

DES福德 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2018-2036 Submission Version

May 2019

Foreword

Desford Parish Council took the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan to enable the local community to gain control over the shape of development in the Parish.

The Parish Council felt that, if development was going to have to happen in Desford, that Desford's residents deserved the opportunity to say what this development should look like and to be involved in shaping the future of the Parish in which they live. The concept of a Neighbourhood Plan was promoted and a Working Group formed. With professional help, funded by grant applications, the Working Group has produced a number of planning policies and community actions that will help shape future development in Desford.

A very positive 'side effect' of the plan has been the relationships created, developed and strengthened both in the villages and with many other organisations too numerous to list.

The Parish Council has been able to incorporate into the Neighbourhood Plan the views, opinions and aspirations of residents and businesses in Desford, leading to the development of the Community Actions within this Plan.

Most importantly the Neighbourhood Plan shows the residents' vision for their Parish and for their future.

Colin Crane

Chair

Desford Parish Council.

Martyn Randle

Chair

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

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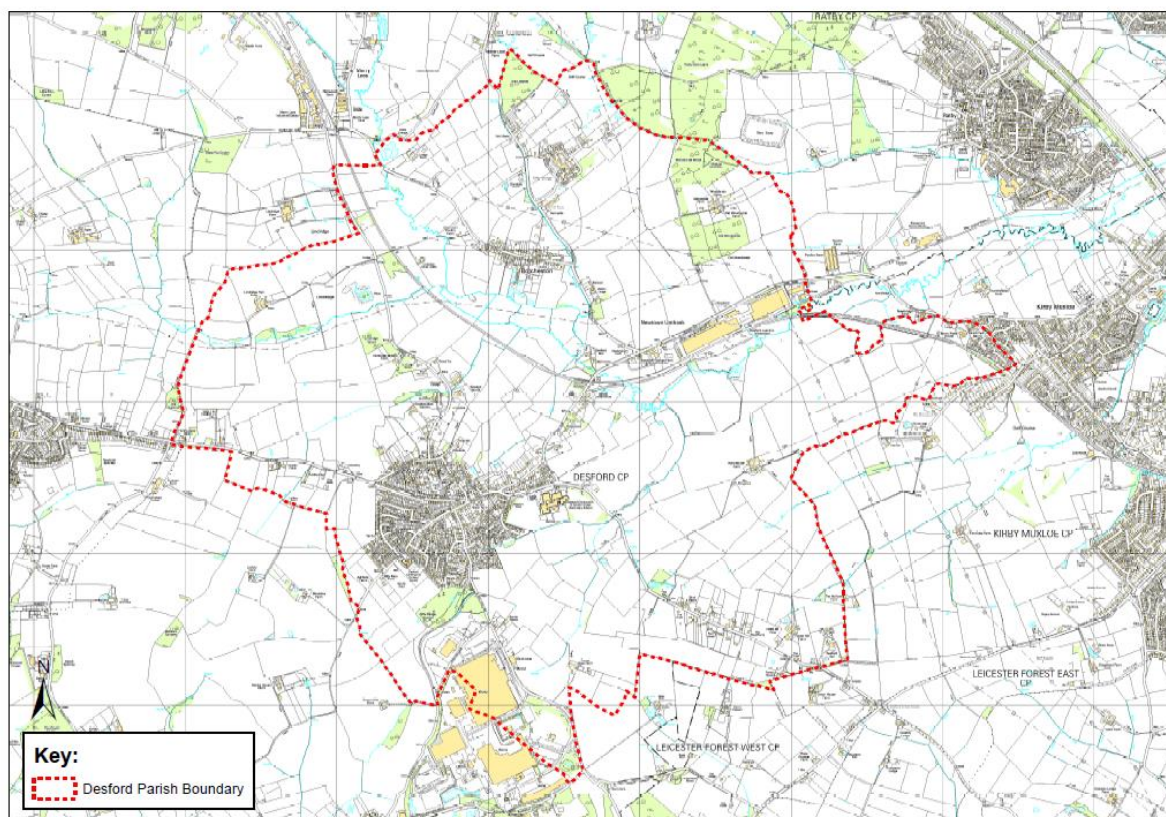
1 About this Neighbourhood Plan

Background

The Localism Act of 2011 introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Plans. These plans give local communities a much greater opportunity to influence future development in their areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the Government’s ‘bible’ on planning issues. It states that:

“Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community.”

Figure 1 – Designated Area



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Our Neighbourhood Plan will sit alongside, and be aligned with, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough’s Local Plan. We can’t promote less development than in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. Other than that, our Neighbourhood Plan is able to shape and direct sustainable development in the Parish. Once approved, the POLICIES it contains will take precedence over non-strategic policies in the Local Plan. This Neighbourhood Plan also identifies a number of COMMUNITY ACTIONS. These are not planning policies and are not subject to examination. They reflect future work activities that it is proposed could be undertaken within the Parish involving a range of third parties to

help improve the Parish in line with the outcome of community consultation.

Before being adopted, this Neighbourhood Plan must pass an independent examination to test against 'Basic Conditions':

- Compliance with national planning policy.
- General conformity with strategic policies in Hinckley and Bosworth's Local Plan.
- Compatibility with EU and human rights requirements.

An independent examiner will check that this Neighbourhood Plan meets these conditions. It will then be voted on in a local community referendum.

On 9 September 2015, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council approved our application for designation as a Neighbourhood Plan area. The area to be covered by our Plan is defined by the Parish boundary (see Figure 1).

Neighbourhood Plan Group

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was fully established by the Parish Council and held its inaugural meeting in January 2016. This group comprises both Parish Councillors and other volunteers from the community.

The Group has worked hard to drive the process forward, assisted by YourLocale consultancy. The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan must conform to guidelines laid down by central Government and involves consultation with not only the local community, but also the Borough Council and local businesses and landowners. There is a prescribed procedure with appropriate checks and consultations, which we have observed.

Parish Profile

The Parish is made up of

the villages of Desford and Botcheston, including the retirement village of Kirby Grange, the hamlet of Newtown Unthank and a number of dwellings in Kirby Muxloe.

- scattered businesses, farms and houses, sometimes in groups, e.g. Markfield Lane/Hunts Close, Botcheston
- significant employers at the periphery of the villages or the parish boundary, such as Caterpillar, Neovia, Crown Crest and Merrylees Industrial Estate.
- All these elements are set within rural, mainly agricultural, countryside, and past policy has ensured they have not coalesced. All are visually separated from each other by open countryside and this separation is valued by residents.

Desford

The earliest written record of Deresford or Diresford is in Domesday Book (1086) but the name is older and means Deor's ford, suggesting an Anglo-Saxon origin. A Neolithic hand axe was found on farmland in the south of the parish and the remains of two Romano-British kilns were found in Main Street. The parish church of St. Martin is largely 13th century, although the font is Norman. In 1866 a non-conformist chapel was built: now Desford Free Church. The centre of the village was designated as a Conservation Area by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council in 1981.

In the medieval period the Manor of Desford belonged to the Earls of Leicester, who became Dukes of Lancaster and in 1399 were united with the Crown. As a result, the monarch is the Patron of St. Martin's Church. The other great influence on the village was the proximity of Leicester Forest, a Royal Hunting Forest, in which villagers had important rights of common until it was disafforested in 1628.

Employment

Most villagers would have originally been involved in farming, cultivating strips in the 4 Open Fields and pasturing their animals on the meadows by the streams. In 1760, by Act of Parliament, the Open Fields were enclosed and the new fields were hedged and farmed separately; an enormous change. Ridge and furrow can still be seen in a disappearing number of fields in the parish.

A cottage industry of stocking or framework knitting developed in the village, the first reference being in 1704. This continued well into the 19th century, with over 100 framework knitters recorded in the 1851 census.

The railway came to Desford in 1832, part of the Leicester to Swannington Railway built by Robert Stephenson; the third oldest line in the world. Originally constructed to take coal to Leicester, it was also a passenger line until 1964 and Desford had its own station. The larger houses in Station Road were built for middle-class commuters to Leicester.

Towards the end of the 19th century, coal mining spread in west Leicestershire. In 1875 an unsuccessful attempt was made to sink a mine in the parish, at Lindridge. This failed due to constant flooding, but the capped shafts can still be identified in a field which is still under pasture. In the 20th century Desford pit employed many local people until it closed in 1984.

During and after the Second World War, Reid & Sigrist employed people at the airfield and both men and women came to RAF Desford 7th Elementary Training School.

After the war the village grew, with both council houses and private estates being built. Local industry provided employment both at Tube Investments at Newtown Unthank (now Crown Crest) and at Caterpillar (now also Neovia Logistics). Desford has become a largely commuter village and the number of working farms in the parish has reduced to 6.

There were ale houses in the village from early times. Records show that the Bulls Head was serving ale in 1665. In the 20th century there were 8 pubs at the height of their popularity, now down to 2. Evidence of 20th century shops, now closed, can still be seen by the large windows of certain houses.

Education

A Board School was built in Main Street in 1876, followed by expansion into a second building in 1908. These are now occupied by the Medical Centre and Church Centre respectively. The Primary School in Kirkby Road was opened in 1961, with subsequent extensions. For secondary education, children had, for many years, to travel to Market Bosworth or South Charnwood. In 1969 Bosworth Community College (now Bosworth Academy) was built on the edge of the village and, from 2015, students have been able to attend here from age 11 to 18.

Botcheston and Newtown Unthank

Botcheston is not mentioned in Domesday Book. In 1846 the hamlet had just 37 people and was part of Ratby parish until about 1936.

The school opened in 1903 but closed in 1931. It is now the Village Hall. The Greyhound has been a pub since the mid-19th century.

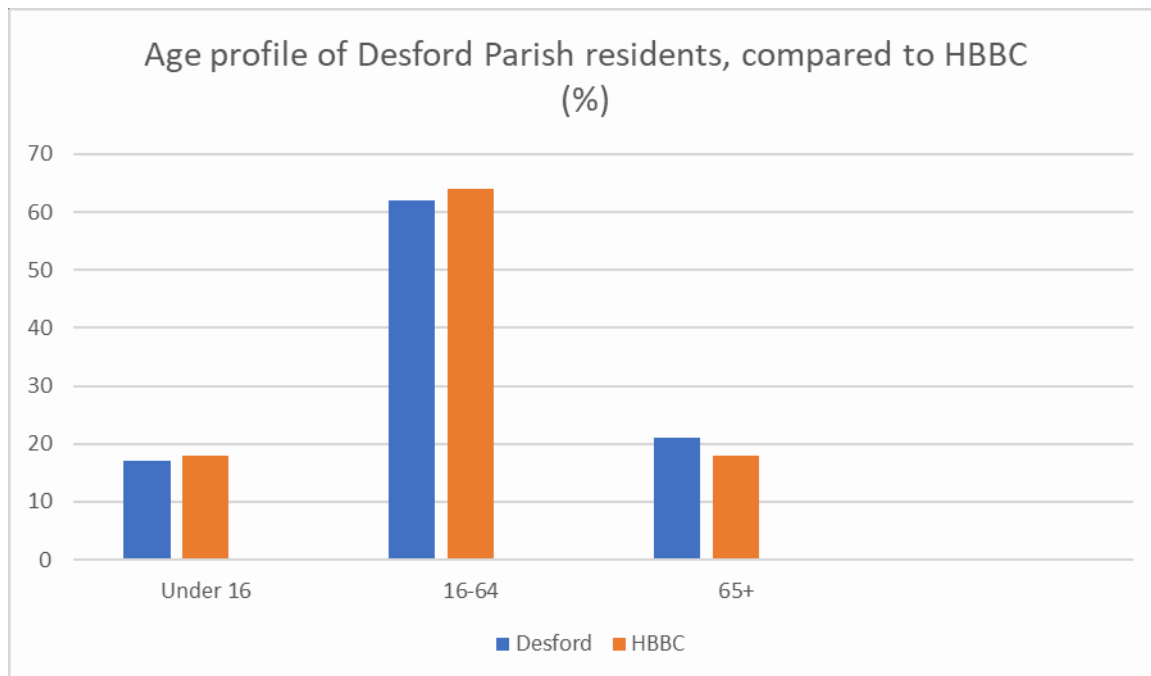
Botcheston was home to Desford Industrial School, opened in 1881 with around 200 pupils. It closed in 1978 and Kirby Grange Retirement Village was built on the land. The old school building is now semi-derelict.

Newtown Unthank has always been a farming community. We know that a mill was built on the bank of the Rothley Brook, as long ago as 1140. The present building ceased operating in 1922.

Census 2011 information

According to the 2011 Census, the Desford Parish had an estimated population of 3,930 residents living in 1,673 households dispersed across 1,439 hectares. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of residents living in the Parish is estimated to have increased by around 7% (254 people). The number of dwellings (occupied and vacant) also increased, rising by 175 (12%).

At the time of the 2011 Census around 17% of residents were aged under 16 which is slightly below the district (18%), regional (18%) and national (19%) rates. Around 62% of residents were aged between 16 and 64 which is lower than both district and region (64%) rates and for England (65%) as a whole. At 21% the parish has a higher proportion of older residents (aged 65+) when compared with the district (18%), region (17%) and England (16%) rates. The median age of people living in the Parish was 46 which is older than that of the district (43), region (40) and England (39) respectively.



A more detailed breakdown of age bands reveals that at the time of the 2011 Census, Desford had a higher proportion of residents aged between 50 and 79 and lower share of 20 to 29- year olds when compared against the national average.

There is also evidence of an ageing population with the proportion of residents aged 65 and over increasing from 18% in 2001 to 21% in 2011. The Census suggests the number of residents aged 65+ rose by 25% (166 people) during this period.

Research shows the number of older people will grow significantly in the future and relative growth will be highest in older cohorts. Latest available population projections suggest that Hinckley and Bosworth's 65 plus age group is forecast to grow by around 51% between 2014 and 2034.

At 70% Desford Parish's economic activity rate is close to the region (69%) and national (70%) averages but below the district (74%) rate. When compared to the national average, the parish has a high share of retired and self-employed residents whereas the unemployment rate was relatively low.

At the time of the 2011 Census, the average household size in the Desford Parish was 2.4 people which is in line with the national average but slightly above the 2.3 district and regional rate. The average number of rooms per household stood at 6.4 which is above the district (5.8), regional (5.6) and England (5.4) averages.

The average number of bedrooms per household stood at 3.2 which is more than the district (2.9), region (2.8) and England (2.7) rates.

Home ownership levels are relatively high with around 84% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan which is above the district (77%), regional (67%) and

national (63%) rates. Around 7% of households live in private rented accommodation which is below the district (11%), region (15%) and national (17%) rates. Just 8% of households live in social rented accommodation which is low when compared to the district (10%), regional (16%) and national (18%) rates.

Data from the 2011 Census shows the majority (50 %) of residential dwellings are detached which is above the district (37.1%), regional (32%) and national (22%) shares. Semi-detached housing represents 38% of housing stock which is in line with the district rate but above the regional (35%) and national (31%) rates. There is a relatively low proportion of terraced housing (7%) and flats and apartments (4%) which is lower when compared to the district, region and national shares.

At 35% the proportion of homes with four or more bedrooms is significantly higher than the district (22%), regional (20%) and national (19%) rates. There is an under representation of housing for single people with just 2% of dwellings having one bedroom against 6% for the district, 8% for the region and 12% for England as a whole.

Under occupancy in the parish is particularly evident in larger properties with more than half (52%) of households with 4 or more bedrooms occupied by just one or two people. This compares with 44% for the district, 43% for the region and 41% for England as a whole.

Census data also suggests that older person households are more likely to under-occupy their dwellings. Data from the 2011 Census allows us to investigate this using the bedroom standard. In total, around 62% of pensioner households have at least two more bedrooms than is technically required by the household which is somewhat higher than the 50% non-pensioner household rate.

2 Consultation

On 12th February 2015 Desford Parish Council submitted its application for designation as a neighbourhood area to HBBC. The designation was approved in September 2015.

On the 1st December the first public meeting was held.

The inaugural meeting of the Desford Neighbourhood Plan Working Group took place on 26 January 2016.

In May 2016 there were a series of Open Events to introduce the Desford Neighbourhood Plan to residents:

- Friday 6th May 17.00-19.00 at Botcheston Village Hall
- Saturday 7th May 10.30-14.30 at St Martin's Church Centre
- Tuesday 10th May 16.00-20.00 at Desford Library

On 5th June 2016 a Stakeholder Event was organised to introduce the Desford Neighbourhood Plan to the local business community, farmers, neighbouring parishes and statutory authorities. The event was hosted by Bosworth Academy. An analysis of the responses at these events was provided by the RCC (Leics & Rutland) in the form of 2 reports. These were followed on 15th June 2016 with a Desford Neighbourhood Plan public awareness stand at Desford Carnival

Focus Groups to consider the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan and to gather the evidence were set up on 25 July 2016.

In March 2017, Questionnaires were delivered to every household by volunteers (apart from a few isolated properties, which were posted) and YourLocale were appointed by the Parish Council to support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan. In this month also, the website, Desford Vision, went live. The RCC (Leics & Rutland) provided an analysis of the responses to the Questionnaire.

On 10th June 2018 there was again a Desford Neighbourhood Plan public awareness stand at Desford Carnival.

Following Regulation 14 consultation, further consultation took place when the Strategic Environmental Assessment report was received and recommendations from the report and consultation incorporated into the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

These consultation activities are detailed within the Consultation Statement that will accompany the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3 A Plan for Our Parish

Introduction

The policies of the Desford Neighbourhood Plan are set within the context of the plan-making framework for England. The scope and content of the Desford Neighbourhood Plan has been shaped by the priorities and aspirations of the Desford community, led by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. This Plan covers the period up to 2036 in line with the emerging HBBC Local Plan. In drawing up this Plan, we have the following vision and aims in mind:

A Vision for 2036

The Neighbourhood Plan, guided by the views of residents and stakeholders, seeks to ensure that the Parish in 2036:

- a) remains a valued and safe place to live and work
- b) continues to thrive in each of the distinct communities within it
- c) will evolve and expand whilst retaining its identity and sense of community
- d) provides well-being through a healthy, creative, equitable and sustainable life, and
- e) makes a positive local contribution to preserving and enhancing the environment and improving sustainability.

Desford will be known during the plan period for its strong community, schools, conservation area and the attractive and thriving recreational and natural environments in and surrounding the various built up areas. It is for the most part very safe and enjoyable to move around on foot and bike, and the plan will seek opportunities to improve these aspects of parish life, thus promoting a safe, family focused and invigorating environment for future *well managed* growth.

This will be achieved by:

- a) Allocating a site for measured, proportionate, timely and sustainable development to 2036: eco-friendly in both design, operation and longevity, and respecting the design guidelines in the plan. Development will meet local needs from both employment and demographic perspectives. Smaller, windfall sites coming forward will also be considered in the light of these criteria.
- b) Maintaining the high-quality natural environment with protected wildlife interests, recognising the local agricultural predominance.

- c) Retaining and enhancing the character and appeal of the existing conservation area and unique assets of the parish, including footpaths, jitties, open green spaces and community and recreational facilities.
- d) Endorsing and/or developing policies and developments in environmentally acceptable locations that have a positive effect on the sustainability and environment of the parish, including those that remove or minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change and reduce the carbon foot-print. Opportunities to remove or reduce through traffic will be sought wherever possible, as will measures to reduce the impact of unavoidable traffic in and through the parish.
- e) Enhancing and supporting our rural economy through ensuring efficient and timely public transport to neighbouring centres and providing an environment for local businesses and home working to flourish in a modern digital age.

Planning Context

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

- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and has regard for the policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as meeting a range of EU obligations.

Sustainable Development

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

An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure. Whilst the community is primarily residential, there is a strong desire to safeguard its employment locations, including the farming community. Neovia and caterpillar are outside of the parish yet provide a valuable local employment resource, as does Pound Stretcher, which is within the parish boundary.

We therefore value these employment opportunities and wish to retain the current level of employment and develop it further where possible.

A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by promoting the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan, we are seeking to ensure that any new housing delivers a mix of housing types so that we can meet the needs of present and future generations and ensure that we support the community’s health as well as its social and cultural wellbeing. We are particularly looking to provide single-level living and extra care housing facilities to ensure that older people and people with disabilities remain independent and able to live in their own homes for longer, as well as some smaller and more affordable homes for our young people and families. We are also seeking to support and enhance existing community facilities and to improve services for younger people.

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

- The special open spaces within our parish are protected from development, to protect the village identity and retain the rural nature of its surroundings.
- Development preserves and contributes to the attractive local countryside including replacement of any hedging which needs to be maintained.
- Development recognises the need to protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats and includes adding hedging to boundaries of new developments. This document sets out local considerations for delivering sustainable development across the parish. Development proposals should meet the requirements of all relevant policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and be in line with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough and national policies.
- Businesses, farming and homes consider maintaining or improving air quality where possible.

4 Housing and the Built Environment

THE STRATEGY

When, in September 2015, the whole parish was designated as the appropriate area for the Neighbourhood Plan, the Approved Local Plan did not require any further allocations of land for housing before 2026. As evidenced by the LPA's land availability assessment, however, there was already pressure for further development of greenfield sites around Desford Village: there were (and are) no brownfield sites of any size within the parish, and any future development would have to be outside the settlement boundary.

DPC therefore concluded that it was necessary to prepare a forward plan to guide development from 2026 to 2036, and the approach was to obtain an indicative figure from the Borough Council for the housing need during that period and allocate sufficient land for housing to meet that need. It was always accepted that this would require land for more units than the actual need figure, to give robustness to the plan in meeting its target.

HBBC provided an indicative figure of 163 units, calculated by the Standard Methodology, and gave credit for 70 completions, leaving a net target of 93. This was supported by DPC, because the methodology is based on population increase and provides a sustainable level of growth for a village already under some stress on infra-structure and amenities due to past growth. DPC decided that the bulk of the target should be met by a new allocation on the site or sites preferred by the parishioners after a consultation exercise. DPC adopted a methodology which has been supported in other Neighbourhood Plans that have been made, to assess the SHELAA sites from the 2014/6 exercise, to use robust criteria to rank them for Neighbourhood Plan purposes.

Flowing from the consultation and the ranking exercise, the Regulation 14 Draft Plan proposed an allocation of 80 units on a site to the west of the village. The 17 permissions granted since the plan preparation started and an allocation of 80 units provides land for 97 units, more than the minimum requirement, and to be added to with a windfall allowance likely to be around 5 per year throughout the Plan period.

DPC will continue to engage with the LPA during its review of the existing local plan, and to commit to an urgent review of the Neighbourhood Plan should the Local Plan review require further land to be found in the Parish.

HOUSING NEED AND PROVISION

Desford Parish has consistently been rated by its residents as a “nice place to live”, from the 2001 Parish Appraisal to the 2017 Parish Questionnaire. HBBC has ascertained it to be in the high range of Market Interest from developers, when ranked by settlement in the Borough. In relation to HBBC as a whole, 2011 census data shows the parish has a slightly higher proportion of sixty-five plus residents (20.9% to 18.4%), and noticeably higher rates of home ownership. Levels of home ownership are also high in the Parish:

	Desford	HBBC
Owned outright:	43.5%	37.2%
Mortgaged	40.1%	39.6%

In terms of affordable housing provision, the parish has many less shared ownership units than HBBC as a whole and a much lower proportion of rented properties across all sectors:

	Desford	HBBC
All sectors rented	15.9%	22.7%
Shared Ownership	0.5%	8.0%

In recent decades, the village of Desford has experienced substantial housing growth on both greenfield sites, such as Peckleton View, Hunts Lane and Leicester Lane and on brownfield sites such as the grounds of demolished houses, for example, Goulton Crescent. The retirement village of Kirby Grange in Botcheston is also of fairly recent construction. The 2001 appraisal and 2017 questionnaire confirm the residents view that there is a strong community spirit in the parish, although that is accompanied in both documents by an ongoing concern that too much and/or too rapid housing growth will endanger “the village feel” and impact adversely on the sense of community. The plan approach to housing is to meet the required growth in a sustainable manner that respects the character of the two principal settlements in the parish.

In the Borough’s settlement hierarchy, Desford is classed as a Key Rural Centre along with eight other settlements. These are defined as having a population of over 1,500 and a range of community facilities including a Primary School, a shop, Doctor’s surgery, employment activity and a regular bus service. The HBBC Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2014) states that ‘The residual minimum housing requirement for Desford, as of 1 September 2014 has been met and as such no sites are required to be allocated for residential development in Desford’.

In line with the recent HBBC Local Plan consultation document (2018), the Housing section of the plan looks forward to 2036, and reflects a new approach, as expressed in the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018). The updated NPPF is now the overarching guidance for planning policy, and one of the key areas it sets out to address is the lack of affordable housing supply. To quote the new NPPF (2018):

Para 59. To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

Para 60. To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

Para 61. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).

Para 62. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site.

In return, this Plan will rely on the certainty provided for approved Plans to allocate development sites in the optimum locations to preserve those aspects of community life valued by the residents. The increased emphasis in the NPPF (2018) on the Neighbourhood Plan as the key planning document is welcomed.

Alongside the Parish Council’s residents’ questionnaire, the Midlands Rural Housing Association carried out a survey of local housing need in 2017. This identified a need for an additional 32 units within the next five years (to 2023): 18 market “for sale” homes and a further 14 affordable homes. As at May 2018 there are 46 households with a proven housing need and a local connection currently on HBBC’s Housing Register. There is a much-needed affordable housing provision coming on-stream in the Bellway Homes Phase 2 Development to the west of Desford-

Historical Land Registry data suggests that about 5 dwellings per annum have been provided by windfall sites in the parish and this delivery mechanism is expected to yield a similar result over the seventeen years of this plan.

It is important to justify the housing provision required in Desford by an analysis of the variety

of evidence that is available. The Leicester and Leicestershire Local Authorities (including HBBC) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) commissioned a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) analysis from G L Hearn (part of the Capita group) to assess future housing needs, the scale of future economic growth and the quantity of land and floor-space required between 2011 and 2036. The report provides the evidence base for the preparation of statutory local development plans for individual local authorities, the 'Strategic Growth Plan Leicester and Leicestershire' and a refresh of the LEP's strategic economic plan. It was published in January 2017 and revealed an increase in housing need from earlier projections and this need has since increased further by local issues including the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2017). The LEP have also signed a "memorandum of understanding" committing all the relevant local planning authorities to collectively delivering this housing need to 2036 through the local plan.

The Government have recently introduced the Standard Methodology for assessing housing need. This currently gives the borough an annual housing need of around 473 dwellings per year (or 9,460 dwellings between 2016 and 2036). However, in advance of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan there are uncertainties in establishing housing requirement figures for Neighbourhood Plans. A draft indicative figure of 163 dwellings over the period 2016-2036 was provided by the borough. It is acknowledged that this is a draft figure at this time and the full scale of housing requirement which may need to be accommodated in the area covered by the Desford NDP over the period 2016-2036 will only be fully established once the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Review has reached a sufficiently advanced stage. In the meantime, a guide figure of a minimum of 163 dwellings will be used for the neighbourhood plan.

A review of the neighbourhood plan may be necessary if it is not sufficiently flexible to respond to a changing housing requirement established through the borough-wide local plan.

One of the key aims of the Plan is to deliver the necessary housing construction required to meet the housing need in the Parish to 2036. This has increased in significance as the local planning authority, at time of Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan, cannot demonstrate a 5-year land supply.

A total of 73 net units were approved between 2016 and 2018. A further 13 dwellings subsequently received a planning consent making a total of 86 and leaving a residual requirement of 77 dwellings up to 2036, to be met by the site allocation at Policy H2 (for around 80 units) and through the windfall Policy at H6. The windfall units effectively provide a cushion against an increased housing requirement or failure to deliver schemes already with a planning approval.

Furthermore, additional sites for housing development may be brought forward in a review of the Plan, following an increase in the housing target for the Parish being required in a review of the Local Plan by HBBC or the failure of a housing commitment in the Parish to be developed.

Settlement Boundary

The purpose of a Settlement Boundary is to ensure that sufficient sites for new homes and economic activity are available in appropriate locations within the parish that will meet the community's aspiration to avoid unwanted encroachment into the local open countryside. The HBBC adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016) updated the Settlement Boundary for Desford within which, and under specific circumstances, development is best located.

The Settlement Boundary defines the extent of a built-up part of a settlement and it distinguishes firstly, between areas where, in planning terms, development might be acceptable in principle, mainly in the built-up area of each village and secondly, it defines where development would not be acceptable. Generally, these are the least sustainable locations such as the open countryside as such growth would risk the loss of separation of settlements to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of the Plan area.

The Plan proposes to designate a new Settlement Boundary for Desford village which will update and supersede the existing Settlement Boundary currently used by HBBC (2016), as it takes into account the residential allocation proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan. Within the defined Settlement Boundary an appropriate amount of suitably designed and located development will be acceptable in principle, although this will be required to take into account the policies within the Development Plan.

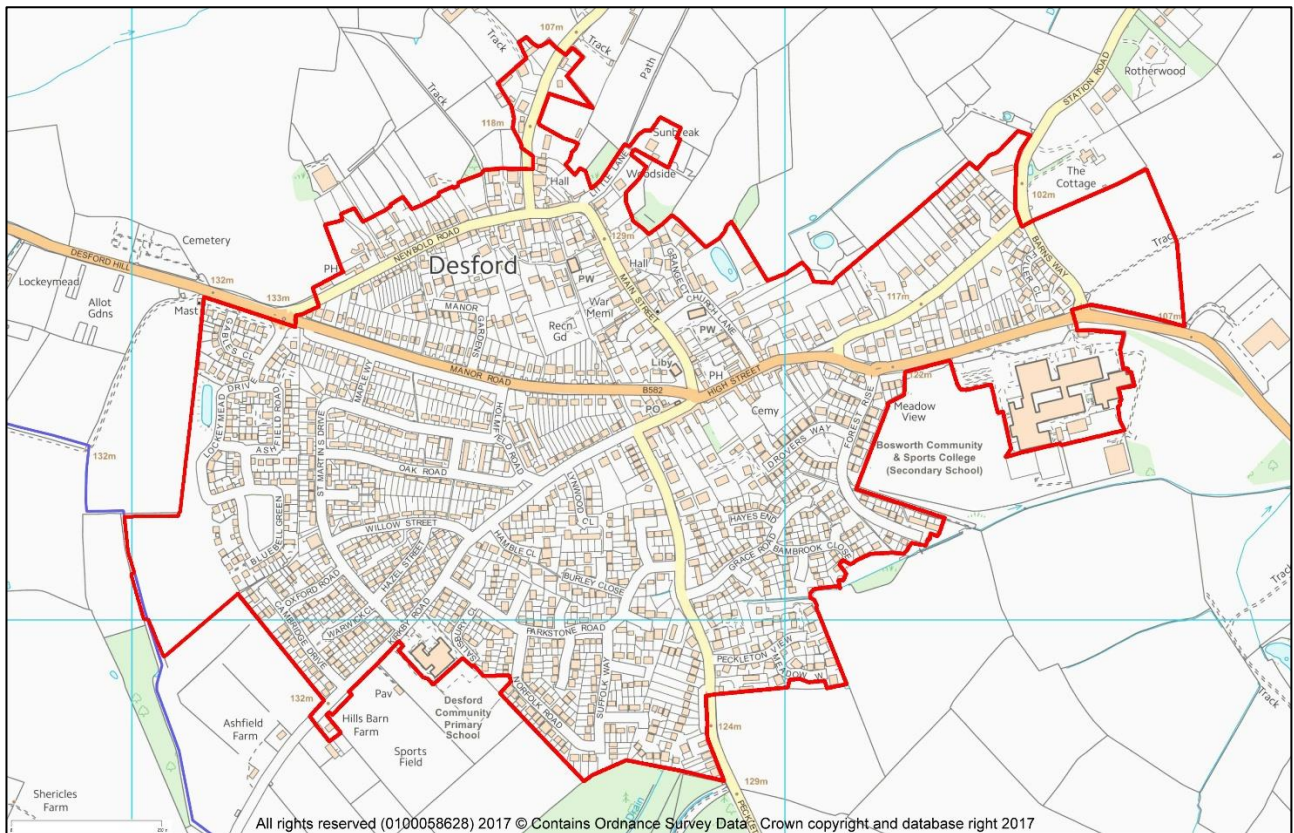
Focusing development within the Settlement Boundary will help to support existing services in Desford village centre and help to protect the village's countryside setting, the natural environment and the remainder of the Plan area from inappropriate development.

The parish is predominantly rural in nature, surrounded by open, attractive, countryside. In planning terms, land outside a defined Settlement Boundary, including any small groups of buildings or small settlements is treated as countryside. It is both national and local HBBC planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. It is of vital importance to the community that development is focused on the main settlement of Desford itself. Desford is sustainable with excellent access to existing services and infrastructure. This focus will preserve the intrinsic rural beauty of the surrounding countryside which is a core planning principle of the NPPF and the adopted DPD (2016) policies of HBBC.

POLICY H1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY - Development proposals within the Plan area on sites within the Settlement Boundary, or in terms of new sporting or recreational facilities close or adjacent to the Settlement Boundary as identified in figure 2 (below), will be supported where they respect the character of Desford.

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

Figure 2 – Settlement Boundary



Housing Allocations

Having considered the housing provision target and the needs to be met, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) agreed to undertake a comprehensive strategic sustainability assessment (SSA) of potential residential development sites, to enable the most sustainable and least environmentally damaging site(s) to be allocated for future housing growth.

HBBC completed three call-for-sites between 2016 and 2018. As a result of these call-for-sites the SHELAA was published in December 2018. Due to the timing of the publication of the SHELAA and the Neighbourhood Plan wanting to progress to site assessment stage, the Desford Neighbourhood Plan group agreed to assess the fifteen potential sites that had come forward for the 2014 SHLAA. Site assessment work was undertaken in 2018 (Appendix D2) and concluded in 2019, incorporating further sites into the process that had come forward during the Regulation 14 consultation.

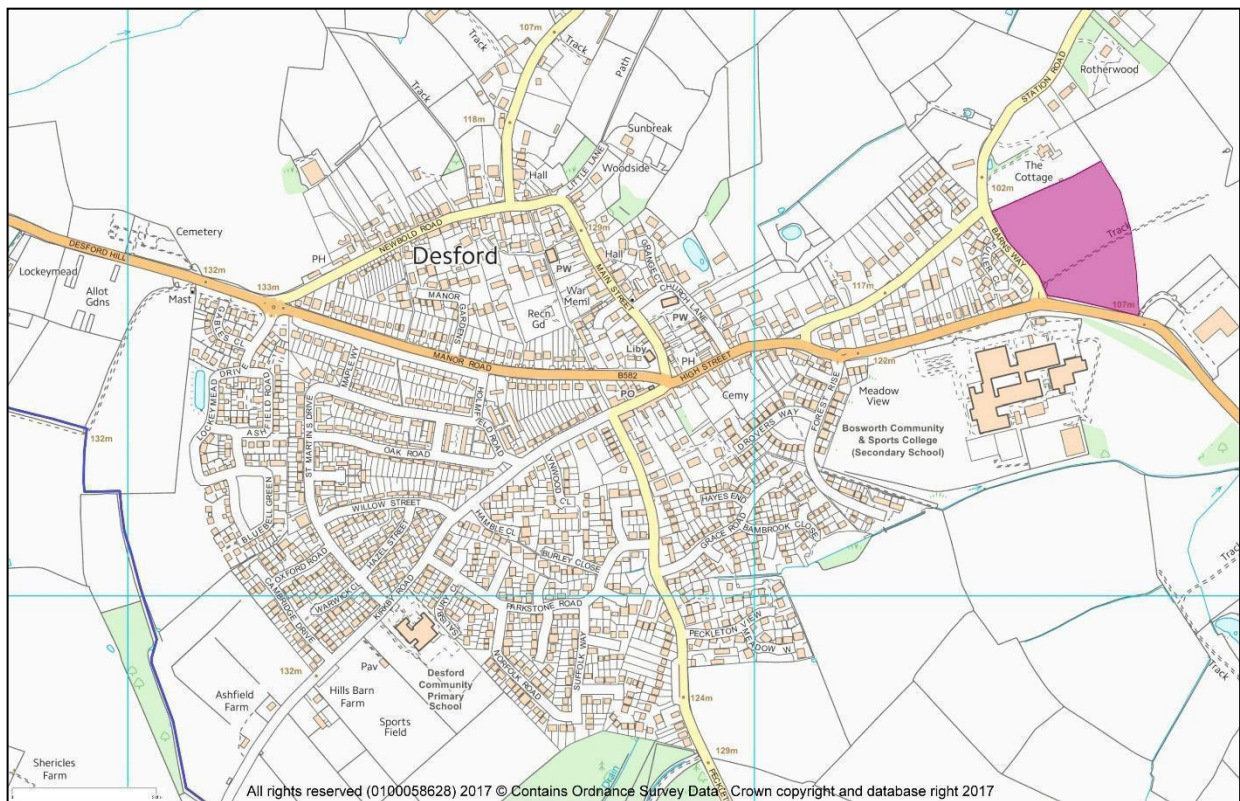
Through undertaking the SSA the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group prioritised the least environmentally damaging and the most sustainable locations for residential development. The SSA process is described in the appendix (Appendix D2).

As a consequence of completing the SSA process, the land off the Barns Way extension site is allocated for residential development. The conditions attached to the allocation have been agreed with the Developer.

POLICY H2: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION – Land is allocated for residential development off Barns Way in Desford for around 80 units as shown below (Figure 3). Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) A minimum of 40% of the total units developed will be affordable housing;
- b) Where possible, all affordable units should be made available to eligible households with a local connection to the Parish;
- c) The affordable housing units should be visually indistinguishable from the equivalent market housing on the site and should be provided as clusters of units dispersed throughout the development.
- d) All of the units to be developed will achieve Part M (2) of the 2016 Building Regulations (unless a specific waiver is granted on a plot by plot basis);
- e) Where possible, a minimum of 10% of all the units developed will achieve Part M (3) of the 2016 Building Regulations;
- f) Of the affordable units developed around 80% will be provided as “social rent” or “affordable rent” housing to be owned and managed by a housing association or charitable trust;
- g) Of the affordable units developed, around 20% will be for “shared ownership” housing, “low cost starter homes for sale”
- h) The shared ownership units will be provided through a condition to development at a percentage of between 25% and 75% to be bought on the initial purchase and allow staircasing to 100% - in line with the council of Mortgage Lenders procedures;
- i) The low-cost starter homes for sale will be offered at a full market discount of a minimum of 20% and in line with the terms and conditions of the Government schemes in place at the time of sale;
- j) A new vehicular access will be built on the junction of Barns Way, subject to Highways Authority approval;
- k) Priority will be given to dwellings of 3 bedrooms or fewer (see Policy H4). The inclusion of four-bedroom or larger houses in the development will be supported where they are subservient in number to two or three-bedroom accommodation;
- l) Other financial contributions will be subject to Leicestershire County Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council requirements at full planning application stage; and
- m) The whole of site A is to be built as one carefully designed scheme. The residential development will only be considered as one project submitted as one planning application and the site cannot be subdivided through more than one planning application.

Figure 3 – Residential Allocation



Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (Annex 2) as ‘housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)’. The PPG (2a-022) describes affordable housing need as being an estimate of “the number of households and projected households who lack their own housing or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.” Public authorities, under the Homeless Reduction Act, also have a new duty to those people who are at risk of becoming homeless; which will increase the pressure on the availability of social housing and affordable housing.

With average house prices too high for those on average incomes, housing affordability remains a key housing issue for the Parish and there is a clear case to meet local targets for affordable housing provision. The Adopted Local Plan contains a requirement to provide 40% affordable units on-site for all developments with 4 or more dwellings.

A strong theme from the statistical data and the local consultation activity has been to address the difficulty of young people, particularly young families or poorer older people to be able to afford to live or move in to the Parish. The entry point for market housing is high at over £210,000 for a three bedroomed property (price at April 2018). The affordable housing proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan is based on an analysis of the available statistical data, the Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Housing Needs Assessment (HEDNA), the Census 2011 data,

a Housing Needs report (See Appendix D1) and Land Registry data (Appendix C2). In approving this plan, the Parish Council have adopted a 40% affordable housing element in line with HBBC policy. The analysis of the local evidence suggests an approximate even split of this affordable housing, to reflect the high levels of owner occupation in the plan area and to help first time buyers to achieve home ownership. The Neighbourhood Plan will specify 33% of all affordable units to be rented (social or affordable rents) 33% to be shared ownership and 34% to be “low cost starter homes for sale” at a 20% discount on full market price.

A further strong theme from the statistical data and the local consultation activity has been a perceived sense of “unfairness” felt by people living in the parish not being offered affordable housing through the current HBBC allocation policy. To address the difficulty of young people, particularly young families, or poorer older people, the solution is to agree a local connection policy within the Neighbourhood Plan. This will apply to the affordable residential units of all tenures developed in the Parish, as well as for social and affordable rented re-lets in the Parish.

It is accepted that HBBC will be responsible for allocating the affordable housing to meet its statutory obligations. The local connection policy will be applied before the other tests of housing need and if no applicant is found within two weeks of a vacancy being notified, the local needs policy will be set aside. The parish will also support policies that deal with under occupied properties and schemes to support people to move to more appropriate accommodation; thereby freeing up family size properties.

POLICY H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING - To meet identified needs within the community at least 40% of all new housing developments of 10 units or more will be high quality affordable housing. The provision of affordable housing through Starter Homes or Shared Ownership schemes is supported alongside social rented housing in line with local evidence of need.

The affordable housing stock should be made available as an integral part of the development, should be visually indistinguishable from the equivalent market housing on the site and should be provided as clusters dispersed throughout the development, subject to a registered provider being prepared to take the dwellings on if applicable. The provision of affordable homes for people with a local connection will be supported.

Housing mix

Providing a wide choice of high-quality homes is essential to supporting a sustainable, mixed and inclusive community. This will help underpin a well-balanced population vital to the on-going viability of local services and the prosperity of the community, particularly in light of its increasingly ageing population.

The mix of housing proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan is also based on an analysis of the available statistical data, the Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Housing Needs Assessment (HEDNA), the Census 2011 data, a Housing Needs report and Land Registry data. In addition, the views and aspirations of residents obtained through various consultation exercises

including open events and a detailed community questionnaire have refined the policy proposals.

Mobility is an issue affecting many people as they get older, but it is just as important for anyone with a disability, at any age. Currently, means tested Disabled Facilities Grants are severely limited for home owners to cover the cost of any necessary alterations to make life manageable in their homes. Most modifications must normally be self-funded, or the owners must move to a new house at great expense and upheaval to meet their day to day mobility needs.

In terms of the 2011 census, 18.5% of Desford residents had their day to day activities limited a lot or a little, compared to 17% for HBBC. Evidence from the community questionnaire strongly suggests that this position has worsened over the last eight years as people continue to age in Desford.

The long-term aim of the Plan is therefore to support more accessible housing including extra care housing; encouraging people to plan pro-actively for future independence and quality of life.

POLICY H4: HOUSING MIX - Housing development proposals should provide a mixture of housing types specifically to meet identified local needs as evidenced Parish Housing Needs Report (Appendix D) or more recent document updating this report. The provision of dwellings of 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms and of homes suitable for older people including single-level living and a supported living complex will be supported.

Dwellings, where possible, are required to be built for people with restricted mobility including those with disabilities or special needs requiring support in the community. Where possible, all homes should be built to Building Regulations M2 (accessibility standard), with 10% built to the Building Regulations M3 (wheelchair standard).

The inclusion of 4 bedroom or larger houses in housing developments will only be supported where they are subservient in number to 1,2- and 3-bedroom accommodation and meet a specific housing need.

Windfall site development

Windfall sites are small infill or redevelopment sites that come forward. These sites can comprise redundant or vacant buildings including barns, or gaps between existing properties in a built-up area.

Such sites have made a regular contribution towards the housing supply in the Parish. There remain opportunities for windfall development within the updated Settlement Boundary, and it is recognised that they will continue to make a contribution to housing provision in the Parish over the lifetime of The Plan.

The aim of this Neighbourhood Plan is to create a vibrant approach to the Parish's development and to attempt to ensure that brownfield and derelict sites are regenerated, so delivering

windfall sites is seen as a positive factor in supporting future managed growth.

POLICY H5: WINDFALL SITE DEVELOPMENT- Small residential development proposals on infill and redevelopment sites will be supported, subject to proposals being well designed and meeting the relevant requirements set out in other policies in this Plan and Borough wide planning policies and where such development:

- a) Comprises a restricted gap in the continuity of existing frontage buildings or on other sites within the built-up areas of the Parish or where the site is closely surrounded by existing buildings;
- b) Is within the Settlement Boundary;
- c) Respects the character of each settlement in order to maintain its distinctive character and enhance it where possible;
- d) Retains and enhances, where possible, existing important natural boundaries such as trees, hedges and streams;
- e) Does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours and the existing and future occupiers of the dwelling (s);
- f) Does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise in line with HBBC advice and Planning Guidance.

Housing Design

Properties in Desford village and the other communities have been built using a wide variety of materials. Estates such as Bellway Phase 1 The Paddocks, Peckleton View, Kirby Grange and Forest Rise have been built using generic designs available to developers at the time and do not reflect local materials or character. This creates an “otherness” and new residents in these developments may feel “outside” the feel of the current settlement. Other houses in the village and hamlets use brick, as well as limestone and render, so there is no overriding single theme for design in the plan area and therefore the Plan does not seek to impose one on new developments. The general design principles contained in the emerging Good Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document are noted and agreed. This policy adds more local detail.

Design should reflect the properties nearby and, if adjacent to open countryside, seek to reduce the visual impact of the new development.

POLICY H6: HOUSING DESIGN- All new development proposals of commercial properties, one or more houses, replacement dwellings and extensions will need to satisfy the following design principles:

- a) New development should enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness and character of

the area in which it is situated, particularly within the Conservation Area, and proposals should clearly show within a Design and Access Statement where appropriate how the general character, scale, mass, density and layout of the site, of the building or extension fits in with the aspect of the surrounding area. Care should be taken to ensure that the development does not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact negatively on any significant wider landscape views;

- b) Adequate off-road parking should be provided as a minimum of two car parking spaces for dwellings of three bedrooms or less and three spaces for dwellings of four bedrooms or more;
- c) All new housing should continue to reflect the character and historic context of existing developments within the Parish and incorporate a diversity of materials. However, contemporary and innovative design and materials will be supported where positive improvement can be robustly demonstrated without detracting from the historic context. Roof and wall construction should follow technical best-practice recommendations for integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites;
- d) Development should be enhanced by fostering biodiversity and landscaping with existing trees and hedges preserved whenever possible;
- e) Where possible, enclosure of plots should be of native hedging, wooden fencing, or brick/stone wall with ground-level gaps that maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs;
- f) 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 high levels of thermal efficiency, water butts, photovoltaic cells and ground heat source pumps as appropriate; ensuring running costs are manageable;
- g) Security lighting should be operated by intruder switching, not on constantly. Maximum light spillage onto bat foraging corridors should be 1 lux;
- h) Development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems with maintenance regimes to minimise vulnerability to flooding and climate change; ensure appropriate provision for the storage of waste, recyclable materials and rain water for use in gardens. The Drainage Hierarchy (Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph 80) should be applied to ensure that where possible, surface water is directed towards infiltration or watercourses before considering the use of the sewerage system;
- i) Development should be of a similar density to properties in the immediate surrounding area;
- j) Properties, where appropriate, should have built-in facilities for wildlife, for example, bee bricks and swift boxes.

5 The Natural and Historic Environment

Introduction

This section of the Plan deals with the environmental component of *sustainable development*, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework. It balances the requirement for appropriate development in Desford against the value of environmental features that can be shown to be both significant (for wildlife and history) and appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people. It also deals with the broader environmental issues of concern to the community, like access to the countryside and renewable energy generation.

The MAPS in this section have been reduced to fit the document page size. Full-size versions are available as *supporting documents*

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan's lifetime. Only 7% (approximately) by area of the open, developable land in the parish has been earmarked for environmental protection, while the proportion in, or within 1km of the limits of, the present built-up areas is 11%:

Area of undeveloped land in Desford parish = 1180ha

Area proposed for environmental protection in Desford parish = 80ha (6.7%)

Developed areas + 1km margin = 470ha

Area proposed for environmental protection within this = 52ha (11%)

The Desford Neighbourhood Plan Area coincides with the Civil Parish. This gently undulating, open **landscape** lies between the Midland Plain (stretching away toward the southwest) and the higher ground of the 'spine of England', of which the Leicestershire Coalfield and Charnwood Forest are the southernmost outposts – these form the northern horizons of the parish. The modest but picturesque, rather steep-sided, valley of Rothley Brook divides the Plan Area into two. The difference in altitude between the highest (133m) and lowest (81m) points is 52 metres (**topography** map, figure 4).

Most of the parish lies on heavy clay soils, but Desford village (**geology** map, figure 4) is located over a patch of sand and gravel and on a valley side where Triassic sandstone is close to the surface; both these 'rock' types provided the early settlers of the area with access to spring water and a less muddy place to live.

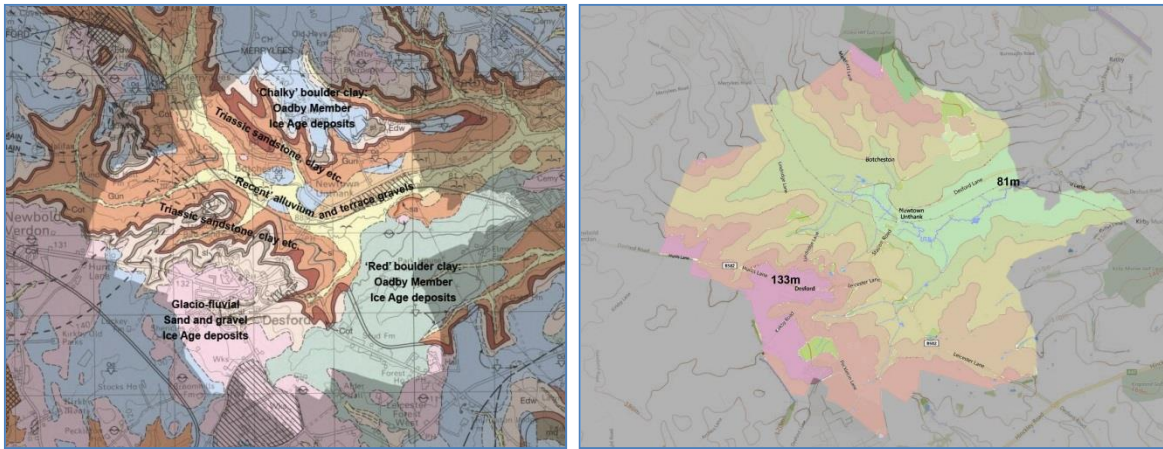


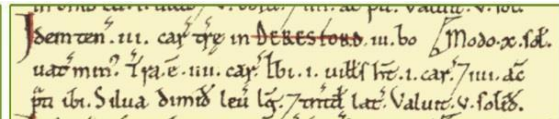
Figure 4. Geology of Desford (left) (adapted from BGS mapping); Topography of Desford (right)

The parish has a long **history**, as shown by archaeology, documents and surviving landscape features. Local interest is demonstrated by the active and long-established Desford & District Local History Society. Finds nearby show that people were here from the Neolithic period, while actual sites and finds in the parish show that by the time of the Roman occupation British people had adopted ‘Roman’ culture and had established settlements, farms and small industrial sites. Occupation has probably been continuous ever since. Desford, which is adjacent to known Romano-British sites, has a pure Old English name, and was probably originally a farmstead established by Anglo-Saxon settlers in the 7th century. It grew to become the main settlement in a larger estate including Botcheston, Newtown Unthank and Lindridge. It was part of Middle Anglia, a short-lived kingdom absorbed into Mercia in about 643, which was in Guthlaxton hundred (St Guthlac was a member of the Mercian royal family). When the Vikings arrived in about 868AD, they found the area already fully occupied, and either became residents under the existing administration or established new settlements elsewhere – the nearest being Kirby (Muxloe) and Ratby.

Figure 5. The Saxon origin of Desford’s name (left), and its entry in Domesday Book as ‘Deresford’ (right)

Desford = *Deors Ford* (personal name +s, OR **deor** (wild animal) + **ford** (all Old English)

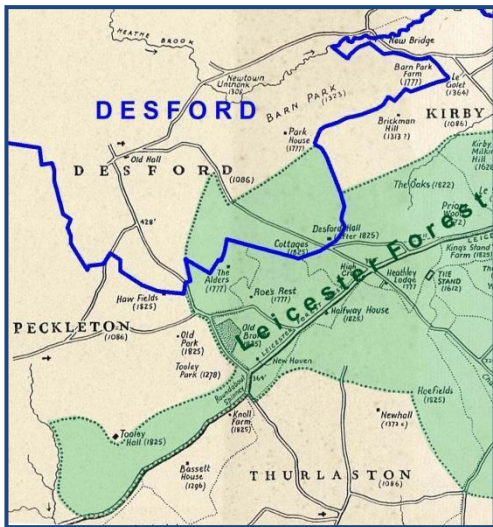
Key to English place-names (University of Nottingham)



By the time of the Norman invasion Desford seems to have shrunk: it was recorded in 1086 as having only one household, four ploughlands, 4 acres of meadow and 0.5 leagues of woodland. The old estate became a manor, which was subdivided into several manors including Lindridge, where a moated site survives.

Leicester Forest, immediately to the east but with a powerful influence on Desford’s historical landscape, was an area of woodland, heath and grass reserved for hunting by kings and nobles. It was based on the pre-Norman *Hereswode* (Old English ‘army’s wood’). The townspeople of Leicester had rights, for example to graze livestock and collect wood, in the Forest, as did people in surrounding parishes, including Desford. Later changes included the establishment of Parks (enclosed for deer), a Desford example being Bar n (Baron’s) Park,

and, in 1628, the disafforestation of Leicester Forest to allow the land to be turned over to



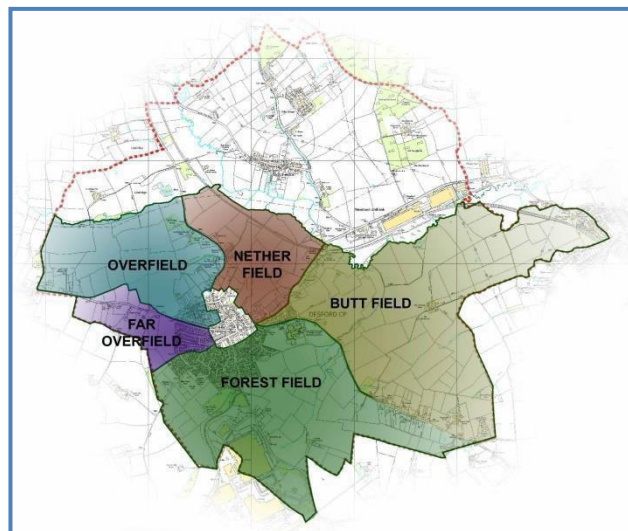
Leicester Forest in relation to Desford Adapted from Fox and Russell 1948

agriculture. The ecclesiastical parish boundaries were fixed in about 1190 and the church dates from the late 13th century. The modern Civil Parish boundary probably preserves some stretches of the original Saxon estate boundary as well as that of Leicester Forest.

The medieval manor was farmed using the open field system (mostly arable, with some meadows and woodland). In most of Leicestershire this system was ended in the 18th century by the Enclosures, but in Desford this change seems to have happened more gradually (and considerably earlier); the Parliamentary Enclosure Act of 1760 merely formalised it. Also, unlike

in other parishes where the arable land was replaced by permanent grazing, Desford maintained a large area of arable agriculture after the Enclosure (still over 25% of the total in 1850). The effects of this unusual farming history can still be seen.

Another change in the 18th and 19th centuries was the partial industrialisation of the parish,



The medieval Open Fields of Desford

largely because of its proximity to the Leicestershire Coalfield. There was one colliery, other industries came to the village, and the Leicester and Swannington Railway (1832; one of the first in England) passed through the parish. The village expanded and the population grew (to just over 1000 in 1846). 20th century housing developments continued this growth, in which the village expanded to three times its historical area and the population increased likewise to almost

4000 (2011 census).

Largely because of its history, Desford's **natural environment** is not particularly noteworthy on a national or even county scale. However, the mixed nature of its land use, with a small-scale patchwork of small fields, copses, formal parkland, streamside habitats, hedgerows and grazing land, particularly in the area north of the village, gives it a good level of biodiversity. The surviving sites of wildlife importance have disproportionately high local value and this Plan sets out to identify and protect them wherever possible.

Existing environmental designations

The parish is located in parts of three *National Character Areas* (Natural England landscape areas, defined for planning purposes): *NCA 71 Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield*, *NCA 73 Charnwood* and *NCA 94 Leicestershire Vales*. HBBC's Landscape Character Assessment, and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017) offer valuable insights into local environmental aspects and sensitivity to development. There are 18 Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument (historic features of national importance), 6 further extant sites and features of history significance (Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records), one *Site of Special Scientific Interest* and 15 mapped areas of *Priority Habitat* (defined by Natural England).

Environmental characteristics of the Plan Area

The parish is characterised by a few distinctive environmental features. Taken together, the policies in this chapter will help to protect the details of the parish's environment and thus contribute to preservation of the whole landscape and 'sense of place' of Desford.

- Open, 'breezy' aspect with long views
- Steep-sided, wooded valley divides the parish into two halves
- Varied built environment of Desford village centre, with intermixed buildings of all ages from 17th century to modern

Environmental inventory

An environmental inventory (Appendix E) of Desford was carried out between August and November 2017. The work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and available information, and
- Fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historical environment significance in the context of the Plan Area.

The review compiled information from many sources, including: DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records, Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Record Centre records (biodiversity), Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, Old maps (Ordnance Survey, manuscript), British History Online, Local history and archaeology publications, Local knowledge

Fieldwork reviewed all open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan Area, and significant species, habitats, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant features were checked.

This data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and each site was scored and evaluated using the nine criteria for Local Green Space selection in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2018*:

Criterion (NPPF 2018)	Score range	Notes
ACCESSIBILITY	0 1-3 4	e.g. private, no access (0) – visible from public place – accessed via PRow – fully open to the public (4)
PROXIMITY / LOCAL	0 1-3 4	Distant (0) --- fairly near to --- adjoins (3) or is within (4) settlement
BOUNDED	0 1-3 4	Individual parcel of land (not an undefined or large area)
SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY	0 1-3 4	Opinion of local people e.g. via questionnaire or at consultation events
RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL USE	0 1-3 4	Actual or potential, informal sports, dog-walking, Forest School use, informal or official open space, etc.
BEAUTY (including views)	0 1 2	Subjective, relative (give justification); use consultation map results
TRANQUILITY	0 1 2	Subjective, relative (give justification)
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	0 1-3 4	Extant, visible evidence. Number of periods/features/records etc. / Relevant existing designations (Historic Environment Records)
WILDLIFE SIGNIFICANCE, GEOLOGY	0 1-3 4	Richness of species and habitats (Priority (BAP) spp. / Priority habitats) / relevant existing designations (Habitat Survey, Local Wildlife Sites / site of geological/industrial history significance)
[Maximum possible score]		32

Environmental protections

In the National Planning Policy Framework, the *natural and historical environment* is acknowledged to be an essential component of *sustainable development*; as such it carries equal weight in a balance against social and economic growth, including new development.





This section of the Plan identifies land and features of environmental significance in Desford. It includes policies to protect the best from loss or damage by allocating them to categories, as follows, based on their type, importance, function (as community assets, for example) and intrinsic value. The range of protections considered by the Plan is available in the supporting information.

Local Green Spaces

Of the approximately 330 inventoried parcels of open or undeveloped land in the parish, 103 were identified as having notable environmental (natural, historical and/or cultural) features. These sites were scored, using the nine criteria for Local Green Space designation noted in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2018* (see the supporting information for the criteria, and scoring system used for this Plan).

Three sites score 75% (24/32) or more of the maximum possible and meet the essential requirements for designation as Local Green Space as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, paragraph 77). Their statutory protection will ensure that these most important places in Desford’s natural and human environment are protected for future generations.

Ref.	EVIDENCE	NPPF (2018) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA									
		Access /4	Proximity /4	Bounded /4	Special /4	Rec/Ed /4	Beauty/ Views /2	Tranq. /2	History /4	Wildlife /4	TOTAL
301	<p>St Martin’s Churchyard</p> <p>Churchyard on elevated sloping site surrounding Grade II* Listed 13th century (with 19th C changes) church. Mown grass, yews, other ornamental and native trees and shrubs, Swithland Slate headstones. Seats.</p> <p>Bounded by local ‘granite’ retaining walls, arched gateways, etc.</p> <p>Bats, 4 species of conservation concern (birds), biodiversity hotspot within the built-up area.</p> <p>Full access. HBBC Open Space, maintained by DPC. Statutory</p>	4	4	4	4	3	1	1.5	4	2.5	28

Ref.	EVIDENCE	NPPF (2018) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA									
		Access /4	Proximity /4	Bounded /4	Special /4	Rec/Ed /4	Beauty/ Views /2	Tranq. /2	History /4	Wildlife /4	TOTAL
	 <p>St Martin's churchyard, summer 2017</p> 										
300	<p>Pickard Recreation Ground</p> <p>Land gifted to the village by Albert Pickard in sections, finally 1937. Subject to a covenant protecting its use as a recreation ground, 'free to all parishioners of Desford'.</p> <p>Full access, seating, flower beds, ornamental trees, hedges, shrubs. Children's Play Area.</p> <p>Maintained by Parish Council and volunteers.</p>	4	4	4	4	3.5	1.5	1	2	2.5	26.5
	 <p>Pickard Recreation Ground and playpark, January 2018</p> 										
167	<p>Barns Charity Fields [Area 8.79ha, including brook and pond within the site]</p> <p>Integrated site consisting of three permanent grass fields, in Trust (resulting from gift of 1729 for the benefit of 'poor and deserving children' by local benefactor William Barns). Income from the charity is still distributed as educational grants to children in the parish.</p> <p>Access by regular guided walks. Two fields are Local Wildlife Site, designated by HBBC; currently under an Environmental Stewardship agreement.</p> <p>Pasture, good ridge and furrow in 2 directions. Light managed grazing from April to October. Recently constructed 150m of fencing with newly planted native</p>	2	3	4	3.5	3	1.5	1.5	3	3.5	25


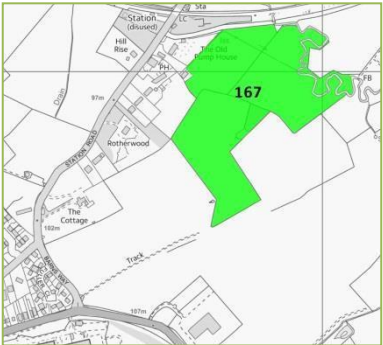
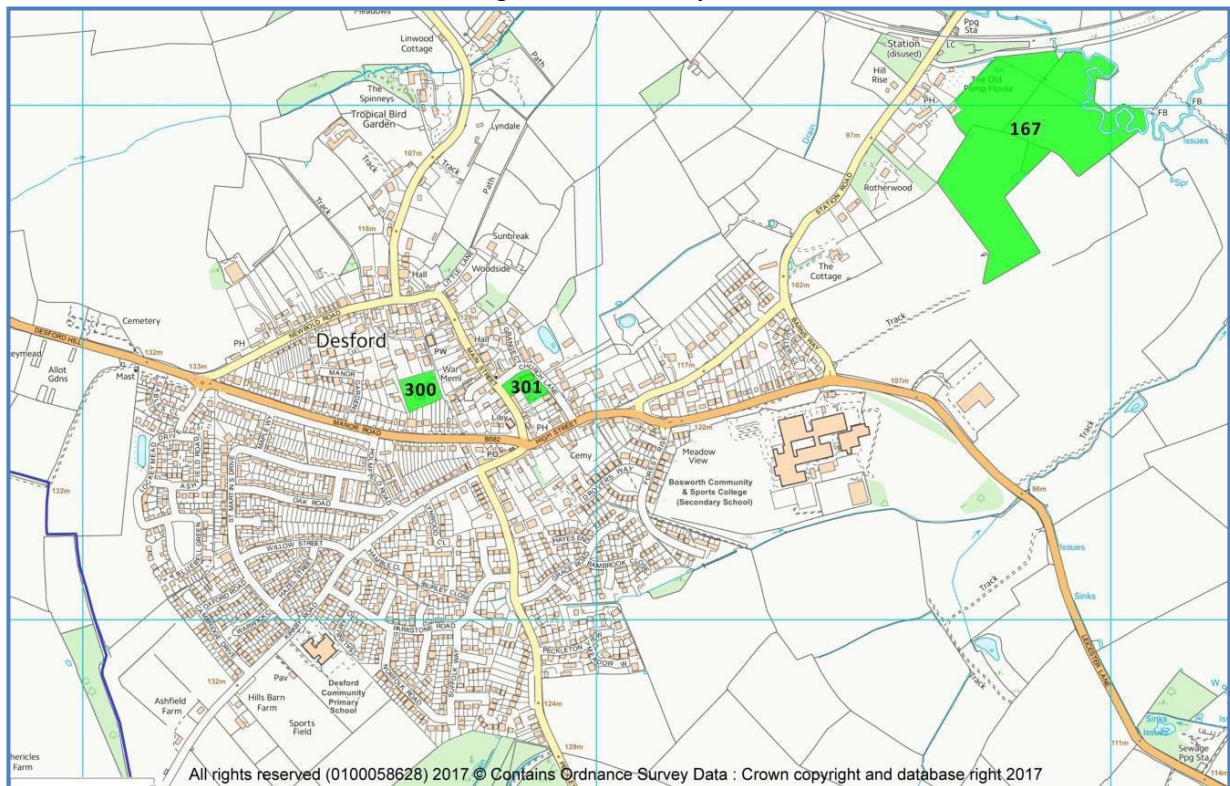
Ref.	EVIDENCE	NPPF (2018) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA									
		Access /4	Proximity /4	Bounded /4	Special /4	Rec/Ed /4	Beauty/ Views /2	Tranq. /2	History /4	Wildlife /4	TOTAL
	<p>hedge of dog rose, crab apple, hawthorn, hazel, maple, dog wood which will be laid, and oak saplings to provide hedgerow trees. Planted to provide landscape value from the village.</p> <p>Includes site of old clay pit, now a pond, which fills in winter and is important for amphibians. Species-rich including lady's bedstraw, common spotted orchid, <i>Alchemilla</i> species, Great Burnet and meadow saxifrage. Copse.</p>										
		Barns Charity Fields, summer 2017									

Fig. 6: Local Green Spaces



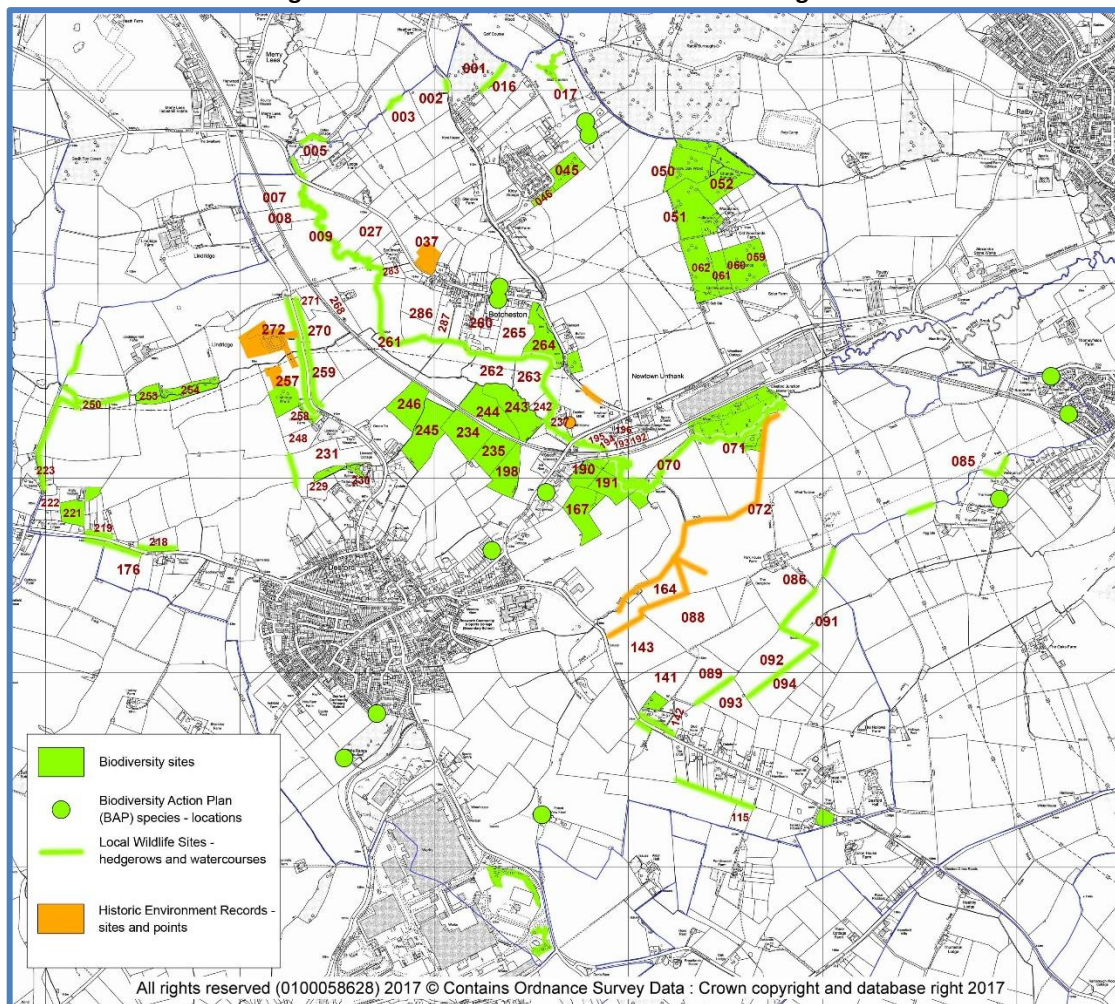
POLICY ENV 1: PROTECTION OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the following designated Local Green Spaces (mapped above, Figure 6), or their settings, will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

- St Martin’s churchyard (Inventory reference 301; also protected as burial ground and as the setting of the Listed Building)
- Pickard Recreation Ground (300)
- Barns Charity Fields (167)

Sites of environmental significance

A group of inventory sites scores highly for ‘history’ and ‘wildlife’ (scoring at least 6/8 under these two criteria) but, because their community value scores are not high enough, they are not eligible for Local Green Space designation. The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in the environmental inventory (Appendix E). The map (Figure. 7) shows their locations.

Figure 7: Sites and Features of Environmental Significance



The **historical environment** sites comprise a) sites with *extant and visible* archaeological or historical features recorded in the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records database and b) other sites of historical and social significance identified in local records and during the inventory process.

The **natural environment** sites comprise: a) SSSIs; b) historic (previous surveys), potential and validated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) as mapped by the Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LCC); c) those where *priority habitats* occur (Natural England mapping) or where *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded as breeding or as regular visitors; and d) sites identified during the inventory process as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area.

POLICY ENV 2: PROTECTION OF OTHER SITES AND FEATURES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – Sites listed in the environmental inventory, (appendix E, and map Fig. 7 above) have been identified as being of local significance for biodiversity (species and habitats) and/or history. They are important in their own right and are locally valued. Development proposals that affect them will be expected to protect or enhance the identified features.

Important Open Spaces

A further group of sites scored highly in the inventory (scoring at least 75% of the possible total under the relevant criteria) for their community value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; some are existing Open Space & Recreation Study 2016 sites.

In Desford these sites have been classified in the following HBBC OSSR typologies:

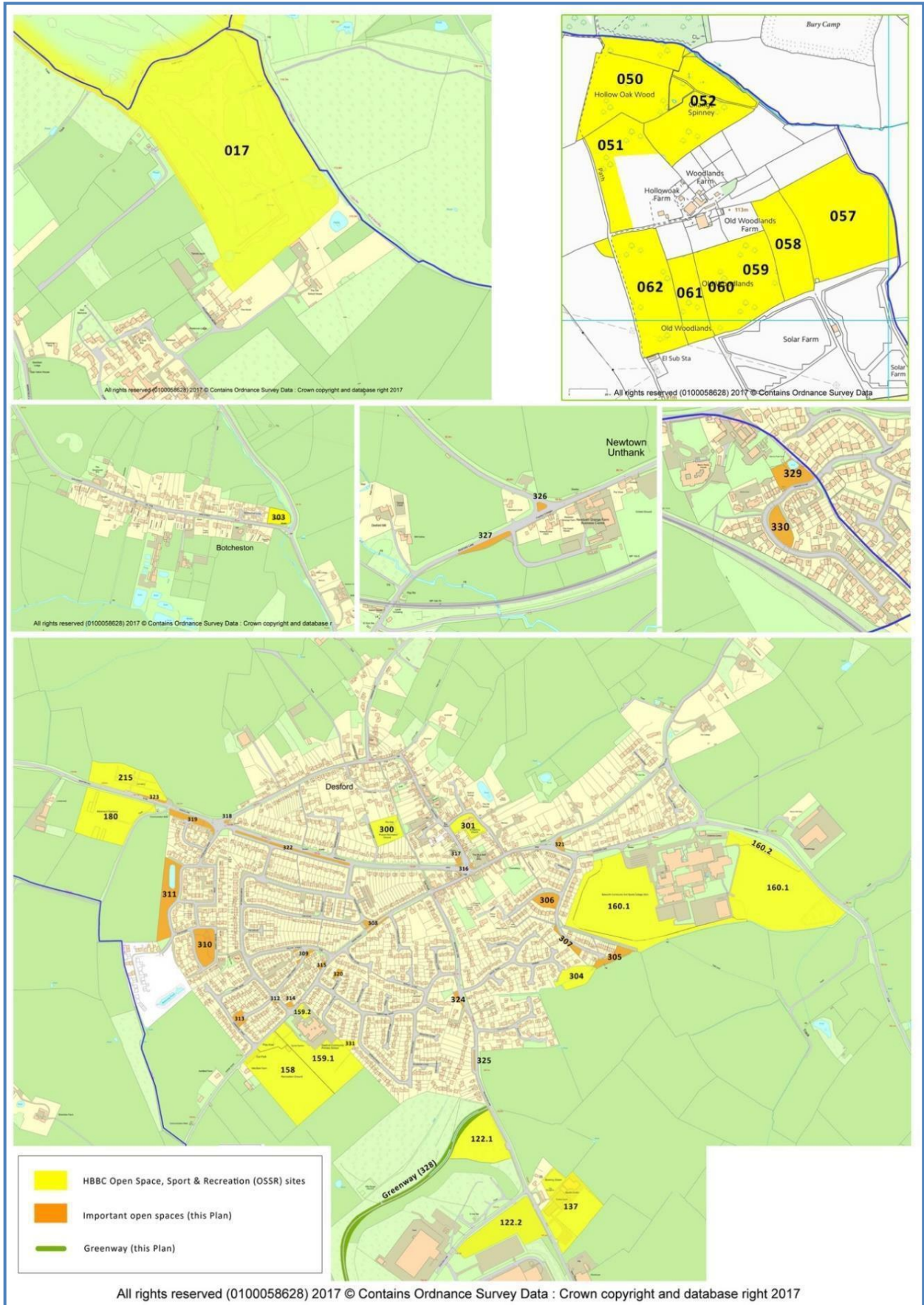
- Formal parks
- Natural and semi-natural open space
- Amenity green space
- Children and young people
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Allotments
- Cemeteries and churchyards

Two additional open space typologies (as used by other Planning Authorities in Leicestershire) are considered by Desford residents to be locally relevant:

- Roadside 'greens' and verges of amenity and streetscape value
- Greenways

These sites' value, as open space *within and close to the built-up areas* and as formal or informal community assets, is recognised in this Community Action.

Fig. 8: Important Open Spaces



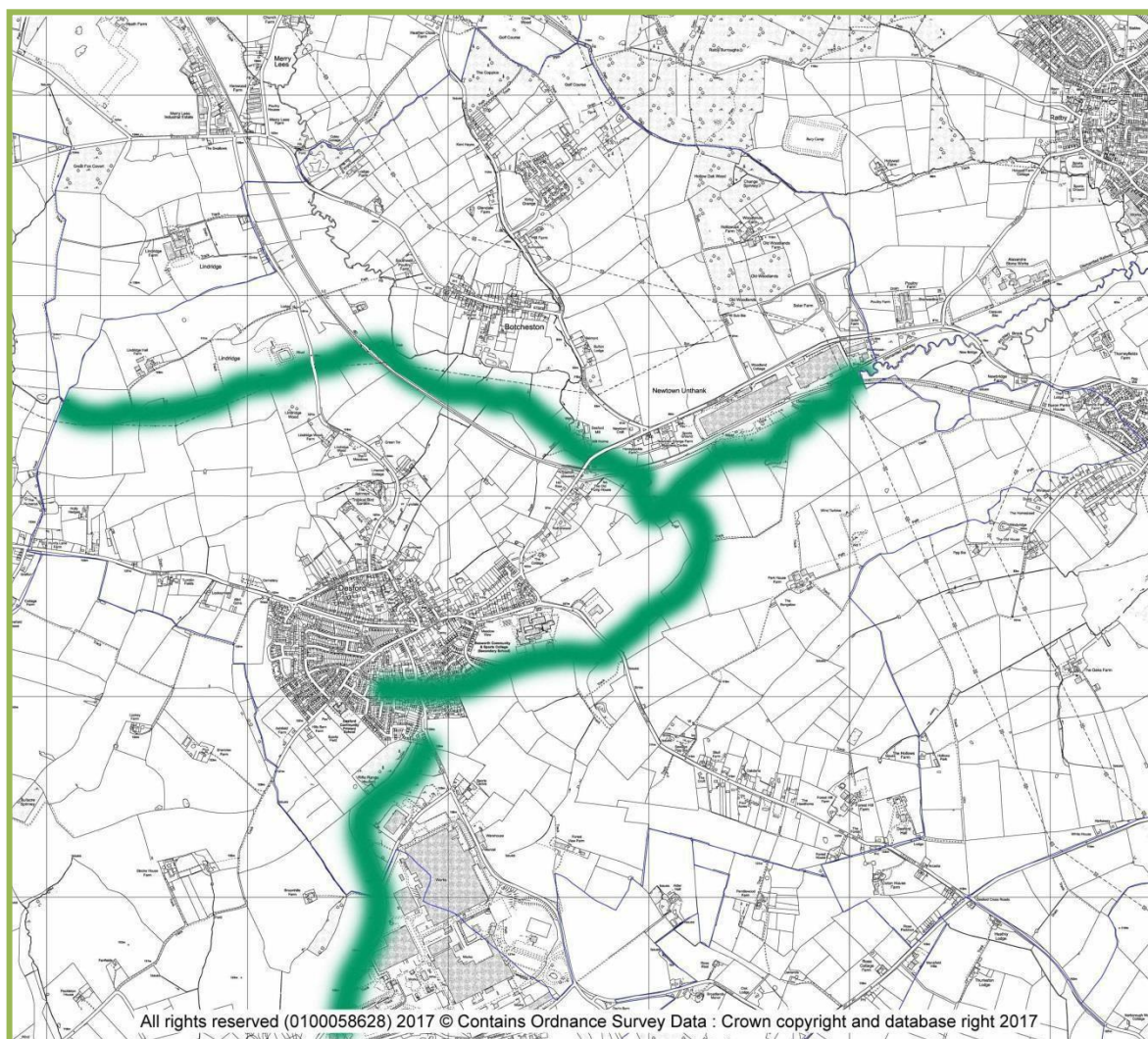
COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 1: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES - The Parish Council will actively work with HBBC to secure the designation of the sites listed in the supporting information as Open Space, Sports and Recreation Sites.

The authorities and owners responsible for the above open spaces will collaborate closely, to ensure better, more effective coordination of site management and enhancement.

Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors

This policy is about local-level compliance with English and European Habitats and Species Regulations and Directives – and how Desford can ‘do its bit’ to maintain biodiversity. Biodiversity is important in its own right, and for the economic (agriculture and tourism) and general health and wellbeing benefits it delivers to communities. The only way to maintain or improve England’s biodiversity in a meaningful way is through a local, site-by-site approach – not just through county- and national-level reserves with existing statutory protection – because it is on individual, local habitat sites that the animals and plants depend.

Figure. 9: Wildlife Corridors



Biodiversity (species and habitats) protection and enhancement is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, which is itself compliant with the UK *Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations, 2010, Amended 2012*, and the European Habitats Directive 1992 (*Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*).

POLICY ENV 3: BIODIVERSITY GENERAL – Development proposals that cannot avoid (through, for example, locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigate, or, as a last resort, compensate for, the loss of a locally identified site of biodiversity value will not be supported.

Development proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity, and incorporate biodiversity in and around them, will be supported.

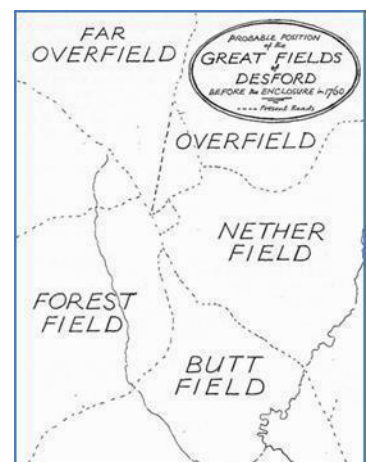
Where a development proposal will adversely affect a protected species, an appropriate and suitable survey will be undertaken prior to development, and mitigation measures will be required as a development condition.

The Plan designates a wildlife corridor (map Fig. 9) along the two tributaries and the main valley of Rothley Brook and in a southerly direction from Desford village. Development will be expected to protect and enhance these wildlife corridors and other potential habitat links, including natural ponds. It should not create barriers to the permeability of the landscape for wildlife in general, or fragment populations of species of conservation concern.

COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 2: BIODIVERSITY - The Parish Council will, when practicable, encourage community groups, landowners, funders and other organisations to maintain and enhance the biodiversity of the Parish by creating and/or managing habitat sites (e.g. wildflower meadows, woodland, wetland) on suitable parcels of land.

Ridge and Furrow

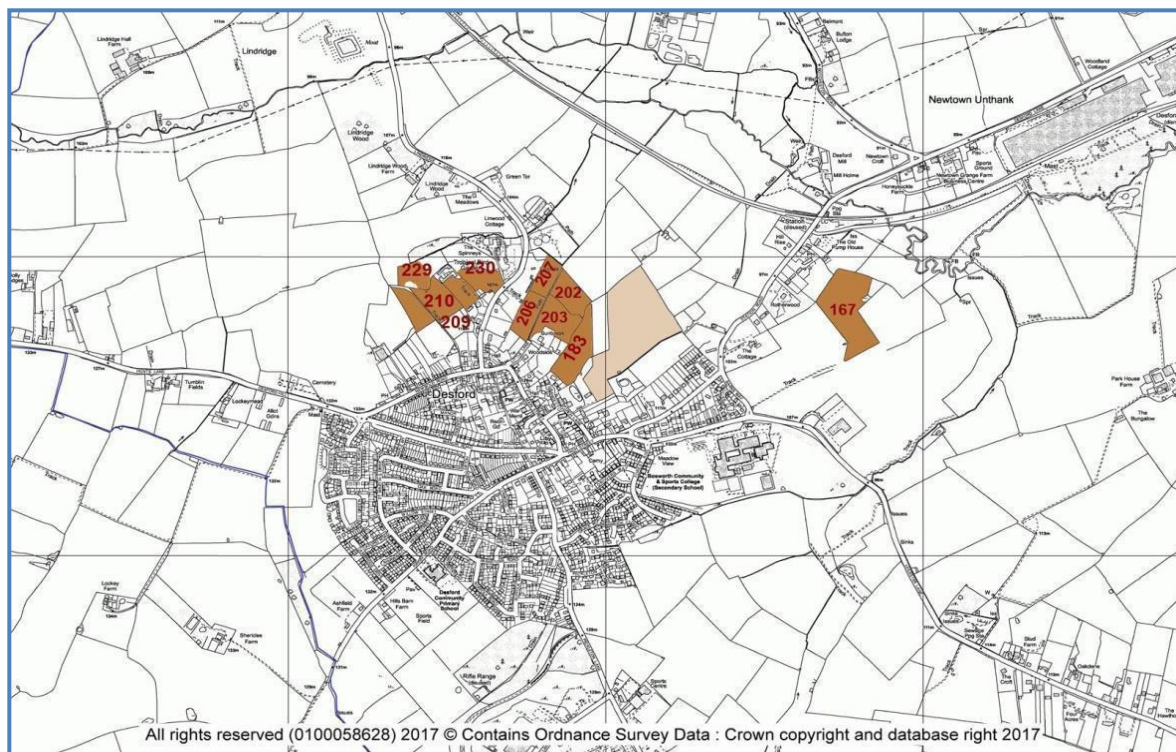
From around the 12th century the settlement of Desford was surrounded by open fields, in which each man farmed one or more strips (see map). The working of this agricultural system, until the Enclosure of Desford's open fields in 1760, left its mark in the ridge and furrows which survive, where fields have not been ploughed, right up to the present day. With the building of housing estates in the 20th & 21st centuries, Desford has already lost many fine examples of ridge & furrow, so it is particularly important to retain surviving examples.



Individual fields in Desford are not claimed to be of international importance, but the well-preserved group (Fig. 10) is important in its own right and is valued by the local community; any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental.

Historic England strongly recommends treating all surviving ridge and furrow as non-designated *heritage assets*, and this is the approach taken in this Plan. However, involvement with local farmers and agricultural landowners on a case-by-case basis will be necessary to achieve a sustainable balance between the significance of the historic environment heritage and economic viability of agriculture.

Figure 10: Surviving Ridge and Furrow in Desford is a significant Heritage Asset
Dark = well-preserved; light = visible



POLICY ENV 4: RIDGE AND FURROW – The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks mapped above (Fig. 10) are non-designated heritage assets.

Any loss or damage arising from a development proposal (or a change of land use requiring planning permission) is to be avoided; the demonstrable benefits of such development must be balanced against the significance of the ridge and furrow features as heritage assets.

Heritage Assets

Designated Heritage Assets

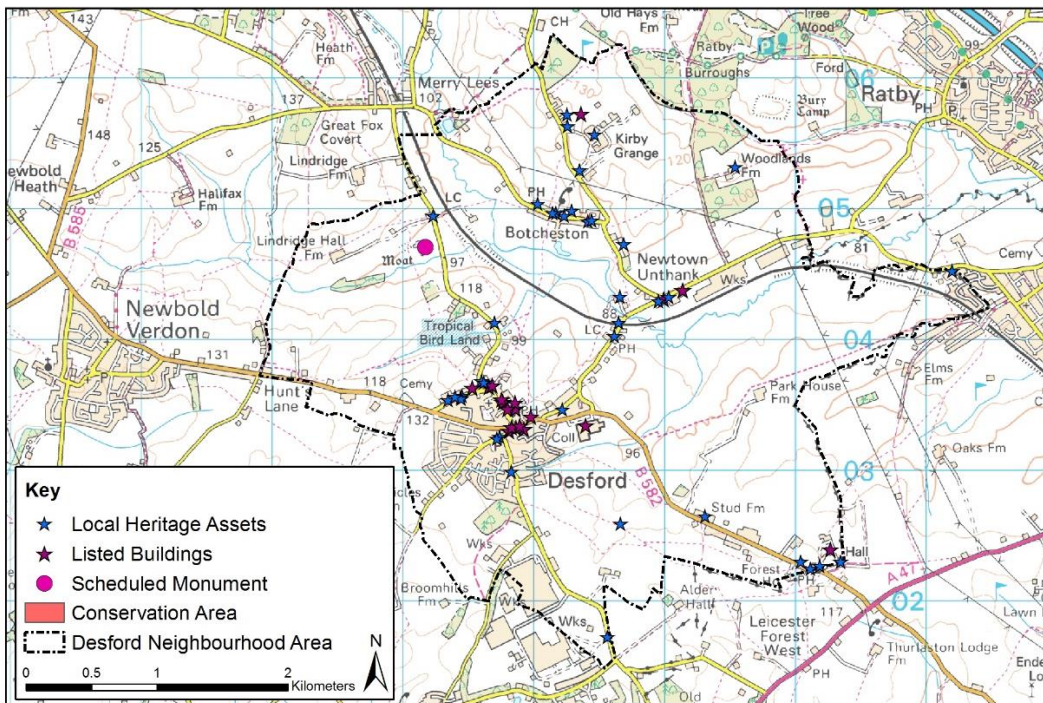
Nineteen buildings and structures in the Plan area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade II* or II. There is also one Scheduled Monument. The Neighbourhood Plan lists them for reference, and to note that new development will be required to take into account their *settings* as defined, on a case by case basis. Their location within, or close to, sites designated or noted for protection in the Plan's Policies and Community Actions contributes to the evidence of these sites' significance.

Local Heritage List

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of other buildings and structures in the Parish that are considered to be local heritage assets. The reasons why these local heritage assets are significant is varied, demonstrating a range of values that contribute to the distinctiveness and heritage of the Parish. These assets have been identified based upon the Borough Council’s adopted selection criteria and their inclusion here records them in the planning system as non-designated heritage assets. Planning Practice Guidance, updated in July 2019, confirms the ability of neighbourhood plans to identify non-designated heritage assets (Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723). (Descriptions in Appendix H1).

The reasons why local heritage assets are significant is varied, but they all demonstrate a range of values that contribute to the distinctiveness and heritage of Desford. The Borough Council has an adopted selection criterion to identify assets of local interest and describe their significance which has formed the basis for selecting local heritage assets in Desford Parish. Identification as a local heritage asset does not bring any form of statutory protection. It can, however, influence the consideration of planning applications that may affect the significance of that heritage asset, and it will be a material consideration in all planning applications.

FIG. 11 Heritage Assets (designated and non-designated) within the Parish



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POLICY ENV 5: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS - Development proposals that affect an identified building or structure of local significance (as listed here) or its setting will be required to preserve and enhance the significance and setting of that building or structure. Any benefits arising from a development proposal, or a change of use requiring planning approval, will need to be balanced against the scale of harm or loss and their significance as heritage assets.

Settlement	Asset Name	Address	Grid Reference
Botcheston	Buften Lodge	Botcheston Road	SK 48692 04728
Botcheston	K6 Telephone Box	Main Street	SK 48173 04966
Botcheston	Manor Farm Complex	Main Street	SK 48148 04966
Botcheston	The Greyhound Inn	Main Street	SK 48034 05037
Botcheston	Underbank Farm	Main Street	SK 48292 04982
Botcheston	Village Hall	Main Street	SK 48418 04902
Botcheston	Wayside Farm	Main Street	SK 48236 04942
Botcheston	White Cottage	Main Street	SK 48447 04909
Botcheston	Polebrook House	Markfield Lane	SK 48468 05564
Botcheston	Leicester Lodge	Markfield Lane	SK 48354 05292
Botcheston	Markfield Lodge	Markfield Lane	SK 48260 05629
Botcheston	Meadow Rise	Markfield Lane	SK 48256 05719
Desford	Desford Hall Lodge	Leicester Lane	SK 50190 02265
Desford	Desford Hall Lodge	Leicester Lane	SK 50349 02299
Desford	Pesto)	Leicester Lane	SK 50118 02245
Desford	The Forest	Leicester Lane	SK 50044 02297
Desford	Stud Farm Complex	Leicester Lane	SK 49312 02646
Desford	The 29 Steps	Leicester Lane	SK 48664 02590
Desford	No.1 Kirkby Road	Kirkby Road	SK 47742 03252
Desford	No.3 Kirkby Road	Kirkby Road	SK 47722 03240
Desford	Mine wheel	Lindridge Lane	SK 47603 03680
Desford	Village Hall and No.12	Lindridge Lane	SK 47623 03670
Desford	Linwood Cottage	Lindridge Lane	SK 47702 04128
Desford	Lindridge Lodge	Lindridge Lane	SK 47233 04944
Desford	No's 55 & 57 Newbold Road	Newbold Road	SK 47455 03567
Desford	No.59 Newbold Road	Newbold Road	SK 47445 03554
Desford	No.61 Newbold Road	Newbold Road	SK 47447 03543
Desford	Former Roebuck Inn	Newbold Road	SK 47349 03533
Desford	Gables Farm	Newbold Road	SK 47402 03558
Desford	Debdale (now Topsham Nursery)	Peckleton Lane	SK 47833 02988
Desford	Caterpillar Tractor Co gates	Peckleton Lane	SK 48568 01724
Desford	No's 20 & 22 Station Road	Station Road	SK 48221 03463
Desford	Lancaster Arms	Station Road	SK 48621 04022
Desford	Station House	Station Road	SK 48651 04126
Kirby Muxloe	Barons Park Farm Complex	Leicester Lane	SK 51200 04519
Newtown Unthank	Desford Mill	Desford Road	SK 48661 04325
Newtown Unthank	The Old Grange	Desford Road	SK 48958 04291
Newtown Unthank	Newtown Grange Farm Complex	Desford Road	SK 49036 04322
Newtown Unthank	Old Woodlands Farm Complex	Desford Lane	SK 49541 05316

Safeguarding Important Views

Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely-held wish to protect Desford's rural setting, and its relationship with the surrounding farmland and the wider landscape.

One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing a number of highly-valued views across the parish and toward Desford village from the surrounding countryside. These consultation findings were supported by the environmental inventory, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance also confirmed the sight-lines of the suggested views and mapped them (below, Figure 12). These most important views should be protected by careful siting of all development in the parish during the lifetime of the Plan.

The most important views in the Plan Area, based on evidence from community consultations and fieldwork, are:

-
1. From footpath through field 136 and footpath between fields 136 and 138.1 (fields behind Sport in Desford), looking NW (towards Desford village), N and NE



-
2. From footpath through very large field behind cemetery and across field from corner of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, looking NW, N and NE



3. From footpath through large field showing railway line and Botcheston, looking NE towards Botcheston and also E and SE



4. From edge of Barns Way development towards Charity fields, looking NE, E and SE



5. From Desford Lane, Newtown Unthank, View looking SW through avenue of chestnut trees, looking towards Rothley Brook and Desford Village



6. From footpath between Desford and Kirby Muxloe (near wind turbines), looking N and NE



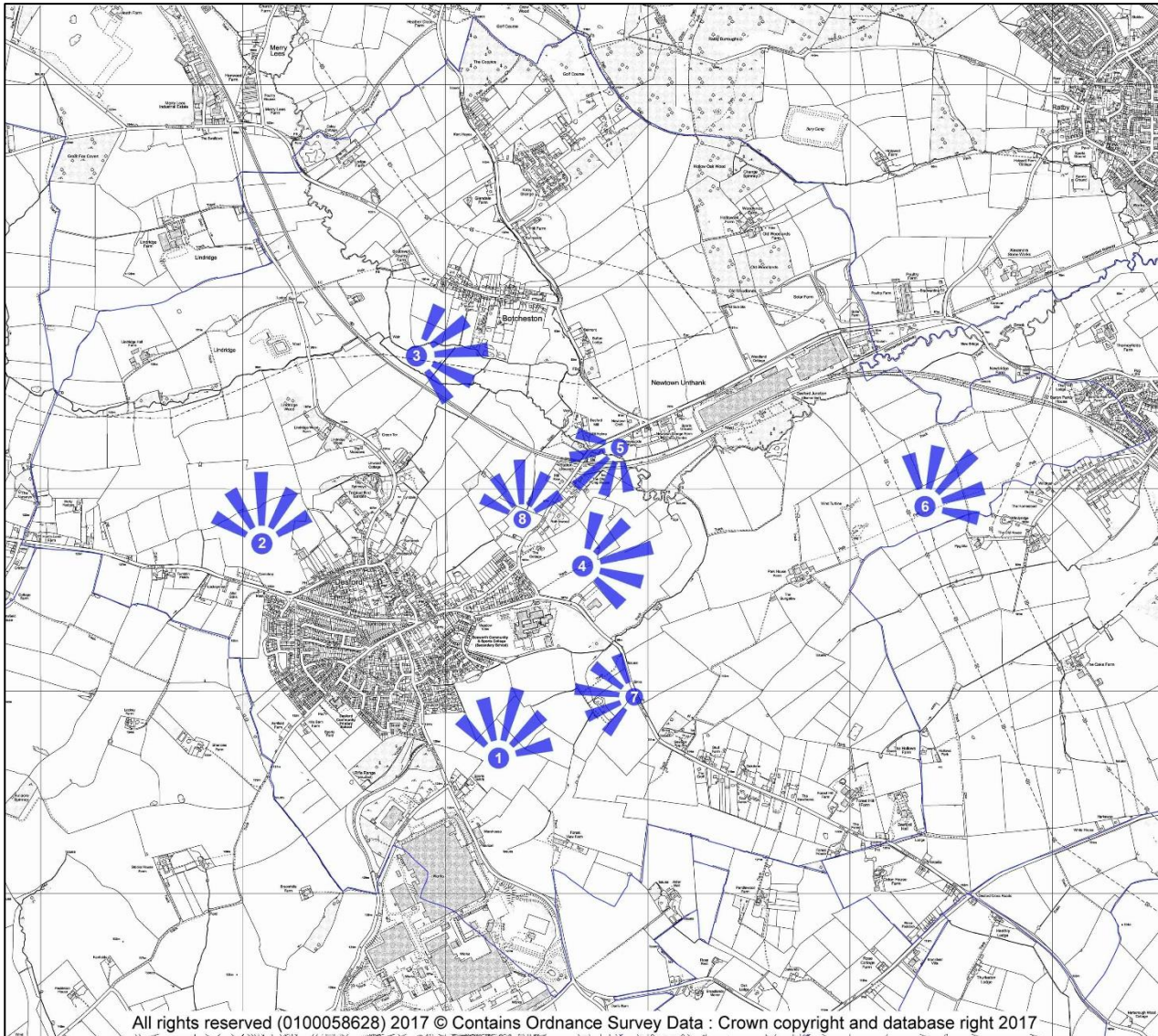
7. From Leicester Lane towards Desford at the gateway adjoining field 140, view NW



8. From Station Road across field 187 towards Botcheston, view N



Fig. 12: Important Views. See text for explanation



POLICY ENV 6: SAFEGUARDING IMPORTANT VIEWS - Development that adversely affects the identified locally important and valued views (list above, and Fig. 12) will not be supported unless the proposal includes effective site-specific mitigation measures.

Renewable energy generation infrastructure

A majority of residents of Desford Plan Area support renewable energy, both in principle and in practice. Existing infrastructure includes:

- Two solar farms (at 5.3MWp and 5MWp)
 - Five wind turbines (generating 5 x100KWp approx.) within 1 km of the village
 - Two community buildings with solar panels (Bosworth Academy (100KWp) and Sport in Desford (44KWp))
 - More than 50 domestic solar installations (equivalent to at least 200KWp)
- This is supported by generally positive responses in the DPNP questionnaire.

Further renewable energy infrastructure development will be considered positively as long as its impact on residents' amenity and the environment of the Plan Area is proportional and sustainable.

Policy ENV 7: RENEWABLE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE – Renewable energy developments of an appropriate scale in relation to the size, character and level of other facilities, the built environment and services in the parish will be supported, so long as the following harmful amenity and environmental factors are avoided or mitigated:

- a) adverse impact (noise, reflections, glare, shadow, flicker, other visual impact, water pollution, smell, air quality impairment, gaseous or particulate emissions) on the health, wellbeing or amenities of residents and visitors
- b) adverse impact on identified views or the character of the landscape
- c) adverse effect on biodiversity (species and habitat sites, as in Policy ENV 3)
- d) adverse effect on statutory historic environment sites, non-designated heritage assets or ridge and furrow (Policies ENV 4 and ENV 5)

Applications will be supported by appropriate and relevant assessments and documentation in respect of transport, heritage, archaeology, landscape impact, environmental impact, flood impact, ecology, arboriculture (impact and method) and tree protection.

Wind turbine development proposals will generally be acceptable if:

- a) Turbine tip height is less than 50 metres
- b) The proposal is for no more than one turbine
- c) The land is also used for other purposes e.g. animal grazing
- d) Low-level noise generated does not interfere with residential homes

Large-scale solar energy generation development proposals will generally be acceptable if:

- e) The panel array is not visible from any valued and accessible viewpoint
- f) Reflection (glare) is not evident from any viewpoint

Small-scale, local resident, business, amenity or community-initiated, solar and wind generation infrastructure will be supported, subject to the above conditions.

Other renewable energy generation, storage and distribution installations in the Plan Area will be supported, particularly if they benefit residents e.g. community energy cooperatives or sales.

Community Action ENV 3: The Parish Council, community and other relevant organisations and individuals will:

- **Work constructively with Neovia PLC to look at the possibility of installing a major solar facility on the roof of the proposed 1 million square foot factory on the southern edge of Desford village. If possible also to introduce a Community Energy dimension into this proposal so that a portion of the generation is used within the Parish;**
- **Encourage further domestic solar arrays to increase local electricity generation within the Parish;**
- **Look to setting up a Community Energy Group within the Parish to explore ways of using more local generation within the Parish;**
- **Welcome proposals for battery installations (such as the 81KWp battery at Sport in Desford) to store energy to mitigate the inherent intermittency of wind and solar generation;**
- **Welcome or facilitate electric car charging points at strategic points in the Parish (such as the potential 8 car charging points at Sport in Desford) to support the national move to electric cars;**
- **the PC will pursue the potential for recycling facilities to be made available in the Parish.**

6 Community Facilities

The Parish of Desford includes three settlements (Botcheston, Desford and Newtown Unthank) and a housing estate on the edge of Kirby Muxloe, which is located within the Desford Parish boundary. Desford contains the main facilities and amenities (such as education, retail, health and places of worship) and hosts many of the community groups, which serve all three settlements. Botcheston is served with a Village Hall, which also hosts community groups and activities. Botcheston also hosts a sizeable private retirement village at Kirby Grange: however, this currently lacks a community hub.

During the Second World War, what is now the Neovia/Caterpillar site was then occupied by RAF Desford and played a significant part in the war effort. Records show that more than 1,000 Spitfires were assembled there, that there were 4 flights of 30 Tiger Moth aircraft stationed there for initial pilot training and that the repair shops rebuilt over 1,000 mainly American aircraft.

Community facilities and amenities make a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of Desford and have a positive impact on the sustainability of the Parish, enhancing the quality of life and regularly providing an important focal point for social interaction. These facilities and amenities can provide local employment, reduce the need to travel and offer important services, particularly for those who do not have access to a car.

Desford enjoys a wide range of community facilities and amenities. These facilities and the services provided are listed in Policy F1 and detailed in the supporting information.

To promote the on-going prosperity of the Parish it is essential that Desford retains sustainable community facilities and amenities and continues to provide local services that will sustain the vitality of the community and encourage local spending.

The importance of the existing facilities and amenities were highlighted in the consultation events that have taken place across the Parish during the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

These events identified the value in retaining the existing Parish facilities as did the questionnaire in which respondents listed local shops, Post Office, pharmacy and GP Surgery as the most used amenities in the village

Both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan indicate that valued community facilities should be retained. Key Aspects of the Local Plan relevant to this chapter include the site of the former pit which is recognised for its importance locally; recognition of the importance of day to day services to ensure that the community can 'work shop and play' nearby; deficiency is noted in green space and play provision; the need is recognised for better sports facilities and cycle routes especially to the school and to employment sites; better car parking is identified to support local shops; the opening up of a new railway station is supported and there is support for tourism.

Policy F1: RETENTION OF EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES - Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

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

The community facilities and amenities covered by this policy include the following:

Library; sports facilities including the 5 acre Sport in Desford site in Peckleton Lane; the Kirkby Road playing field and Pickard Recreation Ground; Botcheston Recreation Ground; Parish Church of St Martin's and Church Centre; Desford Free Church; village halls in Desford and Botcheston; Bosworth Academy; Desford Primary School; Topsham House and Bosworth Academy day nurseries; Chapel Lane Playgroup; Medical Centre; Pharmacy; 2 Cooperative stores; convenience store including Post Office; Bluebell Inn, Greyhound Inn and Lancaster Arms pubs; Pesto at the White Horse; café; hairdresser; barber; allotments; Tropical Birdland sanctuary.

New or improved facilities

Desford Parish Council is currently making significant improvements to the play facilities at several sites in the parish.

Sport in Desford (SiD) launched 2 new floodlit sports courts on their site in Peckleton Lane on 6 July 2019, adding to the existing 3 tennis courts. These 2 new courts are intended to be used primarily for tennis, football and netball and their construction has involved widening the initial access drive and providing 55 extra car parking spaces alongside the courts. SiD was able to raise grants to fund this £316K project, from 8 different sources, principally from Hinckley & Bosworth Community Development Fund, the European LEADER Fund and Desford Parish Council.

Sport in Desford has the wiring in place for 8 electric car charging points at its site in Peckleton Lane and intends to start implementing them incrementally over time. This will be supported by the existing installation of 176 solar panels and of 6 large Tesla batteries, so the power required will largely be from SiD's own generation, day or night.

As traffic increases down Peckleton Lane, there is an increasing issue for Sport in Desford, both for cyclists attending the site and pedestrians crossing the road opposite the SiD entrance.

POLICY F2: NEW OR IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES - Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:

- a) Meets the design criteria stated in Policy H6 where appropriate;
- b) Will improve highway safety;
- c) Will not generate a need for parking that cannot be adequately catered for;
- d) Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the parish wishing to walk or cycle; and
- e) Takes into full account the needs of people with disabilities.

In support of these policies and with a view to enhancing community facilities within the Parish, Desford Parish Council will undertake a range of associated actions as described below:

Community Action F1: Desford Parish Council in conjunction with relevant bodies will:

- a) Work with Sport in Desford to identify extra land for sport and recreation within the parish, with a view to purchase and to develop for further sports and recreation;
- b) Renew efforts to contact the owner of Kirby Grange with a view to redeveloping the school building and eradicating the potential danger for some form of community use;
- c) Make positive efforts to retain remaining Public Houses and restaurants and to register local pubs as assets of community value;
- d) Strive to achieve enhancements to the present network of walking routes in the Parish including the provision of kissing gates to replace stiles wherever possible and to provide new cycle paths to link in with existing local cycle networks;
- e) Update the community directory of local facilities and community groups;
- f) Work with Leicestershire Highways to maintain and where possible improve the bus service through Desford.

8 Transport

Desford is serviced with a major arterial route passing through the village. The B582 serves villages to the north (Newbold Verdon, Market Bosworth, Barlestone, Nailstone, Ibstock and other hamlets) and to the south links to the Motorway structure (M1, M69), Fosse Park shopping centre and the City of Leicester. Consequences of this arterial route passing through the village are:

- Speeding traffic along Manor Road
- Difficulty for pedestrians, in particular disabled pedestrians, to cross Manor Road. This is partially alleviated by four relief islands in the centre of the road
- Volumes of traffic causing jams at certain times of the day. This is particularly noticeable at the mini roundabout at the centre of the village. Typical times of day are early morning, early evening. During shift time changes at Caterpillar and Neovia Logistics further traffic problems occur, although these are short in duration
- Larger vehicles exiting the mini roundabout at the centre of the village in a southerly direction often have to manoeuvre onto the opposite side of the road to avoid one of the oldest houses in the village. Delays stopping traffic moving in a northerly direction at these occasions often create traffic jams, although these are only transitory.



Speeding traffic along Hunts Lane, Desford, is a particular problem for residents living in a terraced row of houses. The recent speed limit change to 50mph has done little to alleviate the residents' concern. There have been many requests to the Highways Authority (Leicestershire County Council) to reduce the limit to 40mph.

A major issue of concern within Desford has been the unauthorised use of HGVs breaching the 7.5t limits on several of the side roads. This is of particular concern in the High Street/Peckleton Lane area of the village. Many of these

vehicles breaching the limits are travelling to and from Caterpillar and Neovia Logistics. In fairness to these two companies, they make it quite clear in the direction maps supplied to transport companies that the route into their factories should be from the A47 and along Dans Lane.

Many of the drivers who have transgressed these limits have been banned from entering their sites on future occasions – often resulting in some company vehicles being barred from site and on some occasions, drivers being



dismissed by their transport company. Neovia Logistics have also paid for a series of new road signs located away from the village giving advanced warning to drivers to use the A47/Dans Lane route. To deter HGVs entering High Street from the mini roundabout at the



centre of the village, three bell bollards have been located on the pavement edge at this junction. Further work is needed to stop vehicles mounting this central refuge and damaging the keep left signs; and at the High Street/Peckleton Lane junction to relieve problems primarily caused by traffic volumes and inconsiderate parking outside the Chemist and Co-op shops. Consideration was given to making High Street from the mini roundabout to Peckleton Lane a one-way street. This was rejected primarily because it would move the problem to other areas of the village and in particular towards the Primary School.

Off street parking in the village is limited to a small car park near to the Chemist and Co-op shops. Whilst this car park offers some relief, illegal parking on double yellows lines is a major concern, and even worse are the numerous occasions of vehicles parking on the pavement inside the double yellow lines, causing obstructions to disabled persons and interacting vehicles with pedestrians. Policing illegal parking is the responsibility of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. A Facebook page “Desford Traffic Watch” was set up 2 years ago to highlight problems and provide a mechanism for reporting incidents.

Many of the side streets within the village have the problem of on-street parking. This is particularly bad in Main Street and Newbold Road. Main Street also suffers from HGVs breaching the 7.5t limit. Many of these vehicles are travelling to and from the Merry Lees Industrial Estate.

A significant number of residents use either buggies or mobility scooters. These users report that there is a shortage of dropped kerbs even in the middle of the village.

Botcheston village suffers from similar problems to those witnessed in Desford; namely traffic speeding along Main Street and Markfield Lane. Main Street also has the problem of HGVs travelling to and from the Merry Lees Industrial Estate. Whilst Markfield Lane has no weight limit restrictions, it is blighted by HGVs parking up overnight whilst waiting to enter the Crown Crest Warehouse on Desford Lane, Newtown Unthank.

Public transport is provided by the Arriva Bus No.153 between Desford and nearby villages to the north in one direction and Leicester City centre in the opposite direction. This bus runs every hour throughout the day, but the last bus from Leicester is at 8pm. There is no 153 bus service on a Sunday. Arriva Bus No.26 services Botcheston between Coalville and Leicester. This is an hourly service. The Burton upon Trent to Leicester railway line runs through the parish, but at present only transports freight. There have been numerous

requests to open the line to passenger transport, but so far this has been unsuccessful.

Traffic management

Desford is a semi-rural Parish, located between other villages and urban areas, the B582 carries through traffic including a high volume of HGV and commuter traffic. Other roads in



the Parish are covered by a 7.5ton weight limit (except for access) which causes problems for HGV drivers trying to access businesses such as Caterpillar UK Ltd, Neovia Logistics, Highfield Seeds, Crown Crest, Poundstretcher and Bakers Waste via Desford village.

The village largely predates motor transport, which leads to parking issues, particularly at the centre of the village.

There is currently limited public transport provision. During school terms, buses are used to convey schoolchildren to and from Bosworth Academy and other schools, which are outside of the Parish. For most people living in the Parish, however, the car has become the principal mode of transport, even for some of the shortest journeys.

The National Planning Policy Framework encourages a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of measures, which promote a reduction in the number of journeys made by car, and there are a number of actions that can be taken by individuals and by the public and private sectors to support this objective.



The Plan therefore focuses on those areas where it can have an influence on the need to travel by car, highway safety and parking provision. In particular, it includes measures to promote new areas for parking and ensure that, where necessary, traffic management measures and appropriate highway and transport infrastructure are provided in connection with new development.

The majority of respondents to the Questionnaire had concerns (either important or very important) about: high number of Heavy Goods Vehicles – 85%, speeding vehicles – 76%, volume of traffic – 75% and inconsiderate parking, causing obstructions –70%.

Of 152 additional comments received concerning transport issues, the highest number related to traffic volume, with HGVs and speeding also among the highest.

74% considered that enforcement of speed limits was either important or very important, with 57% supporting speed reduction measures.

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

- a) Be designed to minimise additional traffic generation and movement through the villages.
- b) Incorporate sufficient off-road parking in line with housing policy H6;
- c) Not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided.
- d) Provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network either directly or by financial contributions
- e) Consider, where appropriate, the improvement and where possible the creation of footpaths and cycleways to key village services

Community Action T1: The Parish Council will work with community groups, local schools and youth organisations to develop speed awareness and considerate parking campaigns and encourage the establishment of a community speed watch scheme and the installation of mobile vehicle activated signs.

Leicester to Burton Railway

This 31-mile stretch known as the Ivanhoe line, passes through the outskirts of Desford and carries regular stone trains from the quarries at Stud Farm (near Markfield) and Bardon Hill.

In 2009 the Association of Train Operating Companies published a £49 million proposal (Connecting Communities: Expanding Access to the Rail Network) to restore passenger services to the line that would include reopening stations at Kirby Muxloe, Bagworth and Ellistown, Coalville, Ashby de la Zouch, Moira, and Gresley (for Swadlincote). There was also some support in the Leicester area for the line to have new stations to serve Leicester City F.C.'s stadium and the suburb of Braunstone.

In February 2017, it was announced that ultra-cheap no frill trains would be tested on Britain's Railways in order to reopen certain lines closed during the Beeching Axe of 1963. The proposals included the Burton to Leicester Line.

The LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE 2050: OUR VISION FOR GROWTH draft document also identifies the need for improvements to the local railway infrastructure.

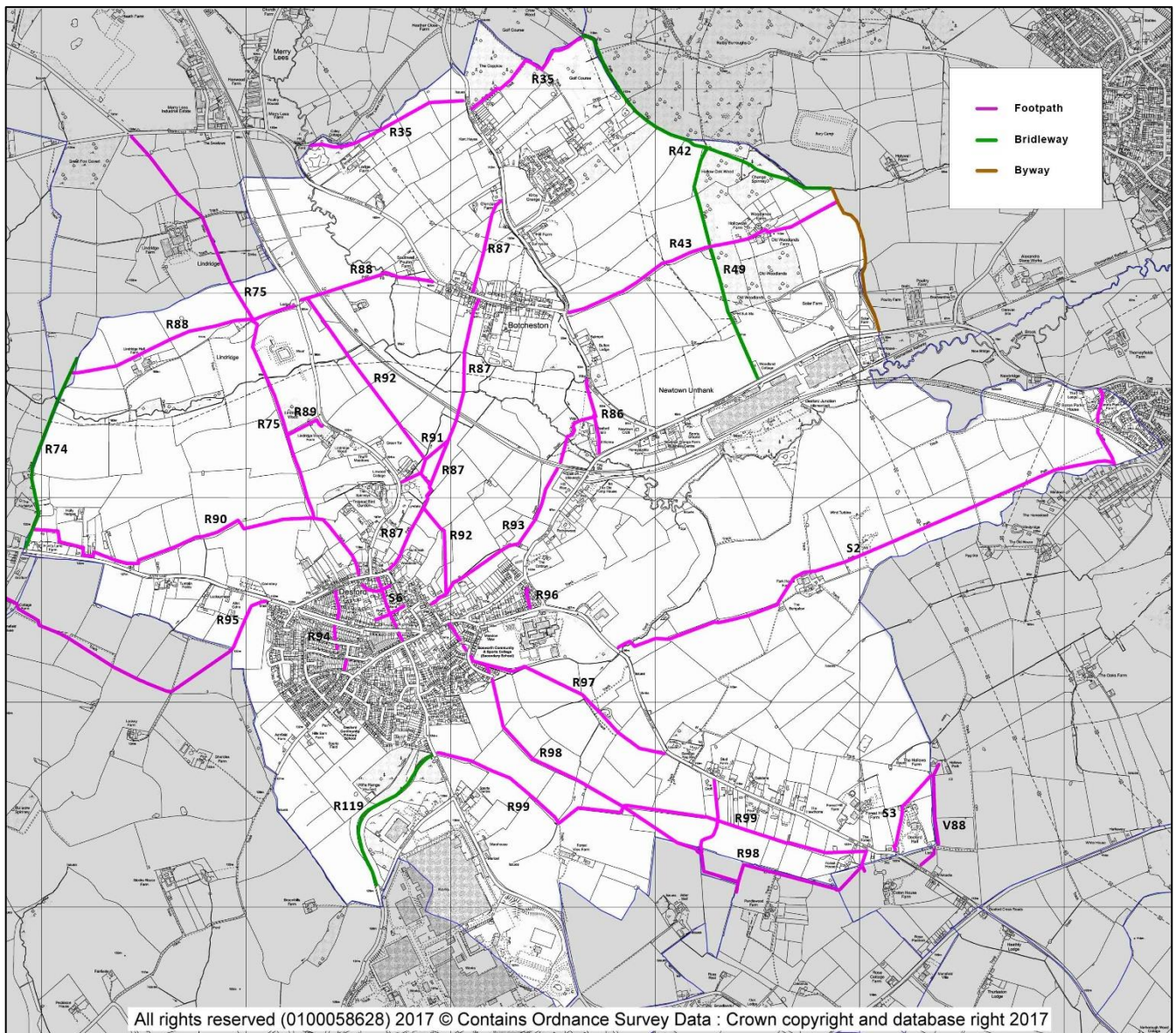
The re-opening of the Desford railway station would be of economic benefit to Desford and the surrounding villages and reduce the volume of commuter traffic.

POLICY T2: Desford Railway Station - The re-opening of Desford railway station to passenger services including provision or alteration of station buildings and car parking facilities will be supported.

Footpaths/bridleways/cycle routes/dog walking

The Neighbourhood Plan will promote, encourage and support sustainable modes of transport through the maintenance, upgrading and, where appropriate, creation of new footpaths and cycleways that extend and enhance the existing networks.

Figure 13 – Rights of Way (based on the Definitive Map, Leicestershire CC)



POLICY T3: FOOTPATHS BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLE ROUTES - The maintenance, upgrading and, where appropriate, extension of the pedestrian footpath network in the Parish will be supported in order to:

- a) Service new developments and connect them to the existing pedestrian footpath network;
- b) Encourage walking over car use for making journeys within the Parish; and
- c) Provide an improved and more extensive footpath network to support exercise and leisure activities for Desford Parish residents and visitors.

Electric Vehicles

The UK government has recently announced its intention to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2040 to combat rising levels of air pollution (in particular NO₂) and address climate change concerns. The implication is that the number of 'pure' (i.e. not hybrid) electric vehicles (EVs) on the road will certainly increase rapidly (there is clear evidence this is already starting).

For EVs to have a similar range to today's petrol/diesel cars, they need to have large capacity batteries installed. This raises the crucial question of battery recharging. Residential charging is a desirable method, but this can take several hours to re-charge the battery. In addition, this method assumes that it is possible for the owner to drive their vehicle into their garage or onto their forecourt. This is not possible for every house type. It is certainly the aim of our Parish to include charging points for new developments.

Additionally, commercial rapid charging facilities are growing across the country (making use of 3-phase supply not possible at the domestic level and reducing the re-charge time by a factor of 3). These could be utilised in Desford for example by installation in a permanent parking area, providing re-charge possibilities for residents with no off-road parking, and allowing opportunity for fast re-charge for all residents.

The cabling for 8 electric charging points is already in place at Sport in Desford, with one already providing a conventional double 13amp socket. These will be upgraded as the perceived need arises.

POLICY T4: ELECTRIC VEHICLES - Housing and commercial developments will be required, where appropriate, to provide 7KW cabling to the most practical point in the building to facilitate subsequent installation of an electric vehicle charging point.

The provision of communal vehicular charging points within the Parish will be encouraged, where there is universal access and their presence doesn't impact negatively on existing available parking in the Parish.

9 Employment

Support for existing businesses and employment

Good employment opportunities within the Parish and the strength of the community go hand in hand. Supporting the growth of employment opportunities in the Parish is therefore recognised as an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. 78% of respondents to the Questionnaire welcomed more business to the Parish. Respondents did feel, however, that such new business should be in keeping with and not detrimental to the rural and predominantly residential nature of the Parish.

There are already a number of large employers both in and adjacent to the parish whose contribution to local employment is recognised. Caterpillar in particular provides a very large and nationally recognised apprenticeship scheme which not only provides for its own commercial needs, but also places young people into the wider job market with proven skills. A full description of the employment opportunities in Desford Parish are available in Appendix G2.

Desford is a semi-rural parish with a high proportion of retired residents relatively close to several significant employment centres, such as Hinckley, Nuneaton and the regional cities of Leicester, Nottingham, Coventry and Derby. Employment opportunities within the Parish are relatively limited although rates of unemployment are low.

The principal employers for people living within the Parish include (see details in the supporting information):

Caterpillar PLC (Parish of Peckleton)	Crown Crest (Leicester) PLC	Desford Pharmacy
Neovia Logistics PLC	Desford Dental Care	The Blue Bell Inn & Lodge
Poundstretcher Ltd	Desford Express	The Food Room
Tropical Birdland	Desford Fish Bar	The Lancaster Arms
Bakers Waste	Desford Hall business units	The Village Pizza
Co-op	Desford Medical Centre	Newtown Grange Business Park
		Bosworth Academy
		Desford Primary School

Business Survey.

Sixty-seven businesses were identified within the Parish, most of which are Small or Medium Sized Enterprises (SME). Many do not employ more than one person from within the Parish. A small number of businesses employ larger numbers of workers, many drawn from outside the Parish.

A questionnaire was circulated to forty-nine of these businesses requesting feedback on long term viability, future expansion and growth, barriers to potential expansion and growth,

involvement with community and changes in the local community

The results of the questionnaire indicated that the current economic downturn has had a negative effect on some companies' viability. Several companies indicated that they were planning future expansion and growth. Barriers to potential expansion and growth were identified as lack of availability of larger commercial premises, Lack of commercial storage rental premises, Land for expansion, funding, economic downturn. Few companies indicated any great involvement with the local community. Suggested changes in the local community were a continuous footpath along Peckleton Lane, a bus service from Hinckley to Desford via Peckleton Lane and more promotion of local businesses and services. (For more information on SME within the Parish of Desford see Appendix G2.)

For many residents, their employment circumstances mean that they must work outside the Parish. This impacts particularly on young people for whom the high property values and lack of starter homes make the Parish of Desford a difficult potential option for residence. Respondents showed a desire to reverse this situation and attract a younger demographic into the Parish.

In order to protect and strengthen the economic base within the Parish, buildings and/or land dedicated to business should be protected against change of use.

Policy E1: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT USE – Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse impact on, an existing employment use will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) the building has not been in active use for the past 6 months; and
- b) the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment-generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 6 months.

New businesses and employment

New employment initiatives can help to boost and diversify the local economy, thus providing more local employment opportunities.

Employment proposals should only be approved if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

Policy E2: SUPPORT FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - In supporting new employment opportunities, development will be required to:

- a) Fall within the planned settlement boundary for the village of Desford, 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, or are sited in existing buildings or on areas of previously developed land

- b) Be of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and environment of the Parish itself and the neighbourhood plan area, including the countryside
- c) Not involve the loss of dwellings
- d) Not increase noise levels or light pollution or introduce any pollution to an extent that they would unacceptably disturb occupants of nearby residential property
- e) Not generate unacceptable levels of traffic movement
- f) Contribute to the character and vitality of the local area
- g) Be well integrated into and complement existing businesses

Community Action T1: Parish Council, local community groups, local schools and youth organisations will work with local employers to encourage apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for local young people.

Home working

In semi-rural areas such as the Parish of Desford, with limited local employment opportunities, one benefit of supporting home working is that it helps to promote local employment whilst reducing the dependency on the car for long journeys to employment sites outside the Parish.

However, it is recognised that people may not have a suitable space within their home from which to run a business, or they may wish to distinctly and deliberately separate their work and living spaces. The construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings, and the development of new free-standing buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate will be supported. This is intended to maximise the opportunities for entrepreneurial activity and employment in Desford Parish.

Whilst it is acknowledged that it may not always be possible, there is also a strong desire for new housing to contain a small office space to accommodate home working.

POLICY E3: HOME WORKING - Proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where:

- a) Development will not result in unacceptable traffic movements and ~~that~~ appropriate parking provision is made;
- b) No significant adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- c) Any extension or free-standing building shall be designed having regard to policies in this Plan and should 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

Farm diversification

There are several working farms in the Parish. Given potential challenges facing the agricultural economy, the Neighbourhood Plan will seek to support farming businesses within the Parish as they are considered essential to maintaining a balanced and vibrant rural community.

Changes in farming have led to some agricultural buildings falling redundant. The conversion of these redundant farm buildings to non-agricultural uses can provide opportunities for the establishment and development of small businesses that generate income and employment opportunities for local people. This trend of diversification will be encouraged to maintain a balanced and vibrant community, subject to the proper consideration of the impact on residents of any nearby houses and the broader community, visual or other impact on the countryside and highway safety issues.

New business development in the Parish should therefore:

- a) Promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in Desford Parish;
- b) Promote the diversification of rural businesses;
- c) Encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract visitors to the Parish;
- d) Maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural land

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

POLICY E4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION - In order to support farm diversification and the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses, the conversion of existing agricultural and commercial buildings will be supported subject to:

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the local character of the surrounding area;
- c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d) The local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site;
- e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

Tourism

Desford is a rural parish with many activities attractive to visitors including:

Sport in Desford	Desford Carnival
Tropical Birdland	Scarecrow Festival
Desford in Bloom	Christmas Tree Festival
Open Gardens	Grange Farm Sport

The Parish is keen to extend a welcome to visitors whilst ensuring that their visit does not have a negative impact on parishioners - for example, in the context of traffic.

The offer to visitors may be enhanced over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan through the development of activities and places to eat and stay in addition to infrastructure such as signage, seating, parking and other provision to welcome visitors to the Parish.

Policy E5: TOURISM - Tourism and visitor economy development proposals will be supported where they do not have adverse residential or visual amenity impacts.

The loss of tourism and leisure facilities will not be supported unless they are no longer viable or alternative provision is made available.

Broadband infrastructure

Super-fast Leicestershire, a partnership between the county council, BT, the district and borough councils, economic bodies, and voluntary and charity organisations to bring fibre broadband to as many premises in Leicestershire as possible means that the majority of businesses and households in the Parish of Desford have access to Hi speed fibre broadband.

With this improved internet connectivity locally and changing employment patterns (increasing national trend for employees to work from home) the Parish may become a place where a greater percentage of the population are spending their time. This could create opportunities – for joint working, business hubs, support groups and room hire for meetings. (For more information on Super-fast Leicestershire see supporting information).

The modern economy is changing and increasingly requires a good communications infrastructure to maximise technological advances. The mobile phone network is particularly important in rural settings, such as Desford Parish, where access to reliable mobile phone signals enables improved access to an increasing number of on-line applications and services, provided by the public and private sector. This can help to significantly reduce social exclusion and create business and employment opportunities. Unfortunately, the mobile network coverage throughout the Parish varies such that indoor reception of mobile phone networks is not possible for many businesses and households. (<http://www.coverage-maps.co.uk/ee-coverage.php>).

Communications technology is progressing at pace with new developments over the life of this plan being inevitable. The Parish wishes to take advantage of these developments for the benefit of its Parishioners.

POLICY E6: MOBILE PHONE AND BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to improve the mobile phone coverage and Broadband infrastructure for all businesses and households in Desford Parish will be supported.

Such improvements, possibly requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the landscape *or be hidden* and not be in or near to open landscapes *so as to not interfere with the parish biodiversity or natural beauty*

10 Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will last for a period of 19 years. During this time, it is likely that circumstances will change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Desford Parish Council, on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan on a five-year cycle commencing in 2023 or to coincide with the review of the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan if this cycle is different.