damaging impact on plants and animals posing a threat to the species within the SSSI and SAC. The Environment Agency has provided funding to deliver river restoration schemes to improve river habitat and function on the River Mease and its tributaries. In addition, there is a developer contribution scheme in place, which also funds the restoration of the water quality in the Mease to offset the additional phosphate contributions of development in the catchment.

Water availability

- 7.2.5 It is important to ensure that there are adequate water resources to meet existing and future demands when planning new development. The water and wastewater utility for the NP area is Severn Trent Water Ltd. (STWL). Leicestershire is covered by 6 Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS). Blackfordby falls within the Tame, Anker and Mease CAMS. The Environment Agency classifies this CAMS as highly variable and highly modified by urbanisation. The River Mease and River Sence are the main rivers in the Leicestershire portion of the CAMS.
- 7.2.1 The catchment contains one principle aquifer of strategic importance, the Sherwood Sandstone. This has been split into nine groundwater management units (GWMU), two of which are partially within Leicestershire. One of these; Coleorton, has water available for licencing if applicants confirm that there is no impact on other abstractors, the environment and river flows. The other GWMU; Measham, does not have any water available for licencing due to over abstraction.

Water quality

- 7.2.2 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been designated by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. The NP area lies in a high Groundwater Vulnerability area.

²⁸ Source Environment Agency Catchment Explorer

- 7.2.3 The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination.
- 7.2.4 The majority of the NP area is wholly within a surface and a groundwater Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ). Agriculture is the main contributor to Nitrate pollution in this NVZ.

Summary of future baseline

- 7.2.5 The NP area contains areas of best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1 to 3a). It might be possible that higher grades of land are affected with un-planned, ad hoc growth.
- 7.2.6 In terms of water quality; requirements set out in the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. However, water quality could be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.
- 7.2.7 In terms of water resources; the NP lies in a moderately water stressed region. The combined effects of population growth, increased development and climate change are likely to exert increasing pressure on the water resources in future.
- 7.2.8 The River Mease and Gilwiskaw Brook (which flows into the Mease) have elevated phosphorous levels. Pressures from Agricultural and population growth can adversely impact the River Mease SSSI and SAC.
- 7.2.9 The NP area is wholly within a surface and a groundwater Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ). Pressures from agricultural and population growth can adversely impact the groundwater quality.
- 7.2.10 Development which requires sewage treatment may, if not designed correctly or located appropriately, result in an increased risk of pollution to groundwater and surface water. Development will therefore need to have due consideration to the capacity of sewage works.

7.3 Key headline issues

7.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a parcel of Grade 2 agricultural land and potentially some grade 3a land. These are classed as best and most versatile (BMV) land.
- The River Mease has elevated phosphorous levels. Deterioration of the water quality (ecological and chemical) can adversely impact the River Mease SSSI and SAC.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area falls within nitrate vulnerable zones.

7.4 Scoping outcome

- 7.4.1 The topic of 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA, as the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on soil / agricultural land and water quality. In view of the limited scale of development, loss of agricultural land is not likely to be significant. This does not mean that higher quality agricultural land should not be protected though, and such principles will need to be addressed through the site assessment process.
- 7.4.2 Despite the Plan area being covered by a nitrate vulnerable zone, it is considered unlikely that significant effects upon water quality would occur as a result of the Plan. The scale of growth proposed is relatively small, and changes to land use are not anticipated to increase nitrate pollution.
- 7.4.3 With regards to recreational pressures on the quality of the water bodies associated with the River Mease SSSI and SAC; the small scale of development proposed is unlikely to impose significant pressures on the existing wastewater treatment infrastructure. Measures such as appropriately designed SUDS could further help reduce impact on the existing treatment capacity and treated effluent quality. Therefore, significant effects in this respect are also unlikely.

8. Population and Housing

Focus of theme:

- Population size;
- Age structure;
- Housing delivery and needs;
- Housing tenure;
- Housing affordability.

8.1 Policy Context

- 8.1.1 The **NPPF** contains as part of its three overall overarching objectives, a social objective to 'support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations'. It further emphasises the need for homes to be of a size, type and tenure to meet needs of different social groups, with at least 10% of new homes to be provided for affordable home ownership subject to conditions and exemptions.
- 8.1.2 In February 2017, the Government published a housing white paper entitled '**Fixing our broken housing market**'. This establishes the government's plans to reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes in England through a series of four proposals. These including planning for the right homes in the right places, building homes faster, diversifying the house building market and supporting people in need of housing.
- 8.1.3 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2011-2031) adopted Nov. 2017 (NWLLP) Policy S2; 'Settlement Hierarchy' classifies Blackfordby as a Sustainable Village. These are described as settlements which have a limited range of services and facilities where a limited amount of growth will take place within the defined limits to Development. Paragraph 5.18 of the NWLLP clarifies that "*some development in these settlements is appropriate, although there is already a significant level of provision made through planning permissions. Any further development in such settlements will be restricted to either infilling or previously developed land which is well related to the settlement concerned*".
- 8.1.4 Policy H2b 'Housing provision: resolutions' of the NWLLP states that the council has resolved to grant planning permissions for a housing development on Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira for 18 dwellings.
- 8.1.5 The Leicester and Leicestershire and Leicester and Leicestershire LEP Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2017 (HEDNA)²⁹ informed the housing targets set in the NWLDCLP. The latter set a housing need of 9,620 dwellings for the period 2011-2031 for the District. The HEDNA report makes recommendations with respect to the total housing need for the region, including the level and mix of affordable housing required.

²⁹ GL Hearn report (2017): Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment

8.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Population size and age structure

- 8.2.1 The population of Blackfordby was 1,450³⁰ in 2011. In 2018, the population was estimated to be 1,471³¹ which represents around 1.45% growth since 2011.
- 8.2.2 Table 8.1 shows the age structure of the local population and that of Leicestershire as a whole, alongside the national data for England. It is apparent that Blackfordby has significantly lower percentage of residents in the 25-44 age group than Leicestershire and England as a whole. Similarly, the 0-14 and 15-24 age groups are lower in the NP area than the corresponding figures for Leicestershire and England. Conversely, the 45-64 and the 65 plus age groups are significantly higher than the corresponding figures for Leicestershire and England. The difference in the proportion of the 65+ age group is particularly strikingly; being 28% for Blackfordby Longville compared to 17.4% for Leicestershire and 17.1% for England. This clearly demonstrates there is a significantly higher proportion of older (65+) residents compared to the rest of Leicestershire and England.

Table 8.1 Age Structure (2011 Census)

Age group	Blackfordby	Leicestershire	England
0-14	12.6%	17.7%	17.3%
15-24	9.4%	10.9%	13.3%
25-44	18.1%	25.8%	25.9%
45-64	32.0%	28.3	26.5%
65+	28.0%	17.4	17.1%

- 8.2.3 According to the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Pre Submission Draft May 2019 a housing target of 147 has been set by the NWLDC for Blackfordby up to the end of 2031.³² The NP committee confirmed the above figure with NWDLDC and added a 15% buffer giving a target of 169 units.
- 8.2.4 A key aim of the NP is to deliver the housing required to meet local need. The NP supports the provision of sustainable housing in the Parish and intends to allocate a housing site within the NP to deliver 14 homes. The Parish Council's objective in preparing the NP is to conserve the identity and community of Blackfordby whilst proactively making provision for appropriate development in the village.

³⁰ 2011 Census – Figure is for Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) E01025952 (North West Leicestershire 008C)

³¹ NWLDC Housing Trajectory April 2019

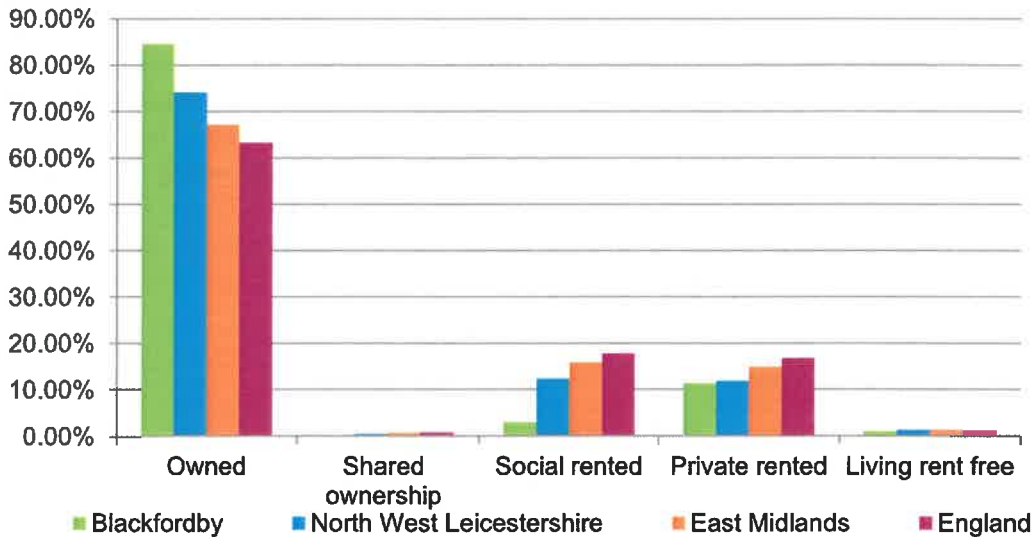
https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/housing_trajectory_april_20193/Housing%20Trajectory%202019.pdf

³² Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Pre submission May 2019 – Appendix 3 – Housing Site Assessments

Tenure

8.2.5 In terms of housing tenure; the majority of homes are owner occupied (85%) which is substantially higher than the 74% at County level (figure 8.2) and national level for England (63%) as a whole. The level of social rents (3%) is similar substantially lower than the corresponding figures for North West Leicestershire (12%) the average for England (18%). Similarly, the percentage of privately rented property is lower (11%) than that figure for North West Leicestershire (15%) and England as a whole(17%).

Figure 8.1 Housing Tenure – Percentage of Total³³



Affordability

8.2.6 The average house price in the NP area is around £235,425. This higher than the equivalent figure for Swadlincote and Woodville but lower than that for Ashby-de-la-Zouch (figure 8.3). The latest UK House Price Index shows the average house price in the UK is around £234,742.³⁴ Therefore, the average house price in the NP area is similar to the UK average.

Figure 8.2 House Prices³⁵

Settlement	Average Sale Price
Blackfordby	£235,425
Swadlincote	£186,519
Woodville	£189,863
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	£295,919

³³ 2011 Census data and AECOM calculations.

³⁴ UK House Price Index <http://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ukhpi>

³⁵ Source: rightmove.co.uk Average house prices updated 5th Feb.2020

8.2.7 In terms of housing mix required; the HEDNA report (2017) recommended the housing mix shown in figure 8.3 for NWLDC.

Figure 8.3 Recommended Housing Mix for NWLDC 2011-2036³⁶

Dwelling size	%
1 Bed	0-10
2 Bed	30-40
3 Bed	45-55
4+ Bed	10-20

Summary of future baseline

8.2.8 Population trends in the Neighbourhood Plan area show a growing and an ageing population. This is demonstrated by the notably higher than average 65+ age group and significantly lower than average 25-44 age group.

8.2.9 In terms of housing typology, the HEDNA derived housing needs for NWL District as a whole, shows that demand for 2-3 bedroomed dwellings is forecast to significantly exceed that for other types of dwellings.

8.3 Key headline issues

8.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The proportion of older residents (65+) is significantly higher in the NP area compared to the regional and national average.
- The population of Blackfordby is likely to increase due to the developments currently being built in the area.
- Average house prices in the NP area are similar to the national average. This makes it attractive to first time buyers and young families.
- The large proportion of older residents will require a commensurate level of smaller, adapted dwellings, suitable for older residents to ensure this group is able to continue living in the NP area. This will have the added effect of releasing larger properties into the market and reducing under occupancy.

³⁶ Suggested Housing Mix (Market Housing) from the 2017 HEDNA report
; https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/hedna_main_report_january_2017/HEDNA%20Main%20Report%20%28January%202017%29.pdf

8.4 Scoping outcome

- 8.4.1 The SEA topic 'Population and Housing' has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as the Plan will influence housing delivery and the delivery of other infrastructures and services that are required to deliver and sustain sustainable communities.

8.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Population and Housing SEA theme?

- 8.5.1 The SEA topic 'Population and Housing' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 8.4 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

Table 8.4: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Population and Housing

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the provision of a responsive range of house types and sizes to meet identified needs of different community groups?• Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs throughout their lives?• Create sustainable new communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities?• Enhance housing provision in existing communities?

9. Health and Wellbeing

Focus of theme:

- Health indicators and deprivation; and
- Influences on health and wellbeing.

9.1 Policy Context

- 9.1.1 The **NPPF** contains as part of its three overall overarching objectives, a social objective to ‘support strong, vibrant and healthy communities... by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment’. It also states that ‘access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.
- 9.1.2 The Framework further outlines that the planning system should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places that are designed to promote social interactions, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles.
- 9.1.3 Fair Society, Healthy Lives (**‘The Marmot Review’**)³⁷ (2011) investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: ‘overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities.
- 9.1.4 The Government’s **‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’** (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. Relevant proposals include connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing by:
- Using green spaces including through mental health services.
 - Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school, with focus on disadvantaged areas.
 - Greening our towns and cities by creating green infrastructure and planting one million urban trees.
 - Making 2019 a year of action for the environment, working with ‘Step Up To Serve’ and other partners to help children and young people from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment.

³⁷ The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12111/53895/53895.pdf>

9.1.5 The **North West Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2028**³⁸(NWLHWS) core 10-year vision is to *measurably improve the health and wellbeing of all people in NWL*. The overarching aims of the strategy are;

- People will live longer and have healthier lives.
- People will 'age well' and have a healthy older life.
- Every Child will have the best possible start in life.

The strategy is based on the following principles;

- Promoting self-care – educating and empowering individuals to take more responsibility for changing their own behaviour (all ages).
- Targeting inequalities – providing key services for all residents but targeting resources and interventions at those most in need.
- Prevention and early intervention – prevent and tackle the wider causes of ill health and poor lifestyle choices and health conditions.
- Improve mental health and wellbeing – ensure that mental health is regarded across all streams of work.
- Partnership working and cooperation – statutory, voluntary and community organisations working with each other to improve health and wellbeing across the district.
- Interventions - need to take place where they can have the most impact

9.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Health indicators

9.2.1 According to Public Health England's (PHE)³⁹ area profile for Blackfordby, the average life expectancy for males is 80.7 and for females 83.7. For comparison the average life expectancy figures for England are 79.5 and 83.1 for males and females respectively. In the main; the region scores better than average on health indicators.

- The under 75 mortality rate is slightly better in Blackfordby (though not significantly) the national average. The score for the ward is 89 (deaths per 100,000 resident population) which is lower than the average figure for England (100).
- The proportion of residents with limiting long-term illness or disability is significantly worse for Blackfordby Ward (25.8%)⁴⁰ compared to the national average for England (17.6%). This is likely to be due to the above average proportion of the residents being in the 65+ age group.
- Blackfordby performs similarly to the National average for England on the remaining PHE indicators.

³⁸ https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/health_and_well_being_strategy

³⁹ http://www.localhealth.org.uk/#/sid=5983:slv=wd18_DR;z=415459_328051_41853,18442:l=en:v=map#15

⁴⁰ 2011 Census

- 9.2.2 Queens Hospital, Burton-On-Trent is the nearest hospital and A&E located approximately 7 miles from the NP area. Coalville community hospital is around 7.4 miles away. There are four hospitals within 9-11 miles in Derby.
- 9.2.3 In terms of GP surgeries in the NP area; there six GP surgeries within a radius of 3 miles with the nearest being Castle Medical Group in Ashby-de-la-zouch (1 mile), followed by Woodville Surgery (1.3 miles) and Swadlincote Surgery (2.3 miles).
- 9.2.4 Access to open space and green infrastructure is widely recognised to have a positive effect on health as it encourages and facilitates outdoor activity. Blackfordby is located in the centre of the National Forest with at the junction of several local and long-distance footpath. There are several recreation grounds (Blackfordby playing field, Methodist Chapel playing fields, Blackfordby recreation ground and children's play area). Additional amenity open spaces include North Close/ South Close Open Space, Methodist Chapel access greenspace, Hall Close open space, Thorntop Close open space and church yards associated with Methodist Chapel and St Mary of Antioch.

Deprivation

9.2.5 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD2019) is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below.

- **Income:** The proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those individuals that are out-of-work and those that are in work.
- **Employment:** The proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness / disability, or caring responsibilities.
- **Education, Skills and Training:** The lack of attainment and skills in the population.
- **Health Deprivation and Disability:** The risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Morbidity, disability and premature mortality are also considered.
- **Crime:** The risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- **Barriers to Housing and Services:** The physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services.
- **Living Environment:** The quality of the local environment, including the quality of housing stock, air quality and road traffic incidents.

Two indices, subsets of the Income deprivation domain, are also included:

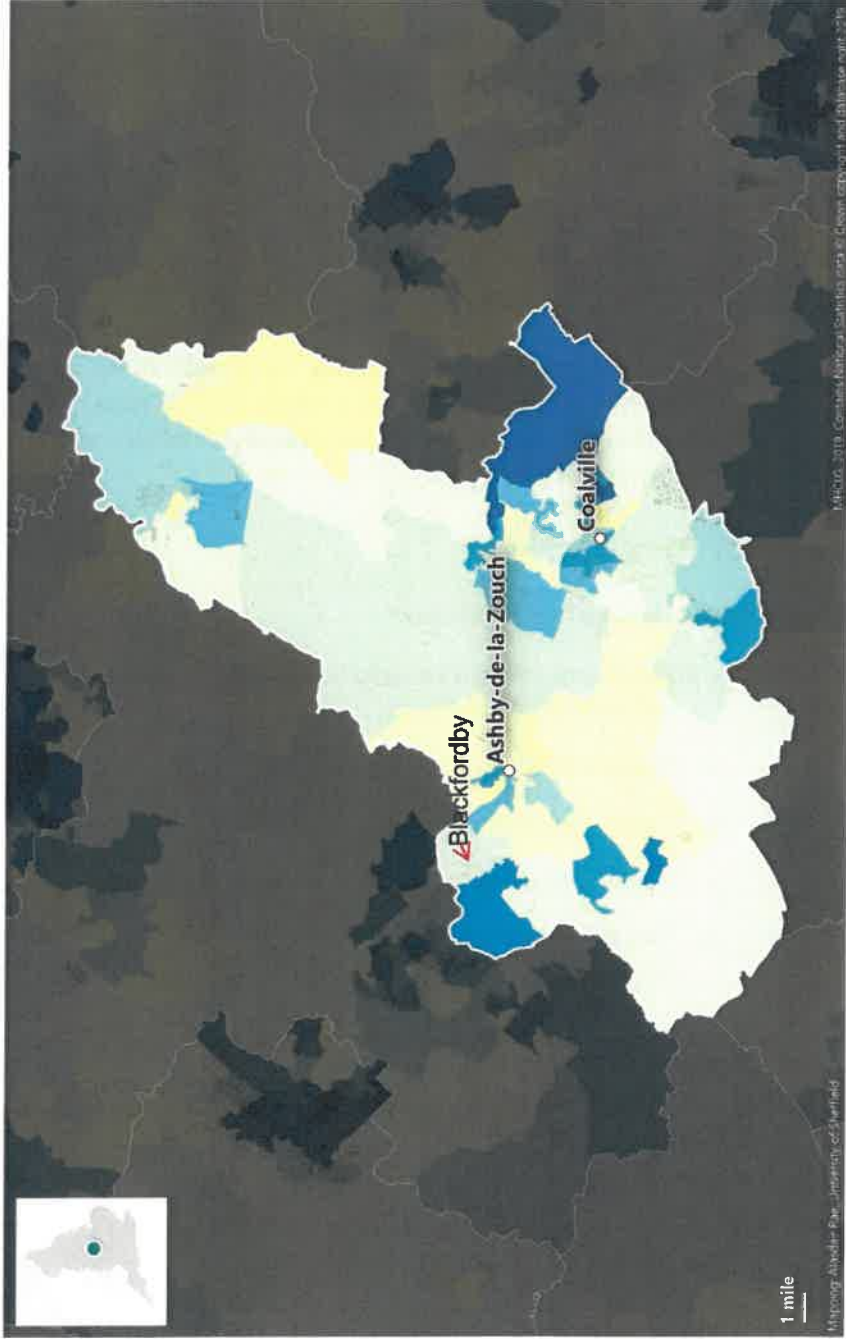
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index:** The proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index:** The proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

- 9.2.6 As illustrated in Figure 9.1 below, most of the NP area falls within the 30% least deprived areas in England (7th decile). However, the neighbouring ward of Ashby Woulds,; adjacent to the NP area's western boundary falls within the 30% most deprived areas in England (3rd decile).
- 9.2.7 As there is a strong correlation between deprivation and health, this corroborates the findings of the health profile of the area showing a higher than average level of health and wellbeing.

Figure 9.1: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

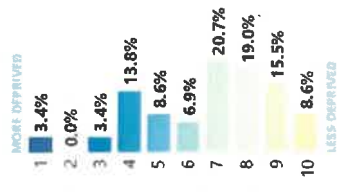
English Indices of Deprivation 2019

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE



Local deprivation profile

% of LSOAs in each national deprivation decile



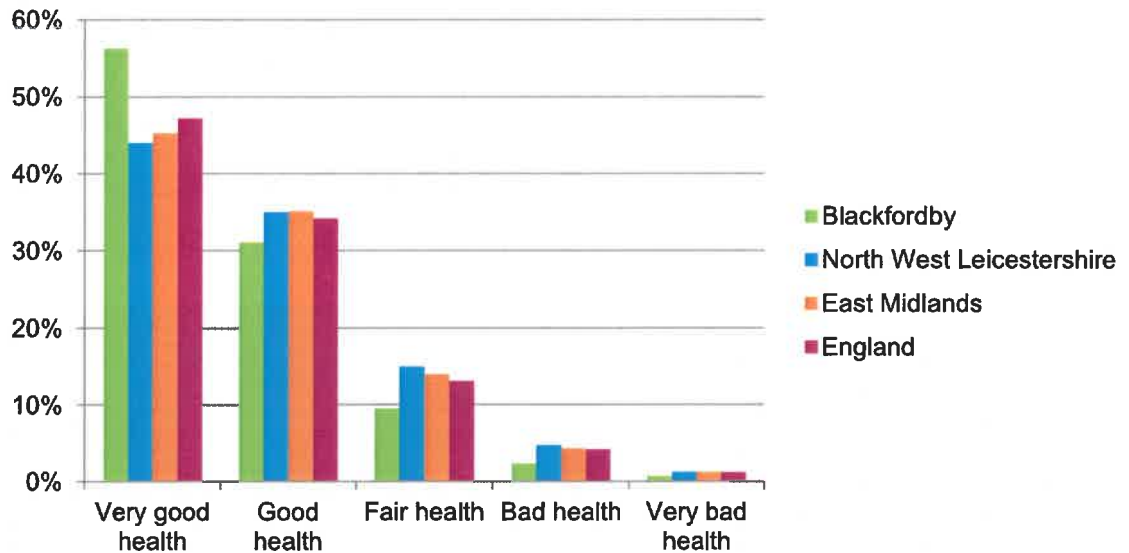
What this map shows

This is a map of Indices of Deprivation 2019 data for **North West Leicestershire**. The colours on the map indicate the deprivation decile of each Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) for England as a whole, and the coloured bars above indicate the proportion of LSOAs in each national deprivation decile. The most deprived areas (decile 1) are shown in blue. It is important to keep in mind that the Indices of Deprivation relate to small areas and do not tell us how deprived, or wealthy, individual people are. LSOAs have an average population of just under 1,700 (as of 2017).



9.2.8 A self-assessment of health by residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area indicates that most residents in Blackfordby consider themselves to be in Good to Very Good health (56% and 31%). Only 2.4% of residents consider their health to be bad and less than 1% consider their health to be very bad (Figure 9.2).

Figure 9.2: Residents General Health (Census 2011: KS301EW)



Summary of future baseline

9.2.9 It is likely that with increased population growth there will be a higher demand for health, fitness and leisure facilities within the NP area. The growth in the 65+ age group is likely to put increasing pressure on health and social care services and facilities in the NP area.

9.3 Key headline issues

9.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- Blackfordby has a broadly healthy population with higher than national average life expectancy.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area has lower than average levels of deprivation.
- There are several healthcare facilities within 2-4 miles from the NP area.
- The NP area has a number of green and open spaces.
- The trend of an increasingly ageing population will require additional provision for health and social care services.

9.4 Scoping outcome

9.4.1 Given the good levels of health enjoyed by residents of the NP area and low levels of deprivation the SEA topic 'Health and Wellbeing' has been **SCOPED OUT**.

10. Transportation

Focus of theme:

- Transportation infrastructure;
- Accessibility; and
- Modes of travel

10.1 Policy Context

10.1.1 The **NPPF** (2019) requires that 'transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making'. The scale, location and density of development should reflect 'opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure'. To help reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health the planning system should focus significant development 'on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes'. The Framework also requires that planning policies support an appropriate mix of uses across an area to further help reduce the need to travel as well as the provision of high quality walking and cycling network.

10.1.2 The **Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3⁴¹ 2016-2026** (LTP) sets out the County Council's vision and policies for transport in the county (excluding Leicester City Council) and how this will achieve the strategy's vision for '*Leicestershire to be recognised as a place that has, with the help of its residents and businesses, a first class transport system that enables economic and social travel in ways that improve people's health, safety and prosperity, as well as their environment and their quality of life.*' The goals of the LTP are summarised below;

- A transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth
- An efficient, resilient and sustainable transport system
- A transport system that helps to reduce the carbon footprint of Leicestershire.
- Accessible, integrated system promoting equality of opportunity for all
- Transport system that improves safety, health and security for residents
- A system that helps improve quality of life and makes Leicestershire a more attractive place to live work and visit.

10.1.3 The **NWLLP** places particular emphasis on improving public transport (a key priority) and on improving access to the strategic highway network⁴². Improvements to the bus network is also supported, including routes to serve East Midlands Airport.

⁴¹ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/consultations/tp4-2018.pdf>

⁴² North West Leicestershire Local Plan (adopted 2017), Paragraph 8.43.

10.2 Baseline Summary

Summary of current baseline

Infrastructure

- 10.2.1 Blackfordby is well served by the roads network and is close to strategic highways, such as, the M1 and M42 motorways and the A50. The A511, the Leicester to Burton upon Trent trunk road passes along the northern boundary of the NP area. Heath Lane connects the village to the A511 at Boundary and Butt Lane/ Hepworth Road connect it the A511 at Woodville.

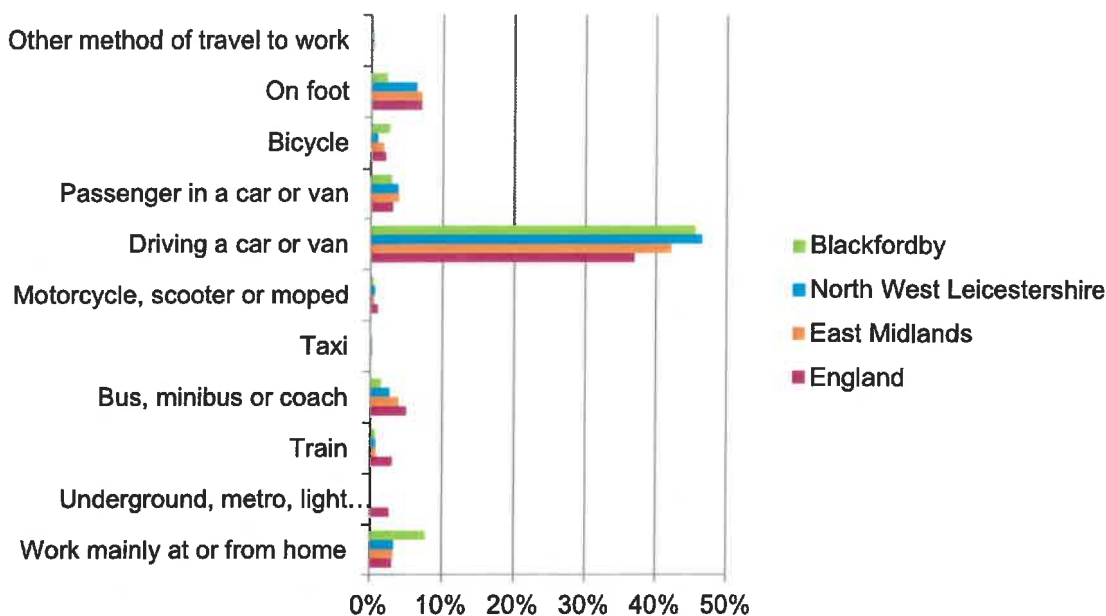
Accessibility

- 10.2.2 There are mainline train stations at Tamworth (14 miles) and Burton upon Trent (7.3 miles). East Midlands and Birmingham Airports are within 20-40 minutes by road. There is also a bus service between Burton upon Trent and Ashby-de-la-Zouch and on to Leicester.
- 10.2.3 In terms of bus services there are three buses per hour passing through in each direction between Burton upon Trent and Ashby de la Zouch (two of these going on to Leicester). The Arriva company has two routes with one route actually passing through the village. The Arriva 29 route has recently been changed to use Butt Lane rather than Main Street and Heath Lane.
- 10.2.4 There are sixteen footpaths and two bridleways running to and through the Neighbourhood Plan Area some of which form most of the central section of the National Forest Way; a path of over 75 miles from the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to Bradgate Park in Leicestershire.

Modes of travel

- 10.2.5 The majority of working residents (45.7%) use their cars to travel to work (figure 10.1), with less than 2% opting for public transport (train and bus). This is similar to the pattern observed North West Leicestershire as whole (less than 4%). There is a higher proportion of cycling to work in the village (2.6%) compared to North West Leicestershire (less 1%). Conversely, walking to work is less prevalent in the village (2.2%) compared to the rest of North West Leicestershire (6.3%).

Figure 10.1 Mode of Travel to Work



Summary of future baseline

- 10.2.6 New development potentially lead to an increase vehicular traffic potentially resulting in congestion.
- 10.2.7 The traffic volumes conveyed through the A511 and local roads are likely to continue to increase creating further congestion and rat-running within the NP area.
- 10.2.8 The growth in population through new development can make public transport services, such as, buses and trains more commercially viable.

10.3 Key headline issues

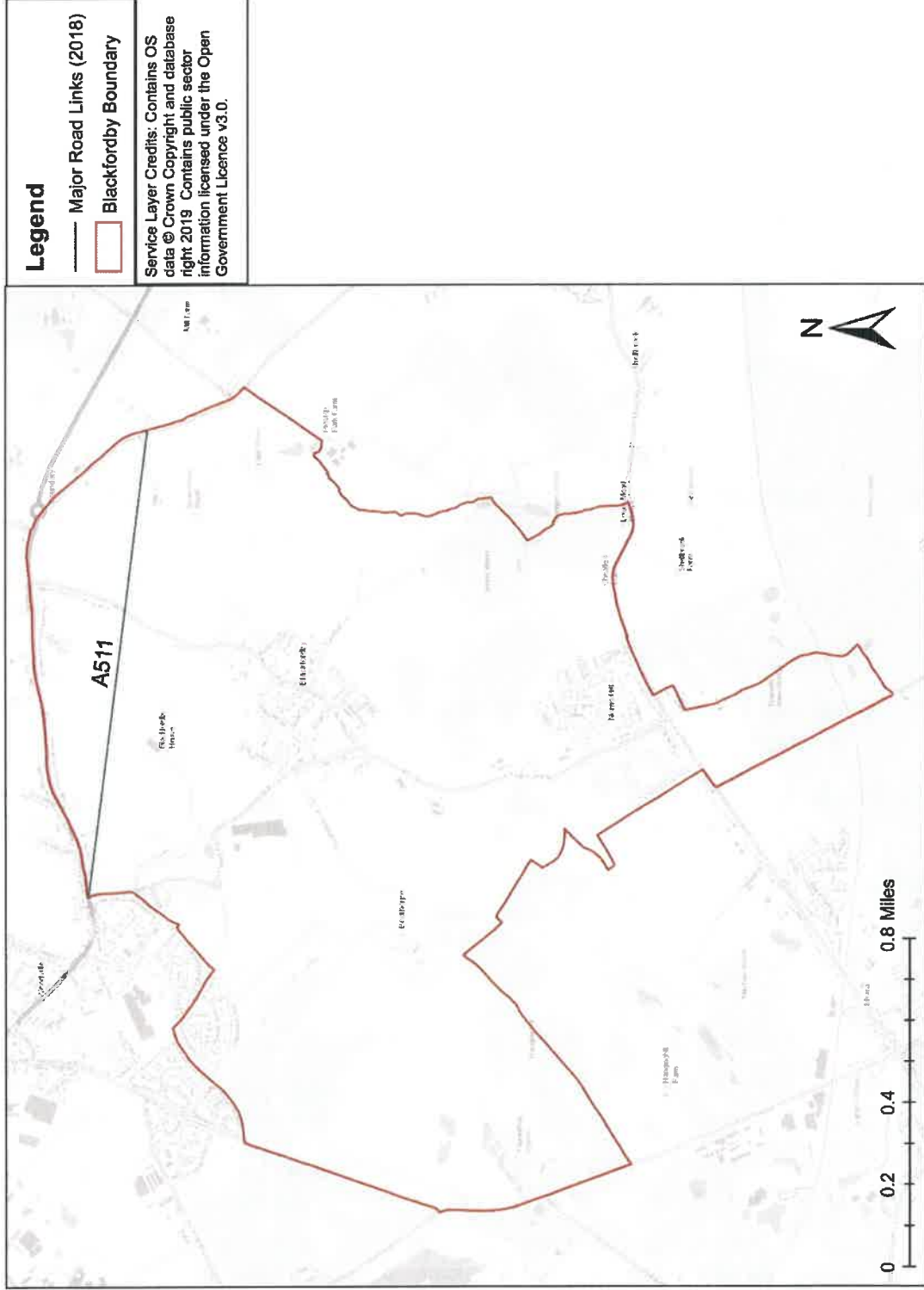
10.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The Neighbourhood Plan area is well served by the highway network and the railway. There is scope for improving Bus connectivity.
- Local residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area are significantly more likely to travel by car compared to the national average.
- Whilst new development can increase traffic and congestion, the scale of development proposed is unlikely to produce a significant increase in traffic within the NP area.

10.4 Scoping outcome

10.4.1 The SEA topic 'Transportation' has been **SCOPED OUT** to the SEA, as the scale of development proposed is unlikely to generate significant amounts of additional traffic and movement in the NP area.

Figure 10.2: Road & Railway Network in relation to Blackfordby Ward boundary



11. The SEA Framework and Methodologies

11.1 The SEA Framework

- 11.1.1 The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics (as set out in Chapters 2-10).
- 11.1.2 The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which will be used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Development Plan Document (and any reasonable alternatives).
- 11.1.3 Table 11.1 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which brings together the objectives and questions that have been set out at the end of each SEA topic chapter. The Framework focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can have in some areas.

Table 11.1: The SEA Framework

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions (Will the option/proposal help to :)
<p>1. Biodiversity</p> <p>Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Avoid any impacts on the River Mease SAC? • Avoid any impacts on the importance of the National Forest? • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the NDP area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change?
<p>2. Climatic Factors (including Flood Risk)</p> <p>Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding?

3. Historic Environment

Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the built environment.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment?
- Contribute to better management of heritage assets?
- Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?

4. Landscape

Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets?
- Contribute to better management of landscape assets?
- Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape?
- Improve linkages to open space and the countryside?

5. Population and Housing

Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Support the provision of a responsive range of house types and sizes to meet identified needs of different community groups?
 - Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs throughout their lives?
 - Create sustainable new communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities?
 - Enhance housing provision in existing communities?
-

12. Next Steps

12.1 Subsequent stages for the SEA process

12.1.1 Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage in a six-stage SEA process:

- Screening (NPPG Stage A)
- Scoping (NPPG Stage B)
- Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan (NPPG Stage C)
- Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation (NPPG Stage D/E)
- Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making/SEA (and present 'measures decided concerning monitoring') (NPPG Stage F)

12.1.2 The next stage will involve establishing and appraising reasonable alternatives for the Plan. This will involve consideration of strategic issues such as the growth and distribution of housing, and site options. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back so that they can be considered when preparing the draft plan.

12.2 Consultation on the Scoping Report

12.2.1 Involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public. The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

12.2.2 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, in particular the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA Framework.

12.2.3 Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

12.2.4 Ishaq Khan, Sustainability Consultant, *AECOM Ltd, 4th Floor, Bridgewater House, Manchester, M1 6LT*

12.2.5 Email address: Ishaq.Khan@aecom.com

12.2.6 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

13. Glossary

Agricultural Land - Agricultural land is classified into five grades. Grade one is best quality and grade five is poorest quality. A number of consistent criteria are used for assessment which include climate (temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure, frost risk), site (gradient, micro-relief, flood risk) and soil (depth, texture, stoniness).

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) – This is a measure of deprivation in England, for every local authority and super output area seven domains of deprivation are measured: (Income, Employment, Health deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Crime the Living Environment). This allows all 32,482 SOAs to be ranked according to how deprived they are relative to each other. This information is then brought together into one overall Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

LNR – Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

NNR - Many of the finest sites in England for wildlife and geology are National Nature Reserves (NNR). There are currently 224 across the country and almost all are accessible and provide great opportunities for people to experience nature.

Objective – A statement of what is intended, specifying the desired direction of change in trends Option For the purposes of this guidance option is synonymous with 'alternative' in the SEA Directive Plan For the purposes of the SEA Directive this is used to refer to all of the documents to which this guidance applies, including Development Plan Documents. Supplementary Planning Documents are not part of the statutory Development Plan but are required to have a sustainability appraisal.

RAMSAR – Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Locally Important Geological Sites – LIGs are designated by locally developed criteria and are currently the most important designated sites for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected areas such as SSSIs.

SAC – Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive

Scheduled Monument - A 'nationally important' archaeological site or historic building, which is given protection against unauthorised change.

Scoping – The process of deciding the scope and level of detail of a Sustainability Appraisal.

Screening – The process of deciding whether a document requires a SA.

SEA Directive – European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

SEA Regulations – The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which transposed the SEA Directive into law).

SPA – Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed on Annex I of the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species.

SSSI – SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. They include some of our most spectacular and beautiful habitats - large wetlands teeming with waders and waterfowl, winding chalk

rivers, gorse and heather-clad heathlands, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote uplands moorland and peat bog.

Super Output Area (SOA) – SOAs are a new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. Three layer of SOA have been devised: Lower Layer - Minimum population 1000; mean 1500. Built from groups of SOAs (typically 4 to 6) and constrained by the boundaries of the Standard Table (ST) wards used for 2001 Census outputs. Middle Layer - Minimum population 5000; mean 7200. Built from groups of Lower Layer SOAs and constrained by the 2003 local authority boundaries used for 2001 Census outputs. Upper Layer - To be determined; minimum size c.25, 000.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. In the UK, SEA is increasingly used to refer to an environmental assessment in compliance with the 'SEA Directive'

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – Generic term used to describe a form of assessment which considers the economic, social and environmental effects of an initiative. SA, as applied to Local Development Documents, incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Sustainability Issues – The full cross-section of sustainability issues, including social, environmental and economic factors.

Response to Blackfordby SEA Report Recommendations.

(Red is AECOM response Blue is agreed outcome)

Recommendation	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to better support energy efficiency and reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in new development. This could include specific requirements to supporting design features that improve energy efficiency and reduces carbon dioxide emissions. This is of particular relevance given the climate emergency declared by North West Leicestershire District Council in 2019. 	<p>Policy G2 d) already says development should 'incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology such as solar panels and rainwater harvesters'.</p> <p>Is this not sufficient?</p> <p>This policy does not add much above the existing baseline established through existing local plan and national planning policy and supporting design documents. Therefore, it is recommended that you delve further into this issue and provide additional detail which is required to secure positive effects. However, the ER does note that the plan is considered to have a minor positive effect for climatic factors.</p> <p>The NP is considered to be sufficient in having a positive impact for climatic factors. No change.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is also considered that the NDP could be positively improved through either including a new policy, or by revising Policy G2 (Design) to require development proposals where possible to enhance the historic features and significance of non- designated heritage assets and their settings. The policy could further be strengthened by requiring development proposals to demonstrate how proposals would result in a net enhancement to the historic significance of heritage assets and their setting. 	<p>There is a policy (Env 4) on local heritage assets. Is this a better location for the reference to enhancing NDHAS?</p> <p>Incorporating the recommendation in Policy ENV4 does sound reasonable.</p> <p>We try not be too prescriptive on how recommendations should be incorporated in the NP.</p> <p>Change incorporated into Env 4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation) can be improved by requiring development proposals to protect, buffer and where possible enhance 	<p>This will be incorporated into the Policy.</p> <p>Change made</p>

<p>existing boundary hedges, trees and habitats and maintain undisturbed ecological connectivity. It is also recommended that the policy requires development proposals for the housing allocation to be supported by an ecological survey including a survey of protected species and to demonstrate how development would not cause harm or the loss of ecologically significant habitats, constrain ecological connectivity or displace without adequate mitigation any species present on site. The policy should also seek to encourage environmental net gain in accordance with the aspirations of the NPPF.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy H1 can further be improved by affording protection to important existing landscape features and setting out a presumption against their harm. This includes safeguarding and where possible enhancing the natural corridor along Shell Brook and natural boundary screening along the southern boundary and undeveloped parts of the boundary along Drift Side. It is also recommended that planning proposals are required to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that demonstrates that the proposed scheme would not cause substantial harm to landscape character and the identified important view and that any adverse effects on landscape have been adequately mitigated. The LVIA should further demonstrate how any associated planting accords with landscape character, uses native species and where possible results in a net landscape gain. 	<p>This will be incorporated into the Policy.</p> <p>Change made</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could be strengthened by allowing development proposals the option to deviate from the requirement set when supported with a housing needs assessment that demonstrates a local unmet need for the proposed housing mix. This should ensure the policy is flexible to changes in housing need in the long term. 	<p>The Policy currently says that alternative mixes can be provided if the latest evidence indicates that this is appropriate.</p> <p>Isn't this already covered?</p> <p>The point we are trying to make here is that the policy could be improved by stating that development proposals can deviate from the requirements set in the latest evidence underpinning the plan when a local unmet need can be demonstrated through an assessment on housing need.</p>

	<p>I have amended the wording of the recommendation to improve clarification.</p> <p>The policy already allows for deviation from the NP evidence base. No change.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy H2 (Housing Mix) could further be strengthened by setting out the proportion of housing types and sizes to ensure new housing reflects local need and contributes towards the widening of choice. 	<p>We think that specifying precise housing types and sizes would be too prescriptive It is up to the applicant to demonstrate the precise mix based on the evidence at the time.</p> <p>No change</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy ENV2 (Protection of Sites of Environmental Significance) could be strengthened by setting out a presumption against development on the identified sites of high significance for their environmental features and to require any development proposals to demonstrate and achieve environmental net gain, guided by the principles set out in the NPPF (2019). 	<p>We will add in a reference to the need to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.</p> <p>The Policy already requires development proposals to demonstrate that the benefit of development outweighs the harm by requiring a balancing judgement to be applied.</p> <p>Change made</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy ENV4 (Non-designated Key Buildings) should seek to afford greater protection to the identified features of local architectural and heritage interest by setting out a presumption against the loss or harm to the heritage asset unless if it can be demonstrated that the public benefit of the development proposal significantly outweighs the harm caused. The policy should further require development proposals to achieve enhancements to the significance of these heritage assets including their setting. 	<p>We will strengthen the policy as recommended.</p> <p>Change made</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies ENV8 and BE5 could be strengthened by requiring development proposals to be supported with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to provide an assessment of the landscape significance of the site and the likely impact of development. Policy ENV8 could further be improved by requiring a comprehensive restoration of land following use including a net improvement in the landscape quality of the site where feasible and appropriate. 	<p>We will add in these recommendations.</p> <p>Change made</p>

Section/ Policy No.	No	Respondent	Comments	Response	NP amends
General	6	Highways England	We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Examination version of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan which covers the period 2020-2031. It is noted that the document provides a vision for the future of the area and sets out a number of key objectives and planning policies which will be used to help determine planning applications.	Noted	None
General	6	Highways England	Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth. In relation to the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan, our principal interest is in safeguarding the A42, M42 and A38 which route approximately 2 miles to the east, 4 miles to the south and 7 miles to the west of the Plan area respectively. We understand that a Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in conformity with relevant national and Borough-wide planning policies. Accordingly, the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Blackfordby is required to be in conformity with the adopted North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2011-2031) and this is acknowledged within the document. Highways England has previously reviewed the Pre-Submission version of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan and provided comments in a response letter dated 19 June 2019. At the time it was noted that planning approval was granted for 197 dwellings within the Parish and exceeded the 147 dwellings target indicated by North West Leicestershire District Council.	Noted	None
General	6	Highways England	Having reviewed the Examination version of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed housing figure have now been amended using more up-to-date figures. The Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363 total planning approvals is now at 217 dwellings within the Parish while the target indicated by North West Leicestershire District Council is now 126 dwellings up until 2031. This is in addition to a housing allocation of 14 dwellings identified in accordance with Policy H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. Due to the limited level of growth currently being proposed across the Neighbourhood Plan area, we do not expect that there will be any impacts on the operation of the SRN. We have no further comments to make and trust the above is useful in the progression of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan.	Noted	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	We are writing in relation to the latest public consultation on the revised Pre-Submission version of Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan. Heaton has previously promoted two parcels of land in our clients' ownership for residential development within the boundary of the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Area. The purpose of this letter is twofold, to respond to the recent findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment undertaken by AECOM in relation to the proposed and discounted housing sites, and further promote the interests of our clients, Mr and Mrs Mansfield, to Ashby de la Zouch Town Council. Our clients have experience in promoting land for residential development in the Blackfordby area, this includes securing outline planning permission for the "Spires View" development (by Davidsons) off Butt Lane, Blackfordby.	Noted	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	We have previously submitted sites and engaged with the District's SHELAA preparation on behalf of our clients as well as promoting the following sites within the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Area for residential development: • Land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby (referred to hereon as SHELAA Site ref. Byd); and • Land south of the A511 Ashby Road and west of Heath Lane, Boundary (referred to hereon as SHELAA Site ref. Bo1).	Noted	None

General	7	Heaton Planning	We submitted representations to the previous Pre-submission version of Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan in June 2019 on behalf of our clients. In light of the omission of our clients' sites as housing allocations, we wish to reaffirm My Ref: MAN-001-C/BNP/001 Your Ref: Date: 14th May 20212 and develop the points raised in our previous submission in light of the current consultation opportunity.	Noted	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	Following a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report undertaken by North West Leicestershire District Council in November 2019, it was determined that the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan (Pre-submission version) May 2019 required a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken. These assessments have been carried out by external consultants, AECOM, and the assessment findings have led to Ashby de la Zouch Town Council making amendments to the Pre-submission BNP (hereafter known as 'BNP'). These amendments have now been published as part of a second public consultation exercise on the revised Pre submission BNP, alongside the SEA and HRA assessments and supporting information including individual housing site assessments	Noted	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	Once formally 'made', the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for Blackfordby, setting out the location and requirements for new development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area up to 2031. Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires a draft Neighbourhood Plan to meet 'basic conditions' including having regard to national policies and advice, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development	Noted	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	In accordance with the requirement to achieve sustainable development, we therefore wish to take this opportunity to make representations on behalf of our clients to the Pre-submission version BNP in light of the SEA findings and in ongoing support of our clients' land as a sustainable location for future residential development. This letter sets out that the proposed housing sites promoted on behalf of our clients (references BY4 and Bo1) are demonstrably preferential to the draft housing allocation within the Pre-submission BNP.	Noted. It is perhaps inevitable that an agent for a landowner will promote their site.	None
General	7	Heaton Planning	The SEA has undertaken an assessment of various elements of Pre-submission BNP. A key element of the SEA is to ensure that the proposals in the Pre-submission BNP are appropriate when judged against the reasonable alternatives. Following a scoping exercise, the resulting SEA Framework has focused on the following objectives in relation to Pre-submission BNP: Biodiversity, Climatic Factors, Historic Environment, Landscape, and Population and Housing. We would like to focus on several aspects of the SEA findings which we consider have direct and indirect implications for our client's land, as well as decreasing the likelihood of the Pre submission BNP being found to meet the basic conditions that all Neighbourhood Plans should meet at examination.	Noted	None
General	8	LCC	Leicestershire County Council is supportive of the Neighbourhood plan process and welcome being included in this consultation.	Noted	None

General	13	Gladman	Gladman Developments Ltd (Gladman) specialise in the promotion of strategic land for residential development and associated community infrastructure and have considerable experience in contributing to the development plan preparation process having made representations on numerous planning documents throughout the UK alongside participating in many Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan examinations. These representations provide Gladman's response to the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan (BNP) under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations 2012. Through these representations, Gladman provides an analysis of the BNP and the policy choices promoted within the draft version of the neighbourhood plan. Comments made by Gladman through these representations are provided in consideration of the BNP's suite of policies and its ability to fulfil the Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions as established by paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4b of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and supported by the Neighbourhood Plan chapter of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	Before a neighbourhood plan can proceed to referendum it must be tested against a set of basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4b of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Basic Conditions that the BNP must meet are as follows: "(a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order. (d) The making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. (e) The making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area). (f) The making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations. (g) Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or neighbourhood plan)."	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In doing so it sets out the requirements for the preparation of neighbourhood plans to be in conformity with the strategic priorities for the wider area and the role they play in delivering sustainable development to meet development needs. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread through plan-making and decision-taking. This means that plan makers should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and Local Plans should meet objectively assessed housing needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. This requirement is applicable to neighbourhood plans.	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	The recent PPG updates make clear that neighbourhood plans should conform to national policy requirements and take account of the most up-to-date evidence. This is so that Ashby de la Zouch Town Council can assist North West Leicestershire Council (NW/LC) in delivering sustainable development and be in accordance with basic condition (d).	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	The application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development will have implications for how communities engage with neighbourhood planning. Paragraph 13 of the Framework makes clear that Qualifying Bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should develop plans that support strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing development and plan positively to support local development.	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	Paragraph 15 further makes clear that neighbourhood plans should set out a succinct and positive vision for the future of the area. A neighbourhood plan should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency. Neighbourhood plans should seek to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, jobs and thriving local places that the country needs, whilst responding positively to the wider opportunities for growth.	Noted	None

General	13	Gladman	<p>Paragraph 29 of the Framework makes clear that a neighbourhood plan must be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider area and plan positively to support the delivery of sustainable growth opportunities.</p>	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>On 6th August 2020, Government published the Planning for the Future White Paper setting out proposals for how it is seeking to 'radically reform' the planning system. The proposals are seeking to streamline and modernise the planning process. The White Paper Consultation closed on 29th October 2020 and it is important the Town Council keeps abreast with the proposals and implications this may in turn have on the preparation of the BNP. Timescales remain uncertain however subject to the outcomes of this process the Government has signalled its intent to make rapid progress toward this new planning system through the swift introduction of new legislation to implement the changes. The Town Council should be mindful of these changes and the potential impact to the BNP and the need to undertake a review of the neighbourhood plan following the Plan's adoption. Further details on this matter are set out in section 3 of these representations.</p>	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>To meet the requirements of the Framework and the Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions, neighbourhood plans should be prepared to conform to the strategic policy requirements set out in the adopted Development Plan. The adopted Development Plan relevant to the preparation of the BNP and the Development Plan which the BNP will be tested against is the North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011-2031. The Local Plan was adopted in November 2017 and is the overarching planning policy document for the district and forms the basis for decision making process in relation to all planning applications looking forward to 2031, or such a time as it, or elements of it are superseded. Policy S1 of the adopted Plan recognised a need to undertake an early review and so, the Council undertook consultation on Emerging Options between November 2018 and January 2019. The Council submitted the Partial Review to the Planning Inspectorate in February 2020. Examination hearings were held in September 2020 and the Inspector's Report was issued on 17th February 2021 which confirmed, subject to a number of main modifications, the Review was found to be sound. The North West Leicestershire Local Plan (as amended by the Partial Review) was adopted on 16th March 2021.</p>	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>The Council is due to commence work on a Substantive Review of the Local Plan in the near future. An updated Local Development Scheme will shortly be published which will provide a realistic timeline of when Local Plan Substantive Review consultations are anticipated to take place as well as likely submission, examination and adoption dates. The Substantive Review is a wider ranging review of the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan taking into account changes that have occurred since adoption, including the publication of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will need to identify potential housing and employment sites to meet the identified need, along with the new infrastructure required as well as reviewing the existing policies. On the 31st March 2021, North West Leicestershire's Local Plan Committee met to discuss the overall housing requirement for the Plan. At this moment in time, there are four potential scenarios, ranging from an overall housing requirement of 6,103–13,870. It is likely that the Council will use the outcome from the Housing and Economic Assessment study to inform the overall housing requirement which is 8,512 dwellings over the proposed plan period 2020-2039 which equates to 448 dwellings per annum. This does not consider any unmet housing need which arises from Leicester City which will need to be factored in at some stage of the Local Plan Review process. Further work is now being undertaken to agree a redistribution of the unmet need and is not anticipated to be completed until Autumn 2021</p>	Noted.	None

General	13	Gladman	<p>The context of the Review arises with the necessity to address more fully the wider housing needs of the local housing market area. In turn, neighbourhood plans should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, jobs and thriving local places that the country needs, whilst responding positively to the wider opportunities for growth. Indeed, paragraph 29 of the Framework makes clear that a neighbourhood plan must be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider area and should positively support the delivery of sustainable growth opportunities. Given the above, it is important that policies contained in the BNP allow for sufficient flexibility so that they will be able to respond positively to changes in circumstance which might arrive through the preparation of the above documents such as additional housing growth being directed towards the neighbourhood area. This degree of flexibility is essential to ensure that the BNP is capable of being effective over the duration of its plan period and not ultimately superseded by s38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that: 'if to any extent, a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approached, or published (as the case may be).'</p>	<p>Noted. The NP can only work on the basis of the latest evidence of housing need, which it has done.</p>	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>These representations are made in response to the current consultation on the draft version of the BNP, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This chapter of our representation highlights the key points which Gladman raises with regard to the content of the BNP as currently drafted. This section is in response to the BNP consultation document and its supporting evidence base.</p>	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>Neighbourhood Plan Policies: This section of the representations provides Gladman's comments on the draft BNP policies. As currently proposed, Gladman believes that a number of the BNP policies require further modification/amendment, before they can be considered consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions.</p>	Noted	None
General	13	Gladman	<p>Gladman is a privately funded, family run business with over 30 years' experience in the land and development industry. From our beginnings in housebuilding, through to our success in commercial and industrial properties, we have evolved into the UK's largest and most successful land promoter. Gladman wishes to promote Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira for residential development. The majority of the land falls under the neighbouring parish, although the two northernmost fields sit within Blackfordby Parish and are designated within the neighbourhood plan area, east of Driftside and Blackfordby Lane (illustrated in blue on Figure 1 overleaf). This site offers a good opportunity to ensure the delivery of sustainable, distinctive residential development in an attractive market location. Gladman considers this site to be suitable for allocation through the BNP to assist the Town Council in achieving sustainable growth and affordable housing, alongside infrastructure improvements which are considered desirable in the locality. The site: • Site Size – 6.72 hectares • Number of units: 125 dwellings (including the provision of 20% affordable housing) • Designation: Open Countryside</p>	Noted	None

General	13	<p>Assessment against Basic Conditions: Gladman recognises the Government's ongoing commitment to neighbourhood planning and the role that such Plans have as a tool for local people to shape the development of their local community. However, it is clear from national guidance that the BNP must be consistent with national planning policy and the need to take account of up-to-date housing needs evidence and the direction of growth outlined in the emerging North West Leicestershire Local Plan Review. If the plan is found not to meet the Basic Conditions at Examination, then the plan will be unable to progress to referendum. A) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan. • With specific reference to Policy G1 – Limits to Development, Policy G2: Design and Policy ENV 4 – Built Environment, these policies do not provide a positive Framework for growth meaning the plan would fail on this basic condition. D) The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development • Specifically with regard to Policy G2: Design, the policy does not entirely accord with the tenets of sustainable development.</p>	<p>We disagree with this assessment</p>	None
General	13	<p>As detailed through this representation, we suggest that greater flexibility must be built into the BNP's proposals. Should the BNP proceed and fail to plan for this flexibility, there is a real risk that its proposals will need to be reviewed upon the emerging North West Leicestershire Council's Local Plan Review adoption, if it is to remain an up-to-date part of the development plan. In a number of instances, the BNP policies duplicate the requirements of national or local planning policies, or require further justification and clarity. These issues should be addressed through modification of the plan.</p>	<p>The Town Council has in place a review mechanism to review the NP should circumstances change in the future.</p>	None
General	13	<p>Gladman are grateful for the opportunity to comment on the drafted policies set out within the updated Regulation 14 Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan document. These representations have been drafted with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF2019) and the Planning Practice Guidance. Gladman have provided comments on several issues which have been identified in the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan consultation material and recommend that the matters raised are carefully explored during the process of preparing the neighbourhood plan for submission to North West Leicestershire Council. We hope you have found these representations informative and useful towards the preparation of the BNP and Gladman welcome any future engagement with the Town Council to discuss the considerations within forwarded documents.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	None
General	14	<p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made. Natural England does not have any specific comments on this neighbourhood plan SEA (Feb 2021).</p>	<p>Noted</p>	None
Site assessments	7	<p>Chapter 3 of the SEA contains an appraisal of 'alternative approaches in relation to the housing growth targets and the location of housing to be delivered'. The Pre-submission BNP proposes to allocate one site to contribute to meeting the local housing needs target, which has been 3 promoted as part of the District's SHELAA process (SHELAA site By2). Four additional sites, all contained within the District's SHELAA (2019) and identified by the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group, have been assessed as reasonable alternatives in the SEA. The sites are: • Site 1 - Our clients land at Heath Lane, Boundary (SHELAA site Bo1) • Site 2 - Land rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By2) • Site 3 - Our client's land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By4) • Site 4 - Land at Hepworth Road, Woodville (SHELAA site Wd2) • Site 5 - Land at Blackfordby Lane, Moira (SHELAA site Mo12)</p>	<p>Noted</p>	None

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	In light of the potential significant adverse effects on both biodiversity and landscape, sites W42 and Mo12 are considered to be un-sustainable alternatives for residential development and are not discussed further within these representations. Instead, this letter focuses on the mis-scoring of Sites Bo1 and By4 and how the latest iteration of the Pre-submission BNP conflicts with its requirement to deliver sustainable development, as per the basic conditions of a Neighbourhood Plan found at Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).	Noted	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	As is clearly illustrated within the SEA appraisal findings, Sites Bo1 and By4 are the joint highest scoring sites and, more importantly, score considerably higher in Biodiversity and Higher in Population and Housing than the proposed Pre-submission BNP site allocation, Site By2. It is noted that site By2 scores higher on Landscape grounds, with a predicted neutral effect. The potential landscape impacts are revisited further within this letter.	Noted	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	It is considered that the SEA has been prepared by a suitably qualified professional and the findings are well-respected and accepted to be objective. Therefore, it is considered that great weight should be applied to the findings of the SEA site appraisal in relation to the allocation of sustainable sites for future residential development within the limits of the neighbourhood plan. At present, the Pre-submission BNP directly conflicts with its objectively-prepared evidence base.	The SEA site appraisal does not cover all aspects covered by the SSA. The SEA conclusion was to recommend additional conditions to be applied to the allocation - which has been done - rather than changing the allocation.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We note that the Parish has already exceeded the District-wide housing provision target of 169 units (including 15% buffer) and is proposing to allocate an additional housing site to ensure that local needs will be met. Sites Bo1 and By4 have the ability to deliver large-scale housing development >100 units which, when assessed against the existing provision within the neighbourhood area, could be considered as disproportionate and excessive growth in this area.	Agree - site capacity is disproportionate to the size of the village	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We wish to highlight that the size of the sites should be viewed as an opportunity, rather than a constraint, to future development. The size of Sites Bo1 and By4 provides opportunities to reduce the developable area to include significant biodiversity offsetting and landscaping works as part of any future development proposal. Therefore, a 'medium capacity' of between 11-20 dwellings is proposed for Sites Bo1 and By4, in line with the Sustainable Site Assessment scoring framework set out in Appendix 3 of the Pre-submission BNP. Of significant importance is the SEA's appraisal of sites Bo1 and By4 in relation to Biodiversity objectives. Both sites present 'opportunities for development to enhance the quantity and quality of existing habitats (which are predominantly agricultural land), introduce new habitats and green infrastructure and achieve biodiversity net gain'.	These sites can be considered in any review of the Neighbourhood Plan should housing requirement figures increase in the future	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The UK government is in the process of preparing new environmental legislation as a result of the governance gap created by Brexit. The Environmental Bill will, through various mechanisms, provide a new framework for improving the natural environment. The 'biodiversity gain objective' set out in Part 6 (supporting Schedule 14) is one of the key mechanisms, whereby the biodiversity attributable to developments covered by the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) will be required to exceed the pre-development biodiversity value of the 'onsite habitat' by at least 10%, which is defined as the habitat on the land to which the planning permission relates.	Noted	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	Development Plans are in the process of incorporating biodiversity net gain planning policies as a standard requirement, in line with the impending legislative ambitions for increased environmental protection and enhancement. Therefore, the SEA findings in relation to biodiversity net gain for our clients' sites should be a afforded great weight in relation to the allocation of sustainable sites for future residential development.	Policy H1 includes a requirement for proposals to achieve a net environmental gain as does Policy ENV2	None

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	In addition to the content of Policy En1 of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2017) it is clear that Pre-submission Government legislation and environmental priorities are to promote the maintenance of biodiversity and maximise opportunities for habitat creation and gains in 5 biodiversity wherever possible. Therefore, the benefit of the scale of Sites Bo1 and By4 should not be ignored. The sites are the two largest promoted for housing allocation within the Pre-submission BNP and therefore they have the greatest potential to incorporate meaningful habitat creation on a scale that is not possible at any other potential housing site. It should also be noted that our clients own additional parcels of land within the locality which could be utilised for biodiversity offsetting purposes in association with development coming forward at Bo1 and By4.	Noted - however environmental net gain is not the only consideration and on balance, taking all factors into account, the sites in question did not score highly enough to warrant an allocation.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	Furthermore, the proposed allocation site By2 is in proximity to several small areas of Woodland Priority Habitat and the National Forest. The SEA affirms that 'new development encroaching on these areas could lead to loss of habitats and associated biodiversity' which is wholly contrary to impending national legislative ambitions for increased environmental protection and enhancement.	Noted. The SEA included recommended mitigation which has been incorporated into the policy H1.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We will now revisit the potential significant landscape impact of sites Bo1 and By4. The SEA appraisal predicts that development on these sites could cause 'significant irreversible harm to landscape character'. This is partly attributed to a higher scale of growth potential at sites Bo1 and By4 when compared with site By2. However, we would like to reiterate that, although the entirety of both sites is available, achievable and deliverable for residential development within the BNP plan period, the developable footprint does not need to extend across the entirety of each site as shown in Appendix 2. There are clear opportunities to achieve a landscape led design code through appropriate landscaping and mitigation.	Noted - however the site assessment process has concluded and it is not appropriate to revisit the assessments.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning policies to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (our emphasis added). It should be noted at this stage that there are no nationally or locally designated landscape areas (LLA and AAL) within the NDP boundary and the landscape quality value of this area is scored at 4 (out of a maximum of 9) within the North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (SFA).	Noted	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SEA concludes that 'most site options are likely to result in some harm to landscape character through the extension of the built-up area and from visibility from public vantage points'. Therefore, some adverse impact on landscape character is considered to be inevitable and should be balanced against the potential to protect the natural environment in other ways, such as enhancing the quantity and quality of existing habitats through development of sites Bo1 and By4	These considerations have already been taken into account on the SSAs	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We consider that the scale of development possible at Sites Bo1 and By4 is an opportunity, not a constraint, especially given that the sites have the flexibility to support either a modest number of dwellings or a higher number, with sufficient land available to deliver significant landscaping, buffer planting, areas devoted to nature conservation, and/or public open space.	Noted - however the volume of housing proposed was deemed to be inappropriate given the housing requirement for Blackfordby.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We would like to support our previous comments made in relation to draft policies within the May 2019 Pre-submission BNP in relation to: • Policy H1: Residential Site Allocation • Policy H3: Windfall Housing Sites • Policy ENV6: Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity and provide further comments in light of the SEA findings and publicised individual site assessments.	Noted	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	Firstly, we thank the NDP Steering Group for now publishing Site Assessments for all sites. This was not the case during the previous Pre-submission BNP consultation, which rendered public scrutiny of the site selection methodology impossible, along with the application of that methodology.	Noted	None

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>We will focus on the three sites given the highest sustainability scoring within the SEA which comprise the Pre-submission BNP site allocation By2 and our clients land at Bo1 and By4. According to the District's SHELAA, all three sites are 'potentially suitable and potentially available between 2029-2039'. This is contrary to the findings of the Pre-submission BNP RAG Scoring System which offers the following site scores: • Site 1 - Our clients land at Heath Lane, Boundary (SHELAA site Bo1) Red -4 • Site 2 - Land rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By2) High green scoring site of 8 • Site 3 - Our client's land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By4) Red - 10</p>	<p>The SSA was based on issues of local significance and therefore adopted a more locally detailed approach than the SHELAA.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The BNP at present is supported by an unsound and conflicting evidence base. On receipt of the now-publicised individual site assessments and following our review of the RAG scoring system, we would like to raise the following points: It is stated within paragraph 3.1 of Appendix 3 to the Pre-submission BNP (Housing Site Assessments) that all 'local factors' were 'fully considered' in the initial site assessments undertaken by an external consultant which were subsequently used to define the site selection criteria and the RAG Scoring System. We do not concur with this statement and wish to question why the Sustainable Site Assessment scoring framework for Blackfordby does not contain an assessment criteria relating to biodiversity. We do not consider that this significant issue and/or opportunity has been adequately addressed in the scoring framework where there is no mention of ecological habitats or biodiversity net gain.</p>	<p>Environmental issues DO feature in the SSA. There are sections relating to greenfield land, agricultural land, landscape character trees, hedgerows etc. These are all factors associated with the location of the land - matters such as biodiversity net gain are related to the development proposal not the site suitability.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>In light of the findings of the SEA, it is considered logical to assume that our client's land at sites Bo1 and By4 would be scored much higher in this regard when compared with the proposed site allocation By2. Biodiversity is considered to be an extremely important 'local factor' and its absence within the current scoring framework renders the current scoring system unsound.</p>	<p>Biodiversity is important but there are many other factors that have been taken into consideration within the SSA as stated above.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Expansion site Heath Lane/Boundary (SHELAA Ref Bo1). The SSA estimates a site capacity of 200 dwellings. Site capacity has already been discussed in relation to sites Bo1 and By4 where the developable footprint does not need to extend across the entirety of each site. Delivering a medium capacity site of between 11 - 20 dwellings would lead to a RAG scoring of amber, rather than red. Site Bo1 has the flexibility to deliver up to 200 8 dwellings, but clearly has the potential to deliver a much smaller number of dwellings within the site.</p>	<p>The development sites were presented as max capacity of 200 and 124 respectively</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>We concur with the findings of the AECOM SEA which considers flexibility of capacity to be a positive, rather than a negative. We do not consider that sites should be penalised for their flexibility to incorporate large areas of landscaping, habitat creation and open space as well as assisting to meet housing targets. As no constraint is identified, the site should be scored as green.</p>	<p>The constraint IS identified in the scoring framework for Blackfordby as indicated in the Appendix.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The site is attributed an amber RAG score with regard to its current use as agricultural land. The land is in the ownership and control of our clients. We reiterate that the land is available for development without 'use' constraints. A score of green is more appropriate.</p>	<p>Noted. The scoring framework has been consistently applied across all sites.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>With regard to adjoining uses, the SSA states that the site is outside of the current built form of Blackfordby. This is correct; however, the site immediately adjoins building development at Boundary. The site therefore "adjoins a residential location" which is stated within the RAG Scoring System as meriting a score of amber as opposed to red.</p>	<p>All those expressing an interest in development had the opportunity to challenge the assessment before being finalised. The change of a single score will not impact on the overall ranking of sites.</p>	None

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA refers to development of the site impacting on a 'high quality rolling landscape'. This is considered to be a relatively subjective assessment given that there are no nationally or locally designated landscape areas (LLA and AAL) within the NDP boundary and the landscape quality value of this area is scored at 4 (out of a maximum of 9) within the North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (SFA). Although landscape impact is inevitable in this location, the site has clear opportunities to achieve a landscape led design code through appropriate landscaping and mitigation to reduce any potential significant landscape impacts. This would lead to a RAG scoring of amber, rather than red.	Whilst it is inevitable that there are elements of subjectivity involved, the process has been undertaken in a comprehensive and transparent manner.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA provides a red scoring for the site in relation to important trees, woodland and hedgerow due to 'several mature trees dotted around the boundaries of the site and three of the boundaries are planted with hedgerow which is of a very high quality'. Site By2 is given an amber scoring where 'three of the boundaries have mature hedgerows and several mature trees are found on the boundary and within the curtilage of the site'. There appears to be some inconsistency in the scoring of these two sites which are described as having similar tree, woodland and hedgerow cover. Mitigation measures would be required if development were to come forward at site Bo1 which results in an amber score.	Noted. Sites had different features and were scored accordingly.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA considers that there is no relationship between the site and existing patterns of built development where the site is 'highly visible'. The site is given a red score. Existing roadside ribbon housing flanks the junction between Heath Lane and the A511. These existing residential properties provide partial visual containment of the site, screening views from the north west, north and north east and the site is generally screened from views from the south east due to existing built development, relatively robust hedgerows and landform. Therefore, we consider that the site represents an amber score where landscaping and planting could be used to mitigate visual impacts.	Opportunities were available to challenge the initial assessments and that was the appropriate time to raise issues of this nature. Any rescoring would not affect the ranking of sites.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA states that the ditch and trees within the site are potential habitats for BAP species including badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals. This leads to a red score for local wildlife. Site By2 is also considered to have potential for nesting birds and is given a green score. Again, there appears to be some inconsistency in the scoring of these two sites and why mature trees at site By2 would not also support potential bat habitats. No evidence is presented to support the conclusion drawn from a green score for Site By2 that development there would result in "No impact on wildlife". The SSA are either erroneous (and therefore do not represent a sound evidence base) or overtly conflict with the findings of the AECOM SEA which scored our client's sites significantly better than the proposed allocation, Site By2. In adherence with the SEA, Site By2 should be scored red and Sites Bo1 and By4 scored green.	Opportunities were available to challenge the initial assessments and that was the appropriate time to raise issues of this nature. Any rescoring would not affect the ranking of sites.	
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We do not concur that development of the site would 'severely undermine' the character and overall setting of the Conservation Area which is located approximately 300m south of the site at its closest point. Instead, given the stand-off distance and the presence of ribbon residential development in between the site and the Conservation Area, we consider that there would be less than substantial harm at most, resulting in an amber score, rather than red.	No mention of ecological diversity or biodiversity net gain. The SSA process is a community led process, this exercise was completed in November 2018 and the ecological details of the sites were not felt to be substantially different between the sites assessed to merit a different and separate scoring criteria. Current SSA scoring system unsound.	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	With regard to safe pedestrian access, the site benefits from an existing footpath. There are no constraints, and the site should be scored green.	The scoring system was developed by a VL consultant and local people, he had undertaken about 15 community led SSA exercises in 2018, the criteria have been supported by planning examiners so they are proven to be sound. Expansion site Heath Lane/Boulevard (SHFLAA Ref Rn11)	

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The SSA predicts a 'massive negative impact' from this 'very large number of units' on existing vehicular traffic in this location. Again, we would like to reiterate that, due to its size, the site provides great flexibility in the number of units that could be provided. We do not agree that development of this site would result in significant impacts on the existing highways network, given the sustainable transport options available and the existing pedestrian access along Heath Lane providing pedestrian access to the village centre. Minimal impact on the village centre is anticipated which represents a green RAG score, rather than red.</p>	<p>Area considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site covers an area of 10.7HA and has a potential yield of 200 units. The SSA was undertaken on this basis and when the landowner received a copy of the draft SSA report for their comments in November 2018 a reduced site yield was not offered. The SSA report will remain on the basis of the whole site submitted in the SHELAA process as is standard practice. The site owner had the opportunity to respond during the assessment process.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The SSA considers that appropriate vehicular access for the site can only be provided by significant highways improvements and therefore the site scores amber in this regard. The site can be accessed from both Heath Lane and the A551. The site benefits from existing vehicular accesses, complete with dropped kerbs. Therefore, we consider that 'appropriate access can be easily provided' which represents a green score.</p>	<p>Flexibility required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The housing need in Blackfordby parish had already been exceeded by 40 units (197 units allocated against a target of 147 units) when the NDP was developed in 2018. The owner did not offer any flexibility in terms of the site yield when consulted on the draft SSA reports in November 2018.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The RAG scoring framework indicates that a pub/bus stop can be used to determine the designated village centre. There are several bus stops within 200m of the site along the A511. Therefore, the site represents a green scoring, rather than red.</p>	<p>Agricultural use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This scoring criteria assesses the quality of the land that would be developed, the SSA report states "The site is classified as a combination of grade two and grade three agricultural land by Natural England. The Eastern half of the site is grade two, this is land of a very good quality, National planning guidance is to "usually" refuse consent on this important land in line with the Natural England best practise recommendation". Land is a finite national resource and once developed is lost for agricultural use, given the very good quality of the land a red score is justified.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The SSA considers that a walking distance of more than 400m to the local Primary School should be given a red RAG score. However, the distance of a walkable neighbourhood is widely regarded as being a 10-minute walk or 800m radius. The site is within the 10-minute walk threshold and, if the scoring system were amended to reflect walkable neighbourhood distance of 800m, the site would score green rather than red.</p>	<p>Adjoining uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community group considered the main built form of the village as the focus of attention, so the red score was justified as the adjoining use is an open field. Landscape and visual impact assessment The SSA states that the site provides "Open long distance panoramic views to three boundaries of the site, the location is very rural and traditional in character and development would cause substantial harm to this very high quality rolling landscape. Birmingham and the Malvern's can be seen on a clear day". The red score is justified for this item and it is accepted that LVIA is a very subjective element to score, different assessors might well give different scores.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Site Bo1 is given an amber score for 'noise issues' due to its proximity to the A511. There are many existing residential properties significantly closer to the A511 than any that would be 10 developed should future residential development be implemented at Site Bo1. A scheme could easily be developed without the requirement for measures to mitigate against traffic noise from the A511. As no measures would be required, the site should be given a green RAG rating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important trees woodland and hedgerow The scoring for this item is not inconsistent as Heaton's claim in their report. The SSA report for site Bo1, an area of 10.7HA states "The site sits within the National Forest. There are several mature trees dotted around the boundaries of the site and three of the boundaries are planted with hedgerow which is of a very high quality. All of these features will require protection". Conversely the SSA report for site By4, an area of 6.6HA states "The site sits within the National Forest. There are several mature trees dotted around the boundaries of the site and most of the boundaries are planted with hedgerow. All of these features will require protection". This is why the first site is scored red and the other is scored amber and these scores are justified.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The SSA identifies a stream/ditch running through the site which requires further investigation in relation to drainage. The site is scored amber for drainage issues which negates a 'need for mitigation'. We do not concur with this assessment as the presence of a stream/ditch does not negate a 'need for mitigation'. As far as we are aware, due to the site topography, there are no drainage issues at the site. Therefore, the site represents a green score for drainage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with existing pattern of built development The Heaton's comments are noted, but as explained in response to the assessment for adjoining use (above) the group focussed upon the village centre and its relationship to the Countryside setting. The topography of the site falls away substantially and this 10.7HA location is highly visible from a range of sources so the red score is fully justified in planning policy terms.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>This results in an overall green score of 14 (Red 2, Amber 9, Green 16). As stated within the SSA, a green scoring site can be developed subject to owner and community support, market demands, full planning consent and financial viability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local wildlife considerations It is accepted for this item directly conflict with the AECOM SEA work completed in 2020 and that the level of detail involved for this individual item in 2018 was not supportive of the final scores for wildlife considerations. The SSA reports
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Expansion site Butt Lane (SHELAA Ref By4). The SSA estimates a site capacity of 124 dwellings. Site capacity has already been discussed in relation to sites Bo1 and By4 where the developable footprint does not need to extend across the entirety of each site. Delivering a medium capacity site of between 11 – 20 dwellings would lead to a RAG scoring of amber, rather than red. The site could even support fewer than 20 dwellings, which would merit a green rating. We reiterate that no constraint is identified and the site should be scored as green.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local wildlife considerations It is accepted for this item directly conflict with the AECOM SEA work completed in 2020 and that the level of detail involved for this individual item in 2018 was not supportive of the final scores for wildlife considerations. The SSA reports
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>As with Site Bo1, By4 is given an amber RAG score with regard to its current use as agricultural land. The land is in the ownership and control of our clients. We reiterate that the land is available for development without 'use' constraints. A score of green is more appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local wildlife considerations It is accepted for this item directly conflict with the AECOM SEA work completed in 2020 and that the level of detail involved for this individual item in 2018 was not supportive of the final scores for wildlife considerations. The SSA reports
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>The SSA consider the site to be open Countryside 'totally outside of the current built form of Blackfordby and separated by a large tract of open countryside and extensive planting'. This represents a red score for adjoining uses. The site's SSA states that the site is "near to Woodville than Blackfordby." This is not correct; the site adjoins Blackfordby as illustrated on the BNP's own Figure 2 (Limits to Development as established in draft Policy G1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local wildlife considerations It is accepted for this item directly conflict with the AECOM SEA work completed in 2020 and that the level of detail involved for this individual item in 2018 was not supportive of the final scores for wildlife considerations. The SSA reports

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We concur that the site is currently open countryside in agricultural use. However, given the adjacent residential development at "Spires View" which is set to be built out by 2022, we do not consider that the site is totally outside of the current built form and it is not separated by a large tract of open countryside. The site adjoins an existing residential area of the village and is therefore considered to merit an amber score.	are not being revisited, they were agreed with the community in late 2018 but it is fully accepted that an amber assessment for site Bo1 would be awarded with the additional evidence from the SEA if the exercise were repeated today (June 2021). Conservation area • It is accepted that if the red score for this item were to be reviewed with the new SEA evidence then the score for this item would be an amber rather than a red score. The SSA reports are not being revisited as they were agreed with the community in late 2018.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	With regard to topography, there are no constraints to development. As stated, a smaller number of dwellings than the 124 quoted could be delivered without any topographic constraints. A RAG score of green is appropriate.	• The community members wished to see the bulk of the site area served with a footpath. It is accepted that if the amber score for this item were to be reviewed from a purely professional standpoint then the score for this item would be a green rather than an amber score. However, the SSA reports are not being revisited as they were agreed with the community in late 2018. Impact on existing vehicular traffic • As explained above, the site has been assessed on the basis of a yield of 200 residential units. It is felt that this would indeed cause a massive negative impact due to the sensitive location of the potential access so the red score is fully justified.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA describes the site as having open panoramic views across three boundaries. The location is described as very rural in character where development would cause substantial harm to this 'quality landscape'. The site is given a red score on landscape and visual impact grounds. We consider that the residential development to the east at Spires View and industrial development to the south off Butts Lane form the prominent land uses in this location which impact on the character of Butt Lane and restrict the continuation of agricultural land and 'open countryside'. Furthermore, rising land levels to the north/north east of the site and a clear intermediate ridge within the landscape provides opportunities to define a natural developable boundary within the site and mitigate visual impacts. The site is therefore considered to represent an amber score.	Appropriate vehicular access • The SSA report states "it should be possible to provide a highways configuration to meet safety standards with significant infrastructure improvements". The amber score is therefore correct for this item. Distance to a bus stop • The bus stop in the centre of the village near to the public house was used as the measure for this item to allow a fair comparison between all of the sites submitted, some sites were to the North and some to the South of the village core, the amber score is therefore justified.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA provides a red scoring for the site in relation to important trees, woodland and hedgerow due to 'several mature trees dotted around the boundaries of the site and most of the boundaries are planted with hedgerow'. Site By2 is given an amber scoring where 'three of the boundaries have mature hedgerows and several mature trees are found on the boundary and within the curtilage of the site'. There appears to be some inconsistency in the scoring of these two sites which are described as having similar tree, woodland and hedgerow cover. Mitigation measures would be required if development were to come forward at site By4 which results in an amber score.	• The SSA scoring criteria for Blackfordby are based upon the actual size of the village and the walking distances reflect the fact that the village is only approximately 600m from one end to the other. Distance is a very local factor and reflects the current built environment. Noise issues • A section of the site directly abuts the A511 and a further section of land is nearby and is "downwind" so the amber score for noise issues is justified, mitigation measures would be required in terms of the local community opinion. It is however accepted that a professional study of the noise mitigation measures might well prove that no mitigation measures are required, but as the SSA states "The SSA is not a substitute for the detailed professional assessments of site viability and other legal or regulatory matters that will be required as part of the process of submitting a residential planning application. The SSA is a community led process and does not contain detailed professional site investigations and the SSA should be read and understood in this context". Drainage issues • It is accepted that if the red score for this item were to be reviewed with the new evidence from the SEA (2020) then the score for this item would be an amber rather than a red score. The SSA reports are not being revisited as they were agreed with the community in late 2018.
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA again considers the site to 'totally outside of the current built form' with no relationship to the existing pattern of built development. This results in a red score. As stated above, given the adjacent residential development at "Spires View" which is set to be built out by 2022, we do not consider that the site is totally outside of the current built form. The site adjoins the residential village envelope and Limits to Development. It is therefore considered to be better represented by an amber score.	
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	The SSA states that the ditch and trees within the site are potential habitats for BAP species including badgers, foxes, bats, moths and small mammals. This leads to a red score for local wildlife. Site By2 is also considered to have potential for nesting birds and is given a green score. As detailed earlier in this letter, we consider that the SSAs are not robust and conflict with the AECOM SEA. In order to maintain consistency with the independently prepared SEA, Site By2 should be scored red and Sites Bo1 and By4 scored green.	
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	We do not concur that development of the site would 'undermine' the character and overall setting of the Conservation Area which is located approximately 250m east of the site at its closest point. Approval of the Squires View site for residential development which is located in much closer proximity to the Conservation Area boundary is considered to support this view. Therefore, we consider that there would be no harm to the Conservation Area, resulting in an green score, rather than red.	
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	With regard to safe pedestrian access, the site benefits from an existing footpath. There are no constraints, and the site should be scored green.	

<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>The SSA predicts a 'large negative impact' from this 'large number of units' on existing vehicular traffic in this location. Again, we would like to reiterate that, due to its size, the site provides great flexibility in the number of units that could be provided. We do not agree that development 12 of this site would result in significant impacts on the existing highways network given the sustainable transport options available and the existing pedestrian access along Butt Lane providing pedestrian access to the village centre. Minimal impact on the village centre is anticipated which represents a green RAG score, rather than red.</p>	<p>Expansion site Butt Lane (SHELAA Ref By4) Area considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site covers an area of 6.6HA and has a potential yield of 124 units. The SSA was undertaken on this basis and when the landowner received a copy of the draft SSA report for their comments in November 2018 a reduced site yield was not offered. The SSA report will remain on the basis of the whole site submitted in the SHELAA process. <p>Agricultural use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This scoring criteria assesses the quality of the land that would be developed, the SSA report states "The site is classified as grade three agricultural land by Natural England this is land of a good to moderate quality". Land is a finite National resource and once developed is lost for agricultural use. Given the good to moderate quality of the land that would be lost an amber score is justified. <p>Adjoining use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SSA report correctly identifies that the bulk of the site is adjacent to Woodville, a planning consent for 91 residential units had been granted in an area between this site and Woodville so the adjoining use score was an amber. In addition, the community group considered the main built form of the village as the focus of attention, so the amber score is justified as the adjoining use was an open field. It is recognised that new residential building since 2018 would probably lead to a different score for this item if the SSA reports were undertaken again in 2021. <p>Topography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amber score relates to the development of the whole site for 124 units; it remains as an amber score and is fully justified on this basis. <p>Landscape and visual impact assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SSA states "Open panoramic views are found to three boundaries of the site, the location is very rural in character and development would cause substantial harm to this quality landscape". The red score is justified for this item and it is fully accepted that LVA is a very subjective element to score, different assessors and local people might well give different scores. <p>Important trees, woodland and hedgerows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Heaton's report has the different site locations confused and is actually referring to another SSA report for a different site. The SSA report for this site states "The site sits within the National Forest. There are several mature trees dotted around the boundaries of the site and most of the boundaries are planted with hedgerow. All of these features will require protection". Hence, the amber score is justified for this location. <p>Relationship with existing pattern of built development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Heaton's comments are noted but relate to residential development that has taken place since the SSA reports were written in late 2018. Also, as explained in response to the assessment for adjoining use set out above, the group focussed upon the actual village centre and its relationship to the Countryside setting. The topography of the site falls away substantially and this 6.6HA location is highly visible from a range of sources so the red score was justified at the time of writing. <p>Local wildlife considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is accepted that the SSA scores for this item conflict with the AECOM SEA work and that the level of detail involved for this individual item in 2018 was not supportive of the final scores for wildlife considerations. The SSA reports are not being revisited. They
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>With regard to safe vehicular access to and from the site, access can easily be achieved without 'significant improvement' which is the established threshold for an amber score within the SSA scoring framework. Therefore, the site should be scored as green rather than amber.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>The RAG scoring framework indicates that a pub/bus stop can be used to determine the designated village centre. There are several bus stops within 350m of the site along Butt Lane. Therefore, the site represents an amber scoring, rather than red.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>As with our points made in the context of Site Bo1 earlier in this letter regarding distance to the local Primary School, the distance of a walkable neighbourhood is widely regarded as being a 10-minute walk or 800m radius. The site is within the 10-minute walk threshold and, if the scoring system were amended to reflect walkable neighbourhood distance of 800m, Site By4 would score green rather than red.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>Site By4 is given an amber score for ancient monuments or archaeological remains. Prior to any future development, the site would be investigated for its archaeological potential in collaboration with the local planning authority. We do not comprehend how the SSAs for any BNP sites can score green for this category, as to our knowledge no physical site investigations have taken place. Therefore, it cannot be confirmed that "no harm to an ancient monument or remains (on)site" would occur. Accordingly, no site should be scored higher than amber.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>The SSA states that the site is currently used for informal recreation by "dog walkers and joggers". It is assumed that this refers to the Public Rights of Way present within Site By4 which assist in the offering sustainable transport options to/from the site. Development of the site for residential purposes adversely affect the accessibility of the site for dog walkers and joggers and the site should be scored green accordingly. With specific regard to the Public Rights of Way, the site can accommodate development without detriment to the Rights of Way, and therefore should be scored green for that category.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>Site By4 is given an amber score for 'noise issues' due to its proximity to the A511, despite being 250m from the A511 with many intervening residential properties and vegetation located in between the site and the road. The site could easily be developed without the requirement for measures to mitigate against traffic noise from the A511. As no measures would be required, the site should be given a green RAG rating.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>The SSA identifies a stream/ditch running through the site which requires further investigation in relation to drainage. The site is scored amber for drainage issues which negates a 'need for mitigation'. We do not concur with this assessment as the presence of a stream/ditch does not negate a 'need for mitigation'. As far as we are aware, there are no drainage issues at the site. Therefore, the site represents a green score for drainage.</p>	
<p>Site assessments</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Heaton Planning</p>	<p>This results in an overall green score of 11 (Red 4, Amber 8, Green 15). As stated within the SSA, an amber scoring site will require remediation works to allow development and it may be developed at a future date.</p>	

Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Given the commentary above, it is considered that the Pre-submission BNP RAG Scoring System offers the following site scores: • Site 1 - Our clients land at Heath Lane, Boundary (SHELAA site Bo1) High green scoring site of 14 • Site 2 - Land rear of 31 Main Street, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By2) High green scoring site of 6 • Site 3 - Our client's land at Butt Lane, Blackfordby (SHELAA site By4) High green scoring site of 11</p> <p>The SSA states that 'the site with the highest green rating score is the one which is most sustainable'. Site Bo1 scores highest and is therefore considered to represent the most sustainable sites when assessed against the RAG scoring framework. In light of the SEA appraisal findings, which score sites Bo1 and By4 considerably higher in biodiversity and higher in population and housing than the proposed Pre-submission BNP site allocation By2, it is considered logical to assume that our clients land at Heath Lane, Boundary (SHELAA site Bo1) represents the most sustainable option for delivering residential development within the Pre-submission BNP area.</p> <p>These representations have been prepared in light of recently published evidence which supports the preparation of the Pre-submission BNP, namely the SEA and individual site assessments.</p> <p>Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires a draft Neighbourhood Plan to meet 'basic conditions' including having regard to national policies and advice and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.</p> <p>Of significant importance is the SEA's appraisal of our client's land at Bo1 and By4 in relation to biodiversity objectives and the 'opportunities for development to enhance the quantity and quality of existing habitats (which are predominantly agricultural land), introduce new habitats and green infrastructure and achieve biodiversity net gain'. The SEA findings in relation to biodiversity net gain for our clients' land should be a given great weight in relation to the allocation of sustainable sites for future residential development.</p>	<p>were agreed with the community in late 2018 but it is accepted that an amber assessment for site bo1 would be awarded with the additional evidence from the SEA if the SSA reports were undertaken in 2021.</p> <p>Conservation area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is accepted that if the amber score for this item were to be reviewed with the new evidence and the development that has taken place between 2018 and 2021 then the score for this item might well be a green rather than an amber score. The SSA reports are not being revisited as they were agreed with the community in late 2018. <p>Footpath</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community members wished to see the bulk of the site area served with a footpath. It is accepted that if the amber score for this item were to be reviewed from a purely professional standpoint then the score for this item would be a green rather than an amber score. However, the SSA reports are not being revisited as they were agreed with the community in late 2018. <p>Impact on existing vehicular traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As explained above, the site has been assessed on the basis of a yield of 124 residential units. It is felt that this would indeed cause a large negative impact due to the sensitive location of the potential access so the red score is fully justified. <p>Appropriate vehicular access</p> <p>The scoring criteria was agreed with the Neighbourhood Planning Group at the start of the process and all sites were judged against this criteria. Environmental issues were taken into account at that time.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>We have had the opportunity to view the SSA's undertaken as part of the site selection process. After detailed review of the findings, we consider that the SSA's contain inconsistent judgements, incorrect statements and are not substantiated by evidence or actual 'on the ground' conditions. It would appear that the SSA's have not been updated to reflect the existing development at Squires View which has direct implications for our client's land at By4.</p>	<p>The SSAs were undertaken in 2018 and are not needing to be updated.</p>	None
Site assessments	7	Heaton Planning	<p>In addition to the application of the RAG scoring framework, we maintain concerns relating to the content of the scoring methodology. The Blackfordby Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan has a distinct lack of evidence to justify the choices made in relation to Policy H1. The findings of the SEA and the results of our RAG scoring provide clear justification for reassessing the proposed housing allocation at Site By2.</p>	<p>We disagree. The process followed was both comprehensive and proportionate. Scoring a single site from the perspective of an agent for the landowner is not objective.</p>	None

ENV9	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Draft Policy ENV9: 'Area of Separation' allocates a portion of our clients' land at site By4 as an area of separation. Justification for this is provided in paragraph 4.74 of the policy pre-text and which seeks to 'prevent the coalescence of Woodville and the A511 corridor with Blackfordby'. The pre-text also infers that the NPPF provides support for this policy by recognising the 'desirability of preventing the coalescence of geographically distinct settlements like Blackfordby with neighbouring, potentially expanding, settlements'. The NPPF does, in chapter 13, seek to prevent the coalescence of neighbouring towns, however, this is in relation to the designation of Green Belt land. Leicestershire does not contain any Green Belt land and, therefore, the Pre-submission BNP is considered to misquote the NPPF in this regard in an attempt to justify draft Policy ENV9. The existing area of separation Policy En5 within the North West Leicestershire Local Plan is also referred to within the draft policy pre-text. The two areas of separation designated through adopted Policy En5 of the District's Local Plan are described as being 'within the Limits to Development and not subject to the countryside policies, as they are surrounded by built development, but which perform a very important role in maintaining the physical separation between Coalville and Whitwick'.</p>	<p>Noted. We will remove the reference to the NPPF.</p>	None
ENV9	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Site By4 is designated within the Pre-submission BNP as an area of countryside outside of the limits of development set out in draft Policy G1 and therefore the area of separation policy is not required. The site is not comparable to the sites designated within Local Plan policy En5 which prevent the coalescence of two large settlements which are located within the same encompassing Limits to Development. Rather, the site should be designated under its primary planning function which is an existing agricultural field. We therefore respectfully request the deletion of draft policy ENV9 from the Pre-submission BNP.</p>	<p>We disagree. The inclusion of Policy Env9 serves to add further protection against the coalescence of settlements and is therefore appropriate.</p>	None
ENV9	7	Heaton Planning	<p>At present, the Policy is not complaint with the guidance within the NPPF and is not supported by evidence. Neither the Pre-submission BNP nor any supporting background evidence explain the extent of land covered by draft Policy ENV9. The draft Policy at present is not robust and this would be highlighted and questioned should the BNP proceed to independent examination.</p>	<p>We disagree with this assessment.</p>	None
ENV9	7	Heaton Planning	<p>Furthermore, we consider that draft Policy ENV9 'Area of Separation' has been prepared without any justification and misinterprets both national planning policy and the local development plan. Consequently, we submit that the policy does not contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which is a basic condition that any Neighbourhood Plan is required to meet. In its current form, draft Policy ENV9 effectively prohibits built development on Butt Lane without any evidence to support the draft policy. We suggest that the policy is deleted from the Pre submission BNP. It is completely unclear how any use of the land in question could "enhance the separation" of the area, as per the current wording of the draft policy.</p>	<p>You cannot cherry-pick individual policies and conclude that they do not support sustainable development. The NP needs to be taken as a whole rather than look in isolation at individual policies.</p>	None
Design Standards	8	LCC	<p>Page 18 Design Standards There is no requirement within the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide for electric vehicle charging points to be provided, however, they are typically encouraged where proposed.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	None
CFA1	8	LCC	<p>Page 48 POLICY CFA1 : COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES Any proposals are subject to Leicestershire Highways Design Guide guidelines. The County Council recognises that residents may have concerns about traffic conditions in their local area, which they feel may be exacerbated by increased traffic due to population, economic and development growth.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	None

CFA1	8	LCC	Like very many local authorities, the County Council's budgets are under severe pressure. It must therefore prioritise where it focuses its reducing resources and increasingly limited funds. In practice, this means that the County Highway Authority (CHA), in general, prioritises its resources on measures that deliver the greatest benefit to Leicestershire's residents, businesses and road users in terms of road safety, network management and maintenance. Given this, it is likely that highway measures associated with any new development would need to be fully funded from third party funding, such as via Section 278 or 106 (S106) developer contributions. I should emphasise that the CHA is generally no longer in a position to accept any financial risk relating to/make good any possible shortfall in developer funding.	Noted	None
CFA1	8	LCC	To be eligible for S106 contributions proposals must fulfil various legal criteria. Measures must also directly mitigate the impact of the development e.g. they should ensure that the development does not make the existing highway conditions any worse if considered to have a severe residual impact. They cannot unfortunately be sought to address existing problems. Where potential S106 measures would require future maintenance, which would be paid for from the County Council's funds, the measures would also need to be assessed against the County Council's other priorities and as such may not be maintained by the County Council or will require maintenance funding to be provided as a commuted sum.	Noted	None
CFA1	8	LCC	In regard to public transport, securing S106 contributions for public transport services will normally focus on larger developments, where there is a more realistic prospect of services being commercially viable once the contributions have stopped ie they would be able to operate without being supported from public funding. The current financial climate means that the CHA has extremely limited funding available to undertake minor highway improvements. Where there may be the prospect of third-party funding to deliver a scheme, the County Council will still normally expect the scheme to comply with prevailing relevant national and local policies and guidance, both in terms of its justification and its design; the Council will also expect future maintenance costs to be covered by the third-party funding. Where any measures are proposed that would affect speed limits; on-street parking restrictions or other Traffic Regulation Orders (be that to address existing problems or in connection with a development proposal), their implementation would be subject to available resources; the availability of full funding and the satisfactory completion of all necessary Statutory Procedures.	Noted	None
Flood	8	LCC	The County Council are fully aware of flooding that has occurred within Leicestershire and its impact on residential properties resulting in concerns relating to new developments. LCC in our role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) undertake investigations into flooding, review consent applications to undertake works on ordinary watercourses and carry out enforcement where lack of maintenance or unconsented works has resulted in a flood risk. In April 2015 the LLFA also became a statutory consultee on major planning applications in relation to surface water drainage and have a duty to review planning applications to ensure that the onsite drainage systems are designed in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The LLFA also ensures that flood risk to the site is accounted for when designing a drainage solution.	Noted	None
Flood	8	LCC	The LLFA is not able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent development where development sites are at low risk of flooding or can demonstrate appropriate flood risk mitigation. • Use existing flood risk to adjacent land to prevent development. • Require development to resolve existing flood risk. 	Noted	None

Flood	8	LCC	<p>When considering flood risk within the development of a neighbourhood plan, the LLFA would recommend consideration of the following points: • Locating development outside of river (fluvial) flood risk (Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)). • Locating development outside of surface water (pluvial) flood risk (Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map). • Locating development outside of any groundwater flood risk by considering any local knowledge of groundwater flooding. • How potential SuDS features may be incorporated into the development to enhance the local amenity, water quality and biodiversity of the site as well as manage surface water runoff. • Watercourses and land drainage should be protected within new developments to prevent an increase in flood risk</p>	Noted	None
Flood	8	LCC	<p>All development will be required to restrict the discharge and retain surface water on site in line with current government policies. This should be undertaken through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Appropriate space allocation for SuDS features should be included within development sites when considering the housing density to ensure that the potential site will not limit the ability for good SuDS design to be carried out. Consideration should also be given to blue green corridors and how they could be used to improve the bio-diversity and amenity of new developments, including benefits to surrounding areas.</p>	Noted	None
Flood	8	LCC	<p>Often ordinary watercourses and land drainage features (including streams, culverts and ditches) form part of development sites. The LLFA recommend that existing watercourses and land drainage (including watercourses that form the site boundary) are retained as open features along their original flow path and are retained in public open space to ensure that access for maintenance can be achieved. This should also be considered when looking at housing densities within the plan to ensure that these features can be retained. LCC, in its role as LLFA will not support proposals contrary to LCC policies.</p>	Noted	None
Planning	8	LCC	<p>If there is no specific policy on Section 106 developer contributions/planning obligations within the draft Neighbourhood Plan, it would be prudent to consider the inclusion of a developer contributions/planning obligations policy, along similar lines to those shown for example in the Adopted North Kilworth NP and the Adopted Great Glen NP albeit adapted to the circumstances of your community. This would in general be consistent with the relevant District Council's local plan or its policy on planning obligations in order to mitigate the impacts of new development and enable appropriate local infrastructure and service provision in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations, where applicable.</p>	Noted. The policies referred to where removed at examination so did not feature in the Made NPs. Policy H1 contains a range of measures to mitigate the impact of development. The future scale of development in Blackfordby does not warrant an additional policy in this area.	None
Planning	8	LCC	<p>The County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority; this means the council prepares the planning policy for minerals and waste development and also makes decisions on mineral and waste development. Although neighbourhood plans cannot include policies that cover minerals and waste development, it may be the case that your neighbourhood contains an existing or planned minerals or waste site. You should also be aware of Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Areas, contained within the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Leicestershire.gov.uk). These safeguarding areas are there to ensure that non-waste and non-minerals development takes place in a way that does not negatively affect minerals resources or waste operations. The County Council can provide guidance on this if your neighbourhood plan is allocating development in these areas or if any proposed neighbourhood plan policies may impact on minerals and waste provision. Given the above, the Mineral Planning Authority have identified that the Blackfordby designated Neighbourhood Area includes part of the application area for Wavin Forest Works and is within a safeguarding area for Coal.</p>	Noted	None

Property	8	LCC	Property Education Whereby housing allocations or preferred housing developments form part of a Neighbourhood Plan the Local Authority will look to the availability of school places within a two-mile (primary) and three-mile (secondary) distance from the development. If there are not sufficient places then a claim for Section 106 funding will be requested to provide those places. It is recognised that it may not always be possible or appropriate to extend a local school to meet the needs of a development, or the size of a development would yield a new school. However, in the changing educational landscape, the Council retains a statutory duty to ensure that sufficient places are available in good schools within its area, for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.	Noted	None
Adult	8	LCC	It is suggested that reference is made to recognising a significant growth in the older population and that development seeks to include bungalows etc of differing tenures to accommodate the increase. This would be in line with the draft Adult Social Care Accommodation Strategy for older people which promotes that people should plan ahead for their later life, including considering downsizing, but recognising that people's choices are often limited by the lack of suitable local options	This is stated in H2 and H4.	None
Environment	8	LCC	Page 10 – Blackfordby is misspelt as 'Blackfordby' towards the bottom of the page.	Agreed	Change made as indicated
Environment	8	LCC	Policy G2: Design. This policy is strong but could be further strengthened by mentioning appropriate provisions for the storage of waste and recycling.	This is not considered necessary.	None
Environment	8	LCC	The Prime Minister has recently stated new cars and vans powered wholly by petrol and diesel will not be sold in the UK from 2030. The planning group should be mindful of this revised date.	Noted. Date changed on page 56 of the NP	Change made as indicated
Environment	8	LCC	With regard to the environment and in line with Government advice, Leicestershire County Council (LCC) would like to see Neighbourhood Plans cover all aspects of the natural environment including climate change, the landscape, biodiversity, ecosystems, green infrastructure as well as soils, brownfield sites and agricultural land.	This is covered comprehensively in the NP	None
Environment	8	LCC	The County Council through its Environment Strategy is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Leicestershire and increasing Leicestershire's resilience to the existing and predicted changes in climate. Furthermore, LCC has declared a climate emergency along with most other UK councils. The County Council has committed to becoming carbon neutral as a council by 2030 and to working with others to keep global temperature rise to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius, which will mean in effect needing to achieve carbon neutrality for Leicestershire by 2050 or before. Planning is one of the key levers for enabling these commitments to be met and to meeting the legally binding target set by the government for the UK to be carbon neutral by 2050. Neighbourhood Plans should in as far as possible seek to contribute to and support a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and to increasing the county's resilience to climate change.	We believe that we have addressed this issue appropriately and proportionately.	None
Environment	8	LCC	The County Council would like to see the inclusion of a local landscape assessment taking into account Natural England's Landscape character areas; Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy; the Local District/Borough Council landscape character assessments and the Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study for Leicester and Leicestershire (2017) which examines the sensitivity of the landscape, exploring the extent to which different areas can accommodate development without impacting on their key landscape qualities. We would recommend that Neighbourhood Plans should also consider the street scene and public realm within their communities, further advice can be found in the latest 'Streets for All East Midlands' Advisory Document (2006) published by English Heritage.	Noted. The Environment chapter is comprehensive in recognising the significance of the landscape and building in protections and enhancement where necessary.	None

Environment	8	<p>The Natural Environment and Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their duties, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The National Planning Policy Framework clearly outlines the importance of sustainable development alongside the core principle that planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, providing net gain for biodiversity, and reducing pollution. Neighbourhood Plans should therefore seek to work in partnership with other agencies to develop and deliver a strategic approach to protecting and improving the natural environment based on local evidence and priorities. Each Neighbourhood Plan should consider the impact of potential development or management of open spaces on enhancing biodiversity and habitat connectivity, such as hedgerows and greenways. Also, habitat permeability for habitats and species which addresses encouragement of movement from one location to another such as the design of street lighting, roads, noise, obstructions in water, exposure of species to predation and arrangement of land-uses. The Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) can provide a summary of wildlife information for your Neighbourhood Plan area. This will include a map showing nationally important sites (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest); locally designated Wildlife Sites; locations of badger setts, great crested newt breeding ponds and bat roosts; and a list of records of protected and priority Biodiversity Action Plan species. These are all a material consideration in the planning process. If there has been a recent Habitat Survey of your plan area, this will also be included. LRERC is unable to carry out habitat surveys on request from a Parish Council, although it may be possible to add it into a future survey programme.</p>	Noted	None
Environment	8	<p>Green infrastructure (GI) is a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities, (NPPF definition). As a network, GI includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, cemeteries/churchyards allotments and private gardens as well as streams, rivers, canals and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and living walls. The NPPF places the duty on local authorities to plan positively for a strategic network of GI which can deliver a range of planning policies including: building a strong, competitive economy; creating a sense of place and promote good design; promoting healthier communities by providing greater opportunities for recreation and mental and physical health benefits; meeting the challenges of climate change and flood risk; increasing biodiversity and conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Looking at the existing provision of GI networks within a community can influence the plan for creating & enhancing new networks and this assessment can then be used to inform CL (Community Infrastructure Levy) schedules, enabling communities to potentially benefit from this source of funding. Neighbourhood Plan groups have the opportunity to plan GI networks at a local scale to maximise benefits for their community and in doing so they should ensure that their Neighbourhood Plan is reflective of the relevant Local Authority Green Infrastructure strategy. Through the Neighbourhood Plan and discussions with the Local Authority Planning teams and potential Developers communities are well placed to influence the delivery of local scale GI networks.</p>	Noted	None

Environment	8	LCC	<p>The NPPF encourages the effective use of brownfield land for development, provided that it is not of high environmental/ecological value. Neighbourhood planning groups should check with Defra if their neighbourhood planning area includes brownfield sites. Where information is lacking as to the ecological value of these sites then the Neighbourhood Plan could include policies that ensure such survey work should be carried out to assess the ecological value of a brownfield site before development decisions are taken. Soils are an essential finite resource on which important ecosystem services such as food production, are dependent on. They should be enhanced in value and protected from adverse effects of unacceptable levels of pollution. Within the governments "Safeguarding our Soils" strategy, Defra have produced a code of practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites which could be helpful to neighbourhood planning groups in preparing environmental policies. High quality agricultural soils should, where possible be protected from development and where a large area of agricultural land is identified for development then planning should consider using the poorer quality areas in preference to the higher quality areas. Neighbourhood planning groups should consider mapping agricultural land classification within their plan to enable informed decisions to be made in the future. Natural England can provide further information and Agricultural Land classification.</p>	Noted	None
Environment	8	LCC	<p>Information for Neighbourhood Planning groups regarding Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) can be found on the Neighbourhood Planning website (www.neighbourhoodplanning.org) and should be referred to. As taken from the website, a Neighbourhood Plan must meet certain basic conditions in order to be 'made'. It must not breach and be otherwise compatible with EU obligations. One of these obligations is Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004, available online). This is often referred to as the SEA Directive. Not every Neighbourhood Plan needs a SEA, however, it is compulsory to provide when submitting a plan proposal to the local planning authority either: • A statement of reasons as to why SEA was not required • An environmental report (a key output of the SEA process). As the UK has now left the EU, Neighbourhood Planning groups should remain mindful of any future changes which may occur to the above guidance.</p>	Noted	None
Environment	8	LCC	<p>Neighbourhood planning groups should remain mindful of the interaction between new development applications in a district area and Leicestershire County Council. The County's Waste Management team considers proposed developments on a case by case basis and when it is identified that a proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the local Policy, Economy & Community, Chief Executive's Department, Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire LE3 8RA T: 0116 305 7309 E: nik.green@leics.gov.uk For further information visit: http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/neighbourhoodplanning.htm HWRC infrastructure then appropriate projects to increase the capacity to off-set the impact have to be initiated. Contributions to fund these projects are requested in accordance with Leicestershire's Planning Obligations Policy (2019) and the relevant Legislation Regulations.</p>	Noted	None

Communities 8	LCC	<p>Consideration of community facilities is a positive facet of Neighbourhood Plans that reflects the importance of these facilities within communities and can proactively protect and develop facilities to meet the needs of people in local communities. Neighbourhood Plans provide an opportunity to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out and report on a review of community facilities, groups and allotments and their importance with your community. 2. Set out policies that seek to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect and retain these existing facilities, • support the independent development of new facilities, and, • identify and protect Assets of Community Value and provide support for any existing or future designations. 3. Identify and support potential community projects that could be progressed. You are encouraged to consider and respond to all aspects of community resources as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process. Further information, guidance and examples of policies and supporting information is available at www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/np/useful-information. 	Noted	None
Ec Dvjp 8	LCC	<p>We would recommend including economic development aspirations with your Plan, outlining what the community currently values and whether they are open to new development of small businesses etc.</p>	This is covered in the NP	None
Fibre 8	LCC	<p>High speed broadband is critical for businesses and for access to services, many of which are now online by default. Having a fast broadband connection is no longer merely desirable but is an essential requirement in ordinary daily life. All new developments (including community facilities) should have access to ultrafast broadband (of at least 100Mbps) and allow mechanisms for securing a full fibre broadband provision for each premise and business from at least one network operator, provided on an open access basis. Such provision must deploy a Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) access network structure in which optical fibre runs from a local exchange to each premise. Developers should take active steps to incorporate adequate broadband provision at the pre planning phase and should engage with telecoms providers to ensure fibre broadband is available as soon as build on the development is complete. Where practical, developers should consider engaging several telecoms providers to encourage competition and consumer choice. The Council supports a 'dig once' approach for the deployment of communications infrastructure and a build which is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Policy, Economy & Community, Chief Executive's Department, Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire LE3 8RA T: 0116 305 7309 E: nik.green@leics.gov.uk For further information visit: http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/neighbourhoodplanning.htm surrounding area. The Council encourages telecommunications build which does not significantly impact on the appearance of any building or space on which equipment is located and which minimises street clutter.</p>	Noted	None
Equalities 8	LCC	<p>While we cannot comment in detail on plans, you may wish to ask stakeholders to bear the Council's Equality Strategy 2020-2024 in mind when taking your Neighbourhood Plan forward through the relevant procedures, particularly for engagement and consultation work. A copy of the strategy can be view at: https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say/previous-consultations/equality-strategy-2020-24-consultation</p>	Noted	None

<p>Accessibility</p> <p>8</p> <p>LCC</p>	<p>In today's working environment more and more information is being produced digitally. When producing information which is aimed at or to be viewed by the public, it is important to make that information as accessible as possible. At least 1 in 5 people in the UK have a long-term illness, impairment or disability. Many more have a temporary disability. Accessibility means more than putting things online. It means making your content and design clear and simple enough so that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those who do need to adapt things. For example, someone with impaired vision might use a screen reader (software that lets a user navigate a website and 'read out' the content), braille display or screen magnifier. Or someone with motor difficulties might use a special mouse, speech recognition software or on-screen keyboard emulator. Public sector organisations have a legal requirement to make sure that all information which appears on their websites is accessible. As Neighbourhood Plans have to be published on Local Planning Authority websites, they too have to comply with government regulations for accessibility. Guidance for creating accessible Word and PDF documents can be found on the Leicestershire Communities website under the heading 'Creating Accessible Documents' - https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/sr/</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>ENV4</p> <p>10</p> <p>NWLDC</p>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revisions to the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan. I have discussed the proposed changes with our Portfolio Holder and we have no comments to make at this stage on the proposed changes. However, one matter that we have picked up is that the title of policy of ENV4 has been changed such that it refers to Local Heritage Assets whereas previously it referred to 'non-designated heritage assets'. The reason for this change is not clear, but previously we requested that the phrase Local Heritage Assets be removed from the policy wording, as it is for the District Council as local planning authority to designate such assets. The policy wording has been changed to delete reference to Local Heritage Assets, but it is now included in the title. It is not clear as to why this change has been made, but in view of our previous comments it suggested that it revert to the previous title.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>The plan has been updated with the correct wording</p>
<p>G1</p> <p>13</p> <p>Gladman</p>	<p>Policy G1 identifies a settlement boundary for the village of Blackfordby and states that land outside of this defined area will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled. Gladman objects to the use of strict settlement boundaries if these preclude otherwise sustainable development from coming forward. The Framework is clear that sustainable development should proceed. The use of settlement limits to arbitrarily restrict suitable development from coming forward on the edge of settlements conflicts with the positive approach to growth required by the Framework and is contrary to basic condition (a). As currently drafted, this is considered to be an overly restrictive approach and provides no flexibility to reflect the circumstances upon which the BNP is being prepared. Greater flexibility is required in this policy and Gladman suggests that additional sites adjacent to the settlement boundary that may be appropriate should not be precluded through a blanket restriction.</p>	<p>We note Gladman's objection to Settlement Boundaries, but they are a recognised tool through which neighbourhood plans can shape housing development. NWLDC has Settlement Boundaries itself so it is a recognised planning tool and we do not propose its removal.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>G1</p> <p>13</p> <p>Gladman</p>	<p>Gladman recommends that the above policy is modified so that it allows for a degree of flexibility. The following wording is put forward for consideration: "When considering development proposals, the Neighbourhood Plan will take a positive approach to new development that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Applications that accord with the policies of the Development Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan will be supported particularly where they provide: • New homes including market and affordable housing; or • Opportunities for new business facilities through new or expanded premises; or • Infrastructure to ensure the continued vitality and viability of the neighbourhood area. Development with or adjacent to the existing settlement will be permitted provided that any adverse impacts do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development."</p>	<p>The limits to development do not prevent a development outside of the area from going ahead. We wish to retain the wording that is in the NP.</p>	<p>None</p>

G1	13	Gladman	Indeed, this approach was taken in the examination of the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan. Paragraph 4.12 of the Examiner's Report states: "...Policy G1 should be modified to state that "Development ...shall be focused within or adjoining the settlement boundary as identified in the plan." It should be made clear that any new development should be either infill or of a minor or moderate scale, so that the local distinctiveness of the settlement is not compromised. PM2 should be made to achieve this flexibility and ensure regard is had to the NPPF and the promotion of sustainable development. PM2 is also needed to ensure that the GNP will be in general conformity with the aims for new housing development in the Core Strategy and align with similar aims in the emerging Local Plan.	This reference to a different set of circumstances is wholly inappropriate. The NWLDC Local Plan refers to development 'within' Limits to Development, not 'within and adjoining'.	None
H3A	13	Gladman	Alternatively, the approach taken to Windfall sites in Policy H3a) should be amended to include "Sustainable locations outside the Development Boundary for Blackfordby". This would follow guidance in the PPG which, as noted above, emphasises that: "... All settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas – and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence."	The policy already says that development outside of the Limits to Development will be controlled 'in line with local and national strategic planning policies' so this issue is already covered.	None
G1	13	Gladman	In the context of the BNP, the Gladman scheme would be more associated with the neighbouring settlement and would therefore meet the development needs of that settlement. Ultimately, the use of a settlement boundary would have the unintended consequence of restricting development in the neighbouring settlement, given the neighbourhood plan area covered in the BNP.	Noted. The NP has exceeded its housing requirement so further planned development is unnecessary.	None
G2	13	Gladman	Gladman is concerned that sub-section g) of Policy G2 requires, "A minimum of 10% of all new housing will be built to building regulations standard M3 – wheelchair standard." Part M of the Building Regulations requires that all new dwellings to which Part M of the Building Regulations applies should be designed to a minimum of M4(1) 'visitable dwellings', and that local authorities can opt into, or 'switch on', requirements for M4(2) and M4(3) via Local Plan policy. The Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) to parliament dated 25th March 2015 introduced a number of significant changes to national planning policy with regard to building sustainability and design. In particular, the WMS sets out the Government's approach on technical standards for new dwellings. In effect, this statement makes clear that qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not seek to apply any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings and that the optional technical standards can only be introduced via an up-to-date Local Plan based on a clear and robust assessment of need and viability. As such, this policy is not in accordance with basic conditions (a) and (d) and the reference to the optional technical standards should be removed.	The introduction to the policy says that the following criteria 'should' be met, not 'must', therefore there is not prescriptive requirement to achieve this. It is desired, not required.	None

H2	13	Gladman	<p>In principle, Gladman support the above policy which seeks to provide a range of housing types to meet housing needs. However, the 2017 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment report, which has been cited as evidence informing this policy recommends a stronger focus on 2-bedroom houses or larger. Therefore, in this policy's current iteration, the proposed housing mixes do not fully align with the recommendations on how neighbourhood areas can most properly address not only current, but future housing need as well. Gladman would recommend that the agreed mix of one, two and three bedroom starter homes and single level dwellings should be removed from the policy wording. Housing mix will inevitably change over a period of time and this policy should instead seek a greater degree of flexibility going forward. As housing needs can change over time, there is a risk that referencing these requirements will lead to the policy becoming out of date as new evidence of need becomes available. Whilst noting the aspiration to increase the number of single storey dwellings to ensure homes are available within Blackfordby for those seeking to get onto the housing ladder, an overtly restrictive housing mix policy may not be practical to deliver and could therefore prevent the kind of housing development it seeks to promote. The delivery of a significant number of bungalows may have complications for development proposals and may not allow for the most appropriate layout of development proposals given the typical plot size compared to floor space to assist in meeting housing needs. As such, flexibility should be provided so it seeks to 'encourage' the provision of bungalows rather than setting a prescriptive requirement forming part of the overall housing mix. To illustrate these points, the following wording is put forward for your consideration: "New housing developments will be supported where they include a range of house types and sizes in accordance with the most up-to-date assessment of housing needs of the Parish. Housing developments are also encouraged to include an element of single level dwellings and, where practicable, sheltered accommodation to meet the needs of elderly and people with disabilities, thus enabling them to remain independent and within the community for as long as possible."</p>	<p>The policy already allows for changes in housing need over time - it will be up to the applicant to demonstrate that any housing mix meets a locally identified need.</p>	None
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ENV2	13	Gladman	<p>Gladman are supportive of the base objective of Policy ENV 2 and any such initiatives undertaken by neighbourhood groups seeking to safeguard important and valuable local nature features. However environmental protection should be carefully targeted, and its area of effect specified, to ensure that is not too widely restrictive to the surrounding area. Gladman suggest that Policy ENV 2 should reflect the intention of environmental protection by limiting the effects of development or potentially impact harmful activity which would directly affect the designated locations. As currently drafted, Policy ENV 2 extends its power to govern planning activity beyond the boundaries of the environmentally significant areas, which is not what the policy has been implemented to protect. Also, development and planning are rarely an isolated process. Meeting the needs of any local area is often done in cooperation with other nearby areas, whose assistance and flexibility is a crucial component of maintaining a fluid and successful planning system. Gladman are concerned that specifically legislating that development must be balanced against solely local benefits conflicts with this cooperative objective and the operation of a smooth-running planning process. Gladman agree that in situations where development have impact on areas of environmental significance, benefits are a key factor in assessing their necessity. It is simply that we maintain that these benefits should be viewed against the scope of both local and nearby area needs. We provide this wording, as both illustrative of the points above, and for your consideration: The sites listed in Appendix 5 and mapped (Figure 6) have been identified as being of high significance for their environmental features these can be natural and/or historical. a) Where there are natural features these are ecologically important in their own right, b) Where there are historical features these are extant and have visible expression (or there is proven buried archaeology on the site), and they are locally valued. The significance and value of the species, habitats or historical features present must be balanced against the benefit of any development that would directly affect or destroy them. Development proposals are required to demonstrate and achieve environmental net gain, guided by the principles set out in the NPPF (2019).</p>	None
ENV4	13	Gladman	<p>As currently drafted, Policy ENV 4 takes the line that non-designated heritage assets' "features and settings will be protected wherever possible". The setting of heritage assets is outlined in the paragraphs 190-194 of the NPPF, whilst definitions are provided within the NPPF Glossary. Here, the NPPF states that the Setting of a Heritage Asset "is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve". Clearly, for non-designated heritage assets, there are separate balancing exercises to be undertaken in terms of their significance. It should be noted that the list of heritage assets are not all listed buildings, nor are all recorded ostensible assets within a conservation area. The approach in the BNP does not have regard to national policies as outlined above and is therefore in conflict with basic condition (a).</p>	None
ENV6	13	Gladman	<p>Gladman suggest a similar approach to biodiversity and habitat connectivity is adopted, as was outlined in the response to Policy ENV 2. The aim of Policy ENV 6 is supported, however damage or adverse effects should be directly attributed to the wildlife corridors or English or European protected species more specifically in the policy's wording. The amended policy wording provided below is for your consideration: Development proposals will be expected to safeguard locally significant habitats and species, especially those protected by relevant English and European legislation, and, where possible, to create new habitats for wildlife. Development proposals should not directly damage or have direct adverse impact on the habitat connectivity provided by the wildlife corridors: 1. From John's Wood, (National Forest) along the brook northwest through the village and around its north-western edge to the areas of grassland and woodland on the crest of the village escarpment 2. From George's Wood, National Forest, north along the brook to Lady Wood and Scam-Hazel Wood.</p>	None

ENV7	13	Gladman	<p>Policy ENV 7 identifies three important views which the neighbourhood plan steering group consider are important to the setting and character of Blackfordby. However, Figure 12: Important Views on page 42 displays four views which are important to the setting and character of the village. It is stated that the Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan would not support development proposals adversely affecting any of the views it designates. Gladman note that the previous iteration of the Regulation 14 Draft Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan, which was consulted on 13th May – 24th June 2019, included four views which the steering group considered important to the setting and character of the village. Gladman have prepared our representation on the assumption that the latest version of the Draft Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan has opted to remove the 4th view from consideration. Therefore, the arrow on Figure 12: Important Views should be deleted. We would ask that if this is not the case, that the neighbourhood plan steering group should release a public notice and extend the plan's consultation period so that this policy can be properly considered. This would also have an impact on Policy H1 which refers to view 4 in Policy ENV 7 in sub-section g) of the policy. Gladman note that there are two policies within the Draft Neighbourhood Plan with the policy reference ENV 7 (Policy ENV7: River Mease Special Area of Conservation and Policy ENV 7: Protection of Important Views) on page 41. Gladman recommend amending Policy ENV 7: Protection of Important Views to Policy ENV 8 with the subsequent policies with the reference 'ENV' chapter require updating too. An amendment would also be required to Policy H1 in sub-section g) which references Policy ENV 7</p>	<p>Agreed. Figure 12 to be amended accordingly and view four removed</p>	<p>Change made as indicated</p>
G2	15	Environment Agency	<p>We agree with the recommendation made by the consultant and are disappointed that the suggested changes have not been implemented.</p>	<p>All recommendations from the SEA were incorporated into the NP with the agreement of the Consultant.</p>	<p>None</p>
H1	15	Environment Agency	<p>We are pleased to see that the recommended changes regarding ecology and environmental net gain have been made.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>None</p>
ENV2	15	Environment Agency	<p>We are pleased to see reference to the need to achieve a net gain in biodiversity being added to this Policy.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>None</p>