

# Ropsley & District Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2036



Churches of Ropsley Parish

Pre-submission Draft for Public Consultation  
February 2020

## Message from the Steering Committee

The Ropsley & District Neighbourhood Development Plan is an important planning document which will shape the future of our community over the next decade and beyond. It is relevant to all parishioners and who value our long history, our heritage and our sense of community.

The Localism Act, 2011 provided parish councils with the ability to have a vital say in shaping the future of their communities by means of a neighbourhood development plan. To take advantage of this opportunity our Parish Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, which comprised volunteers from the local community.

By preparing the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council is taking the opportunity to influence the type, scale and design of any development takes place within our parish. After much hard work by the Steering Committee here is the 'Pre-Submission Draft for Public Consultation'. In summary, the Neighbourhood Plan achieves a vision for how the future of the Parish will be shaped. Taking into consideration all the questionnaires and feedback received in early consultation, the ambition for can be summarised as follows :

*Our ambition for Ropsley & District as we progress through the next couple of decades is to have the five villages distinctly separated by natural countryside and ancient woodlands, alive with wide varieties of flora and fauna. Public footpaths, bridleways and green lanes making all areas accessible, and connecting the villages within the parish.*

*The villages themselves will inevitably have to grow, but development being blended sympathetically between traditional and more modern building styles. Not allowing the villages to become sprawled and eventually merging into each other. Sensitive infilling and possible updating of some currently unused, decaying buildings.*

*On a community level, it is hoped that Ropsley itself will have a new village hall in the next few years to cater for the sporting, cultural and educational requirements of the District as a whole. It would be a huge boost to the District to have a village shop with parking, and maybe to incorporate a café or local meeting place.*

*To protect the areas of green open space that the District currently enjoys. Making the most of such places by the placement of information boards, picnic tables or benches, all of which should have good access and facilities for this less mobile.*

*Finally, the roads will be in a good state of repair with motorists taking care over their speed as a result of gentle traffic calming measures.*

*All of these aspects ensuring that Ropsley & District remains a pleasant, inclusive community to live in, surrounded by protected countryside and woodland.*

The consultation includes all those who live, work or have business interests in our parish. Please read the plan and offer your thoughts and views, both positive and negative, to help us finalise the plan before it is submitted to the South Kesteven District Council. We therefore welcome and look forward to reading your comments.

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### **Maps, Diagrams & Pictures**

### **Acknowledgements**

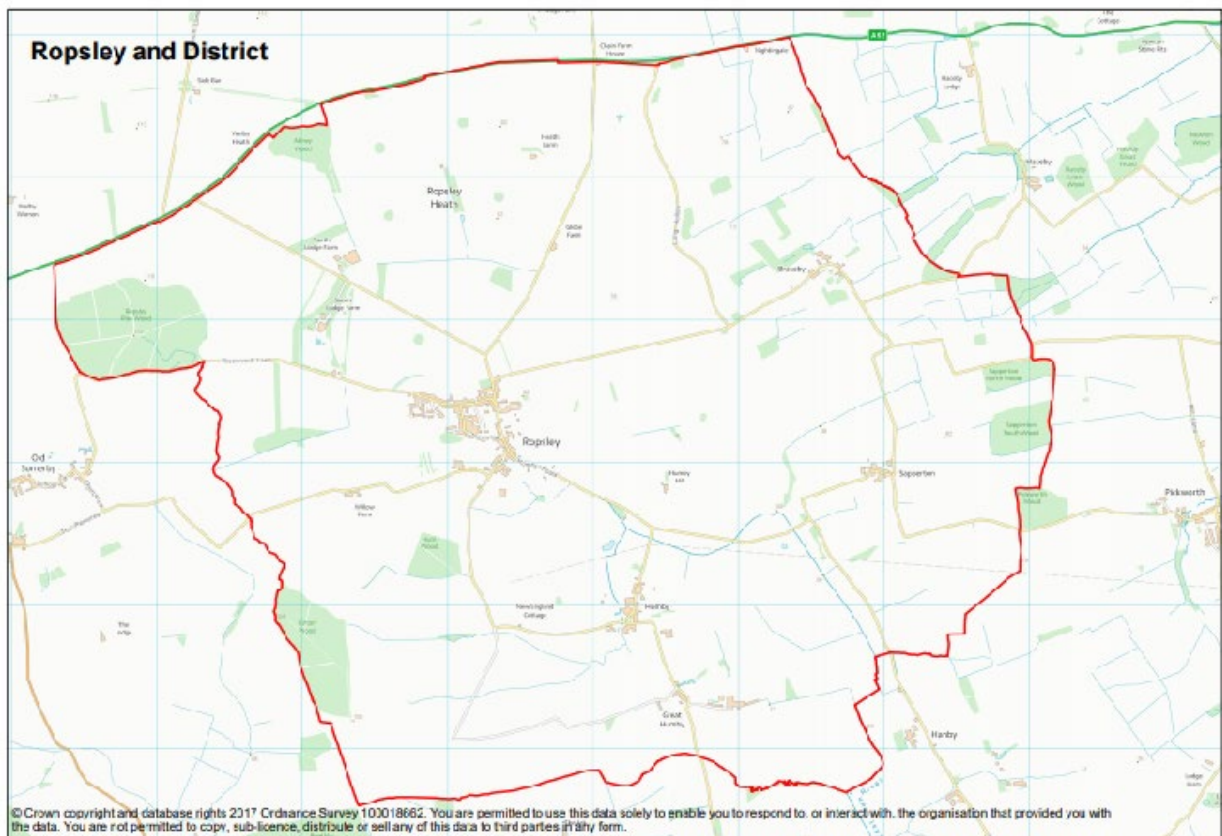
# 1. Introduction - What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

1.1 Communities have powers to shape development through Neighbourhood Planning, which is a right introduced through the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 A Neighbourhood Development Plan can set out a vision for an area and establish planning policies for the use and development of land. It will form part of the Statutory Planning Framework for the area, and the policies and proposals within the plan will be used in the determination of planning applications.

1.3 A Neighbourhood Development Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'Neighbourhood Plan') will therefore form part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area and will be used by the Local Planning Authority and other stakeholders in decision making.

## Boundary of the Ropsley & District Parish/Neighbourhood Plan Area



## Brief Outline of Ropsley & District Parish

1.4 Ropsley & District Parish is situated in the district of South Kesteven in England's East Midlands. It extends to approximately 2,450 hectares (6,050 acres) of attractive rolling countryside and includes the village of Ropsley and the hamlets of Braceby, Great Humby, Little Humby and Sapperton.



1.5 The northern edge of the parish is formed by the A52 Grantham to Boston road, and to the western edge the former line of the Roman road, King Street. Further to the east is the A15 and to the west the A1.

1.6 The parish is between 66m to 117m above sea level and includes the source of the East Glen River, which drains south east. The landscape is open, gently rolling arable countryside of Lincolnshire limestone (north) and boulder clay (south in the shallow valley bottoms).

1.7 There are three main agribusinesses, predominately cropping wheat, barley and rape. A handful of smaller family farms run stock (beef cattle & sheep). The fields are typically large and hedged with mixed hawthorn and elder, interspersed with ash standards. There are four deciduous (predominately ash) woods but these form less than 10% of the area.

1.8 The traditional vernacular is limestone under pantiles, but this diversified to different materials during the 20th century.

1.9 In terms of governance, the parish is within the administrative area of South Kesteven District Council, which serves as the Local Planning authority. Services such as education and transport are provided by Lincolnshire County Council, which also deals with minerals and waste planning matters.

### **Background to the Neighbourhood Plan**

1.10 The Parish Council considered putting together a Neighbourhood Plan so that local people would have more influence on any development coming forward in the area. A parish meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 and those present voted in favour of the Parish Council commencing the formal process.

1.11 The first stage in the statutory process is for the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan, known as the Neighbourhood Area, to be formally designated by the Local Planning Authority. As the appropriate 'Qualifying Body' Ropsley & District Parish Council applied to South Kesteven District Council to designate the neighbourhood area on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The proposed boundary of the neighbourhood area followed the parish boundary. The application was advertised in accordance with the statutory requirements and representations were invited on the proposed boundary. No responses were subsequently received by the District Council.

1.11 A follow up meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and at the meeting a Steering Committee was formed to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the Parish Council. In the interest of openness, breadth, independent and getting people with a range of skills and interests involved, the Committee includes other local residents, who are not Parish Councillors, from several of the settlements in the Parish

### **The Plan Period**

1.12 The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2020 to 2036, reflecting the publication of the Draft Plan and the approval of the new Local Plan, which will run to 2036.

## 2. Consultation on the Pre-submission Draft Plan

2.1 As part of the statutory process the Parish Council and the Steering Committee is required to invite representations on the draft plan prior to it being formally submitted to the District Council. This stage must include a formal consultation period of at least six weeks to publicise the plan and bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area.

2.2 The Parish Council is also required to invite representations on the draft plan from key stakeholders and statutory consultees, including the District Council. This is therefore the purpose of this draft document.

2.3 An electronic version of this draft plan may be inspected on the Ropsley & District Parish Council website: <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/RopsleyandHumby/>  
A hard copy of the plan is available to view at The Green Man Public House or can be loaned from the Parish Clerk at the address below.

2.4 All comments on the draft plan must be submitted in writing on the Response Form:

2.5 Hard copies can be picked up at The Green Man. An e-version is available on the Parish Council website: <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/RopsleyandHumby/>

2.6 Completed Response Forms may be returned using the following means:

**Email:** Ropsleypcclerk@hotmail.com or

**Post:** Patrick Buckley (Chairman of Ropsley & District Neighbourhood Plan Committee), Old Manor House, Little Humby, Grantham, Lincolnshire. NG334HW

**Comment Drop Box:** At the Green Man Public House

**2.7 The consultation runs from Midday Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and the deadline for comments is: Midnight Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

### Next steps

2.8 After this consultation, the draft plan will be reviewed in the light of comments received and may be revised. It will then be formally submitted to South Kesteven District Council.

2.9 The District Council will again publicise the submitted plan for a six week period and invite comments. An independent examiner will then be appointed to consider any representations and check that the plan meets certain basic conditions, including conformity with national and Local Planning policies. The examiner may recommend modifications to the District Council to ensure that this is achieved.

2.10 The submitted plan can only proceed to a community referendum once the District Council is satisfied that the plan meets these basic conditions. A majority of people voting must then support the plan at the referendum if it is to be eventually 'made' by the District Council. Once 'made' the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan and will become a material consideration when determining planning applications.

### **3 National and Local Planning Context**

#### **The Basic Conditions**

3.1 It is a statutory requirement that a Neighbourhood Plan meets The Basic Conditions:

- it has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- it is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
- it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and
- the prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and wider prescribed matters have been complied with, (e.g. the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012).

#### **National Policy**

3.2 The Ropsley & District Neighbourhood Plan has therefore been developed with appropriate regard to national policy, most notably the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The NPPF first came into effect in March 2012, and a revised version was issued in July 2018 which must be taken into account. It states that Neighbourhood Plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in Local Plans and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. It adds that Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than that set out in the strategic policies or undermine them. See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

The Neighbourhood Plan has also been mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance which explains how national policy should be applied. The Guidance can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

#### **Sustainable development**

3.3 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states that sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching aims relating to economic, social and environmental objectives. These should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, where it does not conflict with the policies in an up to date Local or Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **EU Obligations**

3.4 A number of EU obligations may be relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan. In particular the District Council will check whether the policies and proposals give rise to significant environmental effects that trigger the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and assess whether a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required.

## **The Development Plan**

3.5 The Development Plan is the name for the collection of adopted local development documents or planning policy documents that shape development and manage land use in a particular area. It contains the policies and proposals against which planning applications are determined. To meet the Basic Conditions, a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies for the area as set out in the Development Plan. The Development Plan covering South Kesteven currently comprises:

- Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 (adopted July 2010).
- Site Allocation and Policies Development Plan Document (adopted April 2014).
- Saved policies in the South Kesteven Local Plan 1995 (which only affect Grantham).

See: <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=8159> The Development Plan also includes adopted minerals and waste plans prepared by Lincolnshire County Council. In the former, Ropsley & District is a Minerals Safeguarding Area (Limestone) but it is noted that Minerals Planning lies outside the scope of Neighbourhood Plans

## **The New Local Plan**

3.6 South Kesteven District Council is now well advanced in preparing a new Local Plan, which will cover spatial development across the whole District for the period 2011- 2036. The Local Plan sets out the strategic vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the District, as well as the planning policies which will guide future development. The Local Plan looks ahead to 2036 and identifies the main areas in South Kesteven where development should take place, along with areas of the District which will be protected from change. It establishes policies and guidance, to ensure local development is built in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Framework. The Local Plan has a number of allocations which contribute towards the deliverability of the strategic vision.

3.7 The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2019 and Hearing Sessions were conducted by an Inspector in May 2019. A recent consultation on the Main Modifications arising from the Hearing began on 30<sup>th</sup> September and ran until 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It is anticipated that the Council will approve the new Local Plan for adoption on Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>. 2020, just before consultation the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Policy Implications of the New Local Plan**

3.8 The Plan includes policies maps for Ropsley and Braceby, but they are limited to the definition of Conservation Area boundaries and the extent of a (minor) level 2 flood risk zone, with little other specific local detail. This, in itself, supports the need for a locally focused Neighbourhood Plan within the strategic context of the Local Plan.

3.9 There are some important new measures in the Local Plan. In Policies SP 3, 4 & 5, there is the introduction of a policy relaxation to allow some homes to be built for local people, in even the smallest villages, where there is clear community support. Para. 2.1.12 states....*“In the small villages, there is limited capacity to accommodate new development, and whilst previously planning policies strictly limited development in these locations, it is the intention of the Local Plan to allow small, sensitive infill developments (generally expected to be no*

*more than 3 dwellings) so that these smaller communities can positively respond to the housing needs of their people and fulfil their role as sustainable communities”.*

3.10 However, Paragraph 1.1.13 provides clarification, stating that....*“Development proposals on the edge of a settlement will only be supported in the following specific circumstances: where they are supported by clear evidence of substantial support from the local community or; where they form a Rural Exceptions scheme which meets a proven local need for affordable homes. In all cases the site must be well located to the existing built form, substantially enclosed and where the sites edge is clearly defined by a physical feature that also acts as a barrier to further growth (such as a road). The proposal should not visually extend building into the open countryside.”*

3.11 In the settlement hierarchy, Ropsley is a “Smaller Village” but Braceby, Sapperton and Great Humby and Little Humby are classed as open countryside and will be subject to policy SP5 of the new Local Plan.

3.12 The Main Modifications to the Local Plan include additional wording to Policy SP2 (Settlement hierarchy): *“In the Smaller Villages.....development will be supported in accordance with Policy SP3, SP4 and all other relevant policies, **where development will not compromise the village’s nature and character.**”*(my highlighting).

3.13 Policy SP3 provides a basis to assess infill development and, as modified, it reads: *In all settlements defined in Policy SP2, infill development, which is in accordance with all other relevant Local Plan policies, will be supported provided that:*

- a) it is within a substantially built up frontage or re-development opportunity (previously development land);*
- b) it is within the main built up part of the settlement;*
- c) it does not cause harm or unacceptable impact on occupiers’ amenity of adjacent property;*
- d) it does not extend the pattern of development beyond the existing built form; and*
- e) in keeping with character of the area and sensitive to the setting of adjacent properties.*

*The Council is preparing a Design SPD to assist with the submission of applications against the above criteria SP3. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Design SPD, and any development proposals will be expected to have regard to the Design SPD.*

3.14 For Ropsley (village) the Steering Committee intends to use the Neighbourhood Plan to add clarity and detail about the circumstances in which new residential development will be acceptable, including the definition of settlement boundary drawing on local knowledge and criteria in the new Local Plan Policies SP3 (see above) and SP4:

*“Development on the Edge of Settlements - Proposals for development on the edge of a settlement, as defined in Policy SP2, which are in accordance all other relevant policies, will be supported provided that the essential criteria a – f below are met. The proposal must:*

- a. demonstrate clear evidence of substantial support from the local community\* through an appropriate, thorough and proportionate pre-application community consultation exercise. Where this cannot be determined, support (or otherwise) should be sought from the Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Plan Group, based on material planning considerations;*
- b. be well designed and appropriate in size/scale, layout & character to the setting and area;*



- c. be adjacent to the existing pattern of development for the area or adjacent to developed site allocations as identified in the development plan;
- d. does not extend obtrusively into the open countryside and be appropriate to the landscape, environmental and heritage characteristics of the area;
- e. in the case of housing development, meet a proven local need for housing and seeks to address a specific targeted need for local market housing; and
- f. enable the delivery of essential infrastructure to support growth proposals.

*\* the term 'demonstration of clear local community support' means that at the point of submitting a planning application.....there should be clear evidence of local community support for the scheme, with such support generated via a thorough, but proportionate, pre-application consultation exercise. Where demonstratable evidence of local community support or objection cannot be determined, there will be a requirement for support from the applicable Parish or Town Council or Neighbourhood Plan Group....."*

3.15 It is considered that Policy SP4 provides an adequate basis to develop and consider proposals for small scale affordable housing. The Steering Committee is not aware of any current need for specific affordable housing in Ropsley.

3.16 The new Local Plan contains two large scale strategic housing allocations which will bring the edge of the built up area closer to Ropsley and may give rise to increased traffic on rural roads. Policy GR3-H1 allocates land for housing to the south of Grantham on a site known as Spitalgate Heath Garden Village, which has an indicative target of 3700 new dwellings (2,150 anticipated to be constructed by 2036). Policy GR3-H5 allocates land for 500 dwellings on the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks.

3.17 In addition to the (emerging) Local Plan policies outlined above, the following are acknowledged as part of strategic planning context for this Neighbourhood Plan. These policies will not be duplicated or added to, unless there is a need to add local detail.

- SD1: Principles of Sustainable Development
- SP1: Spatial Strategy
- SP5: Development in the Open Countryside
- H5: Gypsies and Travellers
- H6: Travelling Showpeople
- SP6: Community Services and Facilities
- E7: Rural Economy
- E9: Visitor Economy
- EN1: Landscape Character
- EN2: Protecting Bio (and Geo) diversity
- EN6: The Historic Environment
- OS1: Open Space
- RE1: Renewable Energy Generation
- ID3: Broadband and Communications

3.18 Based on the above context, and with reference to housing, this Neighbourhood Plan does not include a numerical housing requirement or make site allocations. It is considered that Ropsley is a small village with limited services and facilities and that development on the periphery would involve incursions into the surrounding open countryside and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the settlement, and the landscape quality of the surrounding Kesteven Uplands. However, recognising the less restrictive approach in the new Local Plan this Neighbourhood Plan includes a settlement boundary and a criteria-based policy to enable small, sensitive infill developments (generally up to 3 dwellings) in appropriate locations in Ropsley, but not outside the existing built up part of the village. This will avoid incursions into the open countryside and protect the setting of the settlement.

## 4. History and Local Character

4.1 The Parish of Ropsley & District, is a comparatively sparsely populated and quite rural backwater, situated in the district of South Kesteven in England's East Midlands. It extends to approximately 2,808 hectares (6,939 acres) of attractive rolling countryside, including the village of Ropsley and the hamlets of Braceby, Great Humby, Little Humby and Sapperton.

4.2 The northern edge of the parish is formed by the A52 Grantham to Boston road, and to the western edge the former line of the Roman road, King Street. Further to the east is the A15 and to the west the A1. All of which ensures good road links to the market towns of Grantham, Sleaford, Bourne and beyond. Grantham offers regular commuter train services to London Kings Cross in a little over an hour.

4.3 The parish is between 66m and 117m above sea level and at various sites the East Glen River has its source, which drains towards the south east. The landscape is open gently rolling arable countryside of Lincolnshire limestone (to the north) and boulder clay (to the south and in the shallow valley bottoms).

4.4 There are three main agribusinesses that crop the land predominately with wheat, barley and rape. A few smaller family farms run stock (beef cattle & sheep) farms. The fields are typically large and hedged with mixed hawthorn and elder and interspersed with ash. There are five deciduous (predominately ash) woods but these form less than 10% of the area.

4.5 The Parish has three Anglican churches and a chapel. Ropsley village benefits from an excellent primary school and the award winning Green Man public house and restaurant, a Village Hall and sports field and a 12 hole golf course. The parish caters well for walking, cycling and for riding, offering many quiet and lovely country walks/rides.

4.6 There is human evidence from c 8000 BC in the Parish, through the Stone Ages, Bronze Age, Roman conquests and settlement, Anglo-Saxon and then the Danish conquests and settlement. The population reached its zenith in the 17th century around the wool trade, which then collapsed to today's levels. The census in 2011 recorded c. 816 residents living in a total of c.367 houses and whose average age was c. 44 years old, but it did not include the hamlets of Braceby or Sapperton and it is reported that no records were available.

4.7 Although agriculture is the major industry relatively few people work in the sector now and most residents earn a living locally and in Grantham.

4.8 In 2019 the pressing challenges/issues facing the parish include community cohesion and sustainability, connectivity to essential services, and the potentially devastating effects on the look and feel of the parish from Ash dieback. The findings of this Neighbourhood Plan show that the residents value the peace and quiet, the open countryside and woodland, continuity and a desire for community.

4.9 The traditional vernacular is limestone under pantile, but this diversified to different materials during the 20th century.

## Character assessment

4.10 Based on the historical development of the District there are five very distinct villages with their own individual characters. Below is a short summary for each of them.

### Ropsley



4.11 Ropsley is roughly between 81m and 93m above sea level. The land undulates, with the middle of the village sitting in a hollow. It is surrounded by views over farmland and some woodland areas. The village is centred around a large church which dates back to 1380, and other historic buildings. Buildings throughout the village are set in a fairly random way with some lining the roads and others set back and at irregular angles. There are many different styles of building. Later buildings are interspersed amongst the old buildings, and there are some newer areas of development.

4.12 The Danelaw Way is a Viking road that runs from Lincoln to Stamford for a distance of approximately 59 miles, and this road runs through the middle of Ropsley. It is a well walked route that is generally across fields and green lanes.



4.13 Half a mile south east of Ropsley are the remains of an unusual 300 years old ring dam once used as a sheep-wash and now identified by a group of trees. Blue brickwork that formed the sheep-wash can still be seen.

4.14 There is a primary school in the village, one public house (The Green Man) which also houses the Post Office for two hours a week, and a Garage. The village also boasts a very well used Village Hall, children's play area and playing field. There is also a 12 hole, 18 tee, par 60 golf course. These amenities are all shared with the other four villages within the parish, and they form an important part of the parish cohesion.



4.15 There is a large village green and a smaller one upon which the War Memorials stand, a number of public footpaths and woodland areas that are easily accessible to all residents, and a number of the footpaths connect the villages to each other. These facilities offer the opportunity for good dog walking, horse riding and cycling.

4.16 There is a wide road through the village that comes from the Sapperton end through to the Roman Road towards Grantham, and there are lanes that go through the village and out connecting Ropsley to the other villages in the parish (and also to Old Somerby which is included in the next parish). The main road through Ropsley is generally kept in a good state of repair as it takes a large amount of traffic. However, the upkeep of the lanes is rather sporadic, and winter sees these lanes deteriorate. Some repairs are made during the rest of the year to keep the lanes at a tolerable standard of repair. There is a local concern about the speed at which some traffic travels through the village and a traffic calming measure would be welcomed.

4.17 In 1979, an Archaeological Field Survey was undertaken in Ropsley and Humby and there were some significant findings. It is believed that there is, amongst other findings, a Saxon Burial Ground in Ropsley. The report was published, and it is entitled '**The Archaeology and Developing Landscape of Ropsley and Humby, Lincolnshire**' and a copy may be obtained from Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.



## Braceby

4.18 Braceby is a tiny hamlet comprising 11 dwellings and a church dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There is a fairly straight road that connects Ropsley and Braceby, with large fields and on both sides of the road. There is a clear distinction between the two villages. Braceby sits on gently rounded plateau, at around 83m, with the land falling away to Long Hollow on the west and with a slight dip down to Sapperton Beck on the south.

4.19 Braceby is a designated Conservation village with 11 Listed Buildings including the Church, several houses, a dovecote, the telephone box and a water pump. There is one (600 acre) working farm (J Limb and Sons), whereas in the 1960's there were three.



4.20 In the 1940's there was a tarmacked lane known as Back Lane, that led to several houses, but these have been demolished, except the one nearest the road. In 1998 a row of three cottages was demolished. The lane still exists but it is little more than a track.

4.21 Today, most of the houses are stone with a couple brick built. They line the road through the village which also curves around the Norman church in the middle. The lane is generally in an acceptable state of repair, and the residents of the village all seem to be content with village life there. The village is kept to a high standard by the residents.



4.21 There is a large herd of fallow deer in the village, and these, together with other wildlife, can be seen frequently in and around the area. Braceby is a little over a mile from Ropsley, and the two villages are closely connected in terms of amenities.



## Sapperton

4.22 Sapperton, like Braceby, is a very small hamlet. The surrounding countryside is level, open farmland with hedgerows and some woodland areas. The road through the village curves in front of the church, and many of the buildings are stone built and sit along the road. The road is generally kept in a good state of repair. There are no amenities in the village, so residents regularly use those available in Ropsley. The 12 – 15<sup>th</sup> Century church is Grade II listed. The tower is 13<sup>th</sup> century and there is a 12<sup>th</sup> century font. The 16th Century Hall is also Grade II Listed, with 17th & 18th century (and minor later) alterations.



4.23 The village is close to Braceby. The verges each side of the road by Sapperton North Wood have been designated by the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust as a Roadside Nature Reserve (No.41). There are 250 species and the most notable are Early Purple Orchids, Common Orchids, and Cowslips. In 2013 it was extended because of the Early Purple orchids and other plants/grasses. It begins close to Braceby and ends beyond the Pickworth turn.



4.24 'Causennis' is a Roman settlement site less than 1 mile to the south of Sapperton, on the East Glenn River, near its source. It was excavated in 1973 and 1981, and again in 1984 to 1988, revealing stone buildings, iron smelting furnaces and various other artefacts.

## Great Humby

4.25 Great Humby has only 15 or so residents. It is surrounded by farmland at around 76m altitude. Most of the village itself is a farm and there is a turkey business on the outskirts. There are no amenities in the village. Great Humby has a small chapel, and in 1885 it was recorded that the chapel consisted of a nave only. Prior to that date it was a private chapel of the Brownlow family who were the former possessors of the nearby hall. The chapel, an 'ashlar' building with bellcote, was restored in 1874, following an earlier rebuild in 1692.



4.26 Great Humby is a very old village and in the Domesday Book it was written that 'Humby' had 1 villager, 1 smallholder and 15 freemen. In 1086 it was in the manor of Old Somerby. The Archaeological Survey (see Ropsley) undertaken revealed that the manor's deserted medieval village (see Little Humby) and hall with moats and fishponds are still evident today.





## Little Humby

4.27 Little Humby lies amidst pastoral surroundings, mainly grazing and arable fields. It is of ancient foundation, its present name being of Viking origin, although nearby archaeological discoveries suggest there were pre-historic settlements dating back to the Mesolithic age ( 8500-4000 BC). The Domesday Book records a now extinct village called Ogarth or Overton located between Little and Great Humby.

4.28 The village sits at approximately 76m above sea level and there is a mixture of very old buildings and newer houses that are placed randomly. There is a newer development towards the outer boundary of the village, that consists of a small collection of houses.

4.29 The village clusters around a green which contains a pinfold which protected livestock which at one time freely roamed the village and adjacent pastures pre enclosure. There is a ford just beyond the green which crosses the original lane from Humby to Ropsley. There is a traditional red telephone box (purchased by the residents) which houses a defibrillator.



4.30 Currently there are 39 houses with a population of about 100 mainly occupied by professional or executive level or self-employed. The residents comprise a mixed age group of about 25 retirees and 27 young people under the age of 18. The housing stock is mixed but mainly consists of detached residences, nearly all owner-occupied. The village benefits from fibre optic high speed broadband and since 2017 is connected to mains drainage, but mobile phone coverage can be weak. Nearly all households have cars which are virtually essential to travel to work locally, regionally and via the East Coast main line to London. A minor road connecting Ropsley to Ingoldsby and Corby Glen passes through the centre of the village. It is used by increasing traffic including HGV, buses and agricultural plant. As a result, verges are continually eroded, and the road is uneven with potholes. Surface water can also be an issue, as is vehicle speeding.

## Surrounding landscape character

4.31 A Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken by South Kesteven District Council in 2007. This indicates that the parish predominantly falls within the Kesteven Uplands Character area, which extends from Grantham in the north across a large part of the District to the south. The boundary of the Parish on the A52 is just in the Southern Lincolnshire Edge character area. The Kesteven Uplands character area is described as:

- a relatively unified, simple, medium-scale agricultural landscape with a high proportion of historic woodland;
- undulating landform around the Rivers Witham, East & West Glen and Welland;
- picturesque villages built of local limestone, with Collyweston slate roofs to the south, and pantiles to the north;
- high concentration of houses and parks, with farmland under estate management;
- a dispersed, nucleated settlement pattern, following, enclosed by hedgerows
- modern human influences include airfields and the A1, Great North Road.

4.32 Within the parish there are 5 defined woodlands (Ropsley Rise, Kirton Wood, Hurn Wood, Abney Wood and Sapperton North Wood). These woodlands date back many years, and most are Ancient Woodland, and some are Sites of Special Scientific Interest. They consist predominantly of broad leaf trees with some pine trees. Ropsley Rise Woods are owned and managed by the Forestry Commission. The woods are classed as Ancient Woodlands and reference to them can be found dating back hundreds of years. The woods are enjoyed by walkers and local residents, and the area is designated as a County Council Nature Reserve. Abney Woods and Hurn Woods are owned by Ropsley Farms Ltd. Kirton Woods are privately owned, and Sapperton North Woods are owned by Welby Estates.

4.33 In terms of its sensitivity, the landscape of the Kesteven Uplands is described in the Landscape Character Assessment as medium in scale with a strong landscape pattern of woodland and hedgerows. It contains areas of sensitive landscape including the historic parks and areas around the edge of the often picturesque villages. Away from the main transport corridors it is a relatively tranquil landscape. Landscape sensitivity to new employment or residential proposals is described as being medium to high because of the high proportion of valuable landscape elements and relatively undisturbed character.

The landscape management objectives for the Kesteven Uplands are to:

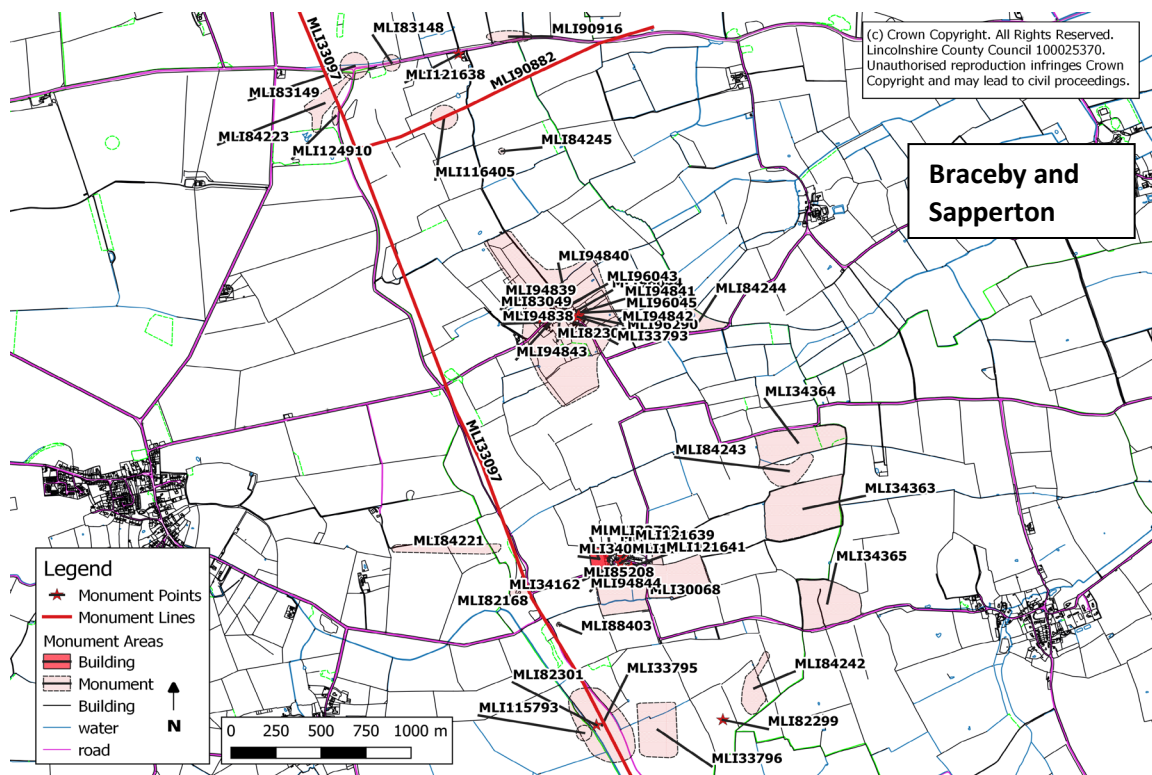
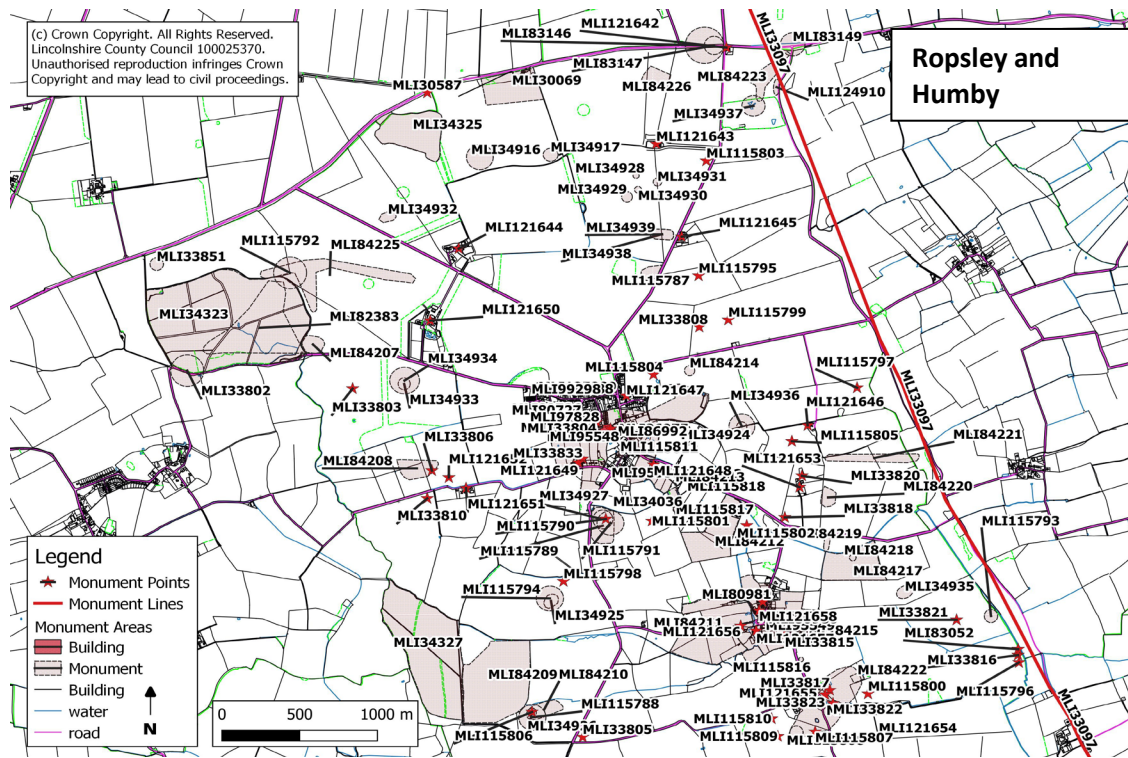
- protect and improve field boundary condition;
- protect existing hedgerow trees and plant new hedgerow trees;
- maintain important grassland areas;
- protect important and distinctive woodland cover;
- protect historic parkland;
- protect field trees, particularly in parkland and in large arable fields;
- maintain traditional village forms;
- use of limestone for new construction in the villages and countryside;
- use new planting to minimise the visual impact of major roads and industry;
- pay special attention to sensitive spaces around the edge of historic towns such as Stamford and the villages and maintain open areas extending into towns and villages

The District Council's Landscape Character Assessment can be found here:

<http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2417&p=0>

## Archaeology

4.34 As noted above, there were significant findings in the 1979 report ‘The Archaeology and Developing Landscape of Ropsley and Humby’. Details of the rich and important archaeology of the Parish can be found in the County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). This data forms a separate Evidence Paper (Heritage & Archaeology), but a flavour of the extent of archaeology around is given on the overview/summary maps below.





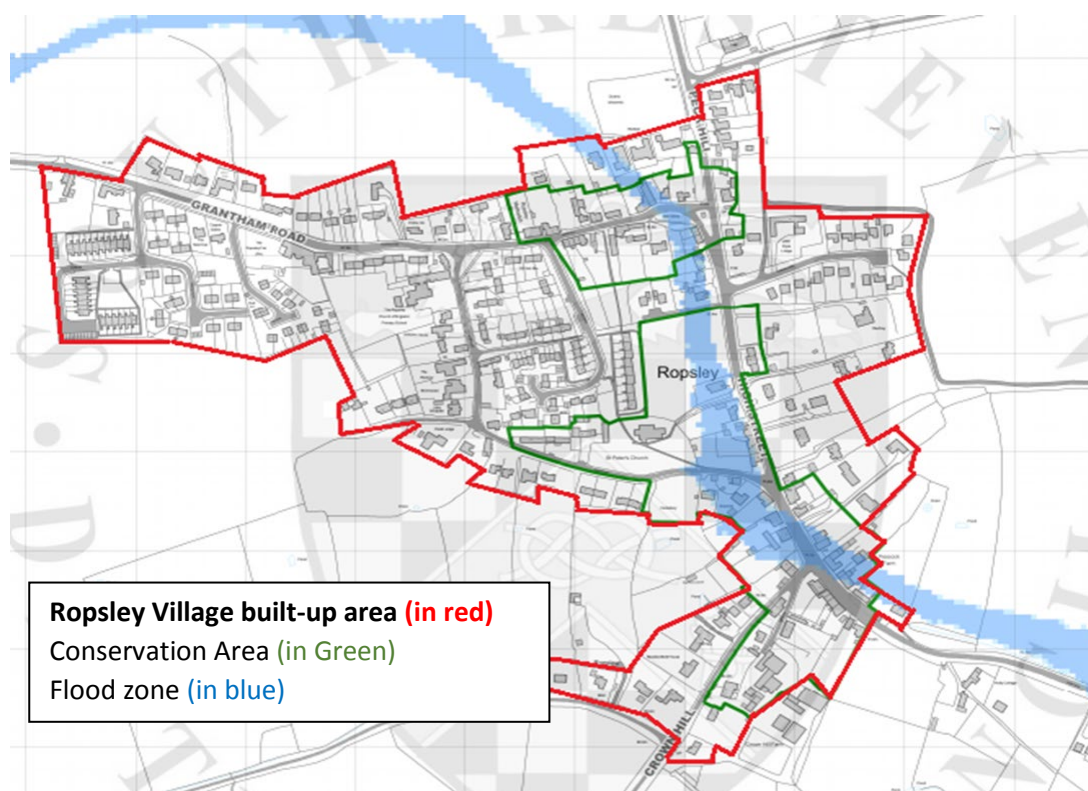
## Bespoke Evidence on Local Character and Heritage

4.35 The Steering Committee believes that, based on consultation outcomes and analysis of the area, as described above, the protection and enhancement of local heritage and character should lie at the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Steering Committee acknowledged that planning policies must be based on sound evidence and the following surveys were completed (Details are in the Neighbourhood Plan Appendices);

- Potential (non-designated) Local Heritage Assets,
- Potential Key Views, and
- Potential Local Green Spaces.

Ropsley Village (extent of built up area)

4.36. In recognition of the change in the policy context in the Local Plan to enable limited residential development in small villages, a survey of the extent of built-up area was undertaken as part of the character work. This resulted in the drawing of the following map.



4.37 It is based on the principles that:

- Countryside extending into the village is an important part of its heritage and character
- Larger farm buildings on the edge relate to the countryside, rather than the village.
- It represents the developed footprint or continuous built form of the village, excluding dispersed dwellings and other structures along linear routes radiating from the village.

4.38 It is not intended that the map constitutes a settlement boundary, which could give rise to a policy conflict with the Local Plan and is not established practice in South Kesteven. However, it is felt that the map is a useful informal reference point for the implementation of Policy R&D 2 (New Housing in Ropsley Village) of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 5. Statistical Profile of the Area

5.1 Ropsley and District has been defined as a collection of five very separate and individual villages, with Ropsley in the middle and the other four 'satellite' villages all being closely connected by lanes. The profile of the area has been compiled using data from the 2011 Census. However, Ropsley & District was not been defined in its entirety because the small settlements of Braceby and Sapperton were surveyed as part of Pickworth. For this reason, the information shown in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan relate to Ropsley, Little Humby and Great Humby only. A copy of the full report for Ropsley can be found here: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E04005936>

5.2 Local estimates show that Braceby has only 23 residents and 12 dwellings and Sapperton 30 residents and 12 dwellings. They are known by are by local people to have similar characteristics to the remainder of the Parish. This means that the recorded figures for Ropsley, Great Humby and Little Humby can be regarded as being indicative of trends and characteristics for Ropsley and District as a whole.

### Social and cultural aspects

5.3 The report states the parish has a population of 816 people living in 367 households. Of this total 456 (56%) are working age adults. There are 184 (22%) over 65, which is higher than the national average of 16%.

5.4 The percentage increases in total population between 2001 and 2011 mirrors the average for Lincolnshire. However, inward and outward migration indicates that there were more aged 15-24 and 65+ moving out, but more aged 25-44 moving into the parish.

### Equity and prosperity

5.5 The parish is not a deprived area. Only 12 people of working age were unemployed and 3% of working age adults received 'out of work' benefit, (half of national average).

### Economy

5.6 There are 389 economically active residents, representing 67% of those aged 16-74, to mirror the national average. 191 were economically inactive (33%). Of those in employment:

- 224 were full time employees;
- 68 were part-time employees; and
- 69 were self-employed.

5.7 The largest employment sector is retail (15% of people), followed by education (11%) and construction (11%). In terms of the occupations of those in employment:

- 16% are managerial, which is slightly above the national average;
- 18% are professional, which compares to 30% nationally;
- 12% are administrative or secretarial; the same as the national average;
- 12% are skilled trades which compares to 11% nationally; and
- 13% elementary, which compares to 11% nationally.

## Housing and the built environment

5.8 The housing stock comprises the following type of properties:

- 194 detached houses;
- 116 semi-detached houses;
- 54 terraced houses; and
- 2 flats.

5.9 The proportion of detached houses (52%) in the parish is just under twice the national average and that of terraced houses (7%) a little over half the national average.

5.10 In terms of tenure, the following breakdown applies:

- 261 houses are owner occupied;
- 43 houses are socially rented;
- 27 houses pay private rent; and
- 18 houses comprise other rented accommodation.

5.11 A snapshot of council tax bands reveals that properties in the Parish Range from A to F, (Ref. <http://www.mycounciltax.org.uk/results?postcode=ng334be> November 2019).

## Transport and connectivity

5.12 Car ownership is generally higher than the county/national averages and is as follows:

- 46 (13%) households had no access to a car;
- 133 (38%) households had 1 car;
- 128 (37%) households had 2 cars;
- 26 (7%) households had 3 cars; and
- 16 (5%) households had 4 cars or more.

5.13 The average travel times by public transport or walking from Ropsley & District to the nearest service or facility was estimated as follows, however the apparently reasonable accessibility has to be placed in the context of the limited frequency of bus services.

- employment centre – 16 minutes;
- further education facility – 37 minutes;
- GP – 25 minutes;
- hospital – 89 minutes;
- primary school – 0 minutes from Ropsley;
- secondary school – 28 minutes;
- supermarket – 15 minutes; and
- town centre – 24 minutes.

5.14 As regards commuting 10 people travel less than 2km to work. Conversely 15 travel more than 40km. Only 3 people travel to work by public transport.

## Open Space

5.15 For the new Local Plan, the District Council prepared an Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Report (2017). This indicates the following provision in Ropsley & district (ha/1,000 - population 816). 3.25 ha. recreation ground; 0.07 ha of children's space, 1.20 ha of outdoor sports space and 0.57 hectares of churchyards. The lack of allotments and designated natural green spaces is a concern.

## Planning Records

5.16 The planning application history from April 2012 to 1 September 2019 has been reviewed to identify any issues or trends which could inform/influence the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. 77 applications made/determined. A summary follows.

Category	Number (%)	Notes
Household	19 (25.5%)	Usual range
New Residential	6 (7.5%)	*See below
Trees	16 (20.5%)	10 in Braceby
Agriculture	10 (13%)	Mostly Ropsley Farms Ltd.
Equine	2 (2.5 %)	Related to ménage
School	6 (7.5%)	Temporary and new classrooms
Listed Buildings	3 (4%)	3 separate buildings
Public House	5 (5%)	4 (conversion) withdrawn and 1 approved
Renewables	2 (2.5%)	EIA Screening required for solar farms
Miscellaneous	9 (13%)	1 minerals, others are for discharge of conditions etc.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77 (100%)</b>	

\*Larger new residential development includes (from 2011):

- The Old Quarry (28 dwellings – refused and appeal dismissed).
- Grantham Road (11 affordable homes - withdrawn).
- Land rear of 43 Grantham Road (1 dwelling approved).
- Conversion of the Old Chapel (after several refusals or withdrawals), approved in 2014.
- In 2016 the Ropsley Fox gained permission for 2 dwellings and a community facility.

5.17 The reasons for refusal and Inspectors' report for the Old Quarry site will be pertinent to the identification of criteria for infill development and the definition of a settlement boundary. In addition, the type and spread of applications has some implications, see below.

1 - The highest proportions are Householder and Tree Works (the focus on Braceby is due to the Conservation Area/presence of trees within it).

2 - The Agricultural applications reflect the importance of commercial scale farming, but, 2 applications each for solar farms and equestrian uses suggest potential pressure for change.

3 - The school generates activity on a regular basis, possibly reflecting success and growth?

4 - The closure/re-use of the Fox PH and Change of Use for the Old Chapel involved multiple applications (up to 10) with several withdrawn or refused until schemes were approved

5 - The two applications for larger residential development (28 and 11 dwellings) including the late 2011 Old Quarry refusal/appeal, reflect the (Local Plan) policy objections.

6 - Approvals for new residential development were restricted to conversion/replacement single dwellings and the occasional single infill plots.

## 6. Community Consultation

### Household questionnaire

6.1 The Steering Committee decided to consult the local community at the start of the Neighbourhood Plan process to establish what people believe is important about living in Ropsley District and to understand what the local community felt was good about the area, what needs to be protected, and what needs to be improved.

6.2 A consultation was organised and undertaken by the Steering Committee on behalf of the Parish Council. In July 2017 they distributed two hard copies of a questionnaire to every household in the parish. The findings of the report are briefly summarised in this section, but a copy can be found under the 'Neighbourhood Plan' heading here:

[www.parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/RopsleyandHumby/section.asp?docId=122366](http://www.parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/RopsleyandHumby/section.asp?docId=122366)

Of the 389 questionnaires distributed around the parish, there were 100 returned. This represents a return of approximately 25%. Appendix 1 is a copy of the questionnaire.

### Analysis of responses

6.3 On why people enjoy living in the Parish, the following received most support:

- Ease of access to Grantham;
- Feeling safe;
- Peace and quiet;
- The beauty of the countryside and green spaces – beautiful walks;
- Village life – parks, great pub, clubs and school;
- Community feeling.

6.4 Amongst the additional comments there was a request that any development should be in-keeping with the character of the village. On the whole most people wanted to see some development (67%) but this was limited/contained to 2-bed starter and 3 bed homes.

6.5 The responses showed that the following matters were things that people disliked and did not contribute to their enjoyment of living in the village:

- The condition of the roads;
- Isolating – not very much happens;
- Inconsiderate neighbours
- No shop in any of the villages;
- Poor broadband;
- Lack of public transport; and
- Environmental issues such as dog mess, litter and vacant properties

6.6 People stated that the following issues and features of the natural environment should be regarded as important issues when development proposals are considered:

- Traffic and parking;



- Changes to the villages and the green spaces;
- Effect on the countryside around the villages;
- Effect on the school and leisure facilities;
- Nature conservation and biodiversity.

6.7 Most respondents were also keen to see both access to the countryside and footpaths protected when considering any development proposals. There were additional comments relating to the need for:

- Better infrastructure;
- Sustainable development in keeping with the surroundings;
- Mindful that all communities contribute to the need for housing.

6.8 When considering development proposals in the Parish, respondents rated the following aspects of the built environment as being the most important to protect.

- Managing the size of the village, to retain its quality and identity;
- Maintaining historical quality;
- Taking accounts of the distinctive building style.

6.9 There was strong support for the introduction of traffic management measures, most notably the reduction of speed levels through the village.

6.10 In terms of service improvements, respondents most wanted to see better:

- Internet/broadband provision;
- Improved public transport;
- Improved surface water drainage.
- Comments supporting the provision of a village shop.

## **External Consultees**

6.11 The Steering Committee was also keen to inform external consultees of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan in advance of formal consultation on the Draft Plan. Accordingly, an email notification was sent to 47 organisations and people on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019 and ten responses were received, of which five were substantive. The key points, which will be taken into account in the emerging (Draft) Neighbourhood Plan, were:

### **Historic England:**

*6.12 The area covered by your Neighbourhood Plan encompasses Ropsley Conservation Area and includes a number of important designated heritage assets. In line with national planning policy, it will be important that the strategy for this area safeguards those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets so that they can be enjoyed by future generations of the area. If you have not already done so, we would recommend that you speak to the planning and conservation team at South Kesteven District Council together with the staff at Lincolnshire County Council archaeological advisory service who look after the Historic Environment Record.*

**Lincolnshire County Council:**

6.13 *The guidance produced by LCC will be helpful towards our consideration of heritage, but otherwise it seems to refer more to larger scale, more strategic matters related to site allocations.*

**Natural England:**

6.14 *Although Natural England does not have any specific comments at present, the annex that they provided which covers many environmental issues and opportunities that can be considered in a Neighbourhood Plan. This should support out approach to nature conservation sites, landscape character and Local Green Spaces.*

**South Kesteven DC:**

6.15 The Council provides useful information on the constraints and designations that we will need to take account of, namely:

- Parts of Ropsley are situated within a minor level 2 flood risk zone
- The Ropsley & District is within a Minerals safeguarding area (Limestone)
- Ropsley and Braceby have Conservation Areas
- There is a Local Wildlife Site (Hurn Wood) south west of Ropsley
- There is a Scheduled Monument (Ring Dam medieval fishpond) east of Ropsley.

6.16 Reference was also made to the publication of the main modifications for the new Local Plan and that these should be examined to see if there is any impact on the policy context for the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Anglian Water:**

6.17 There is existing water supply and sewerage and sewage treatment infrastructure within the Parish and the comments refer to the need for consultation if site allocations are made, which is unlikely. However, it will be helpful to keep them involved.

**Highways England**

6.18 This organisation requested future consultation, but it will be good practice to include the majority of organisations in future rounds, unless they specifically requested to be excluded.

## 7. Key issues and Emerging Policy Themes

7.1 The key issues to emerge from the evidence gathering and community engagement are summarised below, categorised under the three elements of sustainable development (Environmental, Economic and Social). They provide the context for the formulation of the vision and objectives in the following section, and the subsequent policies and proposals.

**Table 2 - Assessment of Key Issues**

Category	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Environment (& Landscape)	<p>The villages are very attractive with rural and open character</p> <p>There are a number of Listed buildings</p> <p>The villages are surrounding by open countryside</p> <p>The District is in the Kesteven Uplands Landscape Character Area</p> <p>The District is physically separated from nearby Grantham, which is not visible because of topography.</p> <p>There are extensive views across surrounding farmland available from many residential properties</p> <p>Pedestrian accesses available in the villages and via the public rights of way to adjoining countryside</p> <p>Local people value the tranquillity and rural nature of the villages</p>	<p>There is concern amongst the local community that any inappropriate development would result in the loss of environmental features</p> <p>There was support for the introduction of traffic management measures, most notably the reduction of speed levels through the villages and on the rural lanes</p>
Social	<p>There are churches (including one chapel) in 4 of the villages</p> <p>There is a public house in Ropsley that is enjoyed by the whole parish</p> <p>Extensive services/facilities available nearby in Grantham</p> <p>A mixture of house types in the village, of varying size and tenure</p>	<p>Approximately 22% of residents are over 65</p> <p>Only limited services facilities: no local shop or health provision</p> <p>There is a high rate of car ownership.</p> <p>Respondents wanted to see better broadband provision</p>

	The village hall in Ropsley is well used by many local organisations which encourage involvement by various members of the parish	There were also requests for improved public transport and surface water drainage  There were comments supporting the provision of a village shop
Economic	It is not a deprived area  There are low unemployment levels  There are employment opportunities available in nearby Grantham and further afield (e.g. commuting to London on the East Coast Mainline)	There are very few employment opportunities within the Parish  People are very dependent on the car to access work, with few people using public transport  There is concern about poor road maintenance

### **Emerging Policy Themes**

7.2 The key priorities for the Plan can be grouped around a number of themes, to form the basis for formal planning policies. Some other ideas can be categorised as being “aspirational” projects which are in keeping with the general themes.

#### **Social (Community cohesion)**

7.3 There is a strong desire to further build community cohesion and a sense that this could be achieved by focussing on some of the existing facilities such as the school, pub and village hall. Specifically, there is a strong desire to retain and enhance these critical facilities which are closely interconnected currently and play a central role in the community.

7.4 Improved broadband speeds and mobile phone signals would also support cohesion, especially for Braceby and Sapperton. These could contribute to an improved environment for local people looking to run businesses, either home-based or in other properties.

#### **Environment**

7.5 The survey revealed a strong desire to retain the current sense of openness and green space limiting developments to those that would enhance the local environment. There was support for environment initiatives such as green energy production, but within existing buildings or as part of limited infill new housing. That is, for example, solar roof panels, as opposed to extensive solar or wind farms which would not enhance the local landscape.

#### **Economic (limited future development)**

7.6 In keeping with the strong sentiment of retaining the rural nature of the area, there was a support for only limited new development which would enhance and be in keeping with the status quo. There should be a focus on brownfield sites within existing village boundaries first, with infill sites as a secondary priority and in all cases, for the development of 2-3 bed homes.

## **Potential (Planning ) Policy Headings**

7.7 Based on the above, the following potential policy heading were identified

- Protect and enhance openness and green space;
- Retain/enhance village facilities (school, pub, village hall);
- Limited development in keeping with and enhancing the local environment with house to meet local market needs/aspirations (e.g. a focus on 2-3 bed homes);
- Encourage small scale business and self-employment within existing premises and enable a fibre broadband facility for Braceby and Sapperton;
- Set criteria to ensure that solar/wind farms do not have an adverse impact on the character and quality of the countryside and the setting of the five villages;
- All new development to meet high level sustainable development and energy standards;
- Protect and enhance local heritage features;
- Protect and enhance the rich archaeology of the Parish;
- Protect and enhance the landscape quality of the Kesteven Uplands, including key views;
- Protecting and enhancing the cycling/walking network;
- Protect the open land between Ropsley and Grantham (development should not extend south west beyond the A52 and High Dyke.

## **Other Community Aspirations**

7.8 It was also recognised that some of the issues raised fall outside the scope of formal planning policies in Neighbourhood Plan, but these have been incorporated into five potential Community Aspirations, as follows:

- A Community shop, managed and run by community volunteers;
- A Resource Guide to include transport (shared), medical resource, local services;
- A Scheme working with local farmers to plant trees/hedges;
- A wider Volunteering Scheme building on “The Big Clean” a twice a year village clean up;
- Developing a local heritage trail.

## 8. Vision and Objectives

**The Vision for Ropsley and District is that:** In 2036 Ropsley & District (comprising of Ropsley, Braceby, Sapperton, Little Humby and Great Humby) will be five distinct, sustainable and vibrant rural settlements, surrounded by attractive open countryside. Ropsley & District will contain communities that value and look after their historic buildings and the natural environment. Whilst physically separate from Grantham there will be good links to the employment, services and facilities that the town offers.

**Objective 1** - To protect the distinct identity of Ropsley and District and within it, the individual nature and setting of its five settlements.

**Objective 2** - To define, protect and enhance the distinctive landscape of Ropsley and District.

**Objective 3** - To protect and enhance built environment (heritage) assets, archaeological sites and natural environment assets.

**Objective 4** - To maintain and develop local services and facilities to ensure a sustainable and viable community.

**Objective 5** - To encourage and enable sustainable development including energy efficient buildings, active travel and access into the countryside.

**Objective 6** - To enable appropriate small scale residential development, with a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs and aspirations of local people.

## The basis for the Planning Policies and Community Aspirations

8.1 The vision and objectives will be achieved by the planning policies set out in Section 9 and the following table indicates which policies will deliver each of the objectives.

**Table 3 – Relationship between Objectives and Policies**

<b>Neighbourhood Plan Policy</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<i>R&amp;D 1 - Sustainable Development Principles</i>	All
<i>R&amp;D 2 - New Housing in Ropsley Village</i>	Objective 6
<i>R&amp;D 3 - New Housing in the other settlements</i>	Objective 6
<i>R&amp;D 4 - Residential Extensions</i>	Objectives 1 and 6
<i>R&amp;D 5 - Landscape Character and Openness</i>	Objectives 1 and 2
<i>R&amp;D 6 - Key Views</i>	Objectives 1 and 2
<i>R&amp;D 7 - Designated heritage assets</i>	Objective 3
<i>R&amp;D 8 - Local (non-designated) heritage assets</i>	Objective 3
<i>R&amp;D 9 - Archaeology</i>	Objective 3
<i>R&amp;D 10 - Open space and recreation</i>	Objective 4
<i>R&amp;D 11 - Proposed Local Green Spaces</i>	Objectives 1, 2 and 4
<i>R&amp;D 12 - Countryside management</i>	Objectives 2 and 3
<i>R&amp;D 13 - Nature conservation and biodiversity</i>	Objective 3
<i>R&amp;D 14 - Community facilities &amp; local services</i>	Objective 4
<i>R&amp;D 15 - Local businesses and employment</i>	Objective 4
<i>R&amp;D 16 - Telecommunications and broadband</i>	Objective 4
<i>R&amp;D 17 - Transport and active travel</i>	Objective 5
<i>R&amp;D 18 - Countryside access and rights of way</i>	Objective 5
<i>Community Aspirations</i>	
<i>CA 1 - Community assets( inc. shop)</i>	Objective 4
<i>CA 2 - Resource and services guide</i>	Objective 4
<i>CA 3 - Volunteering</i>	Objective 4
<i>CA 4 - Local heritage trail</i>	Objective 3
<i>CA 5 – Tree &amp; hedge planting and habitat creation</i>	Objective 3

8.2 The Community Aspirations are listed here for ease of cross reference with the relevant objective and planning policies thereby avoiding repetition and duplication. They address the issues raised in consultation which are related to, but cannot be addressed by, land use planning policies in a Neighbourhood Plan. However, these issues can be listed and addressed in a separate document or as an appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan. Section 9, which follows the planning policies, is therefore entitled 'Community Aspirations'. Technically this does not form part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan and will not be considered by the Examiner or the District Council.



## 9. Planning Policies

9.1 The policies are designed to deliver the Vision and Objectives and once the Neighbourhood Plan has been 'made' by the District Council they will form part of the Development Plan and be used by the District Council to determine planning applications in the parish. Each policy is followed by an explanation to substantiate the adopted stance. In accordance with the statutory requirements, each policy must meet the Basic Conditions. Where appropriate, the accompanying justification to each policy will therefore refer to:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);
- strategic policies in the new the South Kesteven Local Plan;
- the findings from research and the evidence base; and
- the views of the local community and other interested parties from consultations.

### Overall Sustainable Development

***R&D 1 - Sustainable Development Principles - All proposals for development should:***

- a) Be appropriately located;***
- b) Be of an appropriate scale and demonstrate a high standard of design;***
- c) Have regard to their setting and the character of the local area;***
- d) Take account of the key landscape views identified in Policy R&D 6;***
- e) Not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents;***
- f) If appropriate, to provide for sustainable transport modes, walking and cycling;***
- g) Respect the local built, social, cultural, historic and natural heritage assets, and***
- h) Demonstrate practicable efforts to achieve (or preferably exceed) design and construction standards for sustainable development to minimise CO2 emissions.***

### Explanation

This policy provides a positive framework for decision making, as required in the National Planning Policy Framework. Development will only be encouraged where it can be shown that the scheme will help to achieve the Purpose and Objectives outlined in Section 7. Locally, the concept of sustainability relates particularly to the need for sensitive design such that development reflects the character of the surroundings; meeting environmental, social and economic objectives and better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, all of which contribute to the quality of life for residents in Ropsley and District. It is also intended that the policy encourage national efforts, based in part on local action, to address the very real threat of climate change to all communities

In addition to the formal planning requirements of this policy, there is a wider intention to support the creation and maintenance of healthy and sustainable communities.

## Housing Policies



## **R&D 2 - New Housing in Ropsley Village**

***Proposals for small scale residential development within Ropsley village will be supported providing that, where applicable to the site, each of these criteria are met:***

- a) it is sensitive infill development that is located within the existing confines of the built-up area of the village.***
- b) it is on a small scale, generally expected to be no more than 3 dwellings in an otherwise built-up frontage;***
- c) it is appropriate to its' surroundings;***
- d) it is not on open land (including open spaces, Local Green Spaces, farmland or recreational uses) that is important to the form and character of the village;***
- e) the scale, layout and materials retain local distinctiveness;***
- f) it protects and enhances public rights of way;***
- g) there is good access by car with adequate off road parking provision;***
- h) it does not adversely affect views of value or significance (see policy R&D 6);***
- i) feature domestic scale renewable energy, sustainable drainage and carbon minimisation features, where the design, which is appropriate to the location, and;***
- j) comprise a variety of types and sizes, including smaller houses for first time buyers.***

### **Explanation**

The purpose of this policy is to enable the application of the provision in the new Local Plan to allow small, sensitive infill developments (generally expected to be no more than 3 dwellings) in small villages. There is no need for this plan to set a numerical requirement for new housing and intention of this policy is to enable Ropsley to respond positively to the housing aspirations of local people and as part of maintaining a sustainable community. However, in recognition that any development must be sensitive and appropriate, the policy adds local criteria to the higher level Local Plan Policy: SP3 - Infill Development). The aim is to avoid incursions into the surrounding open countryside and to protect the setting of the settlement. It is accepted that, in accordance with established practice in South Kesteven, a formal settlement boundary cannot be defined. However, it is considered that the Character analysis and the resultant indicative map of the built-up area (Paras. 4.36 to 4.38) are useful reference points for the implementation of this policy. In addition, the following definitions are intended to apply to the application of this policy

Land and buildings will be classified as being **inside the existing confines** of the built-up area where they are contained in the settlement and visually separate from the open countryside. They should clearly be part of the network of buildings that form the settlement and may include any areas of land with an extant planning permission for built development

The following will be regarded as being **outside the existing confines** of the built-up area:

- A. Gardens which are visually open and relate to the open countryside.
- B. Individual dwellings, groups, or agricultural buildings, that are detached from or peripheral to the settlement.
- C. Employment or leisure uses, including public open space, that are detached or peripheral.

This approach is also supported by the references to design in the NPPF(Ch. 12 – Achieving Well Designed Places). In addition, PPG states that proposals should consider scale, both the overall size and mass of individual buildings and spaces in relation to their surroundings. It adds that decisions on building size and mass, and the scale of open spaces around and between them, will influence the character, functioning and efficiency of an area.

Any proposals for new housing, outside the settlement boundary will need to be considered under the Local Plan Policy SP4 (Development on the Edge of Settlements). It is, however, unlikely taking into account the provisions and intent of the Neighbourhood Plan that the criteria in Policy SP4 requiring “...substantial support from the local community...” will be met. It is felt that development on the periphery of the village would involve incursions into the surrounding open countryside and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the settlement, and the landscape quality of the surrounding Kesteven Uplands. It is intended that any proposals for affordable housing should be considered under Local Plan Policy SP4. With the District Council, the Parish Council will monitor and review the need for affordable homes and/or starter homes within the village over the plan period.

### ***R&D 3 - New Housing (and other development) in the other settlements***

***Proposals for new housing (and other built development) in Braceby, Sapperton, Great Humby and Little Humby will need to meet the requirements for and definition of exceptional circumstances in Policy SP 5 of the Local Plan and should take account of the following local matters:***

- a) The need to respect Braceby Conservation Area and its setting, such that it would be protected and enhanced by the proposed dwelling(s).***
- b) The need to respect Listed Buildings and Local (non-designated) Heritage Assets.***
- c) The need to respect known and potential archaeological assets.***
- d) The need to retain the gardens, open spaces, trees, hedges and water bodies which contribute to the character of each hamlet.***
- e) The proposal should not visually extend buildings or residential curtilages into the open countryside outside the built framework of the hamlet.***
- f) consider the need for smaller houses aimed at first time buyers and older people.***

***Where development is accepted consideration will be given to the removal of Permitted Development rights to bring future extensions, outbuildings, access improvements and means of enclosure under planning control.***

### **Explanation**

Whilst Ropsley is classified as a “Smaller Village” in the settlement hierarchy, Braceby, Sapperton and Great Humby and Little Humby did not have any of the criteria to be similarly identified and are hamlets in open countryside. Therefore, applications for new housing (and other) development will be considered under Policy SP5 of the Local Plan. However, based on the consultation responses and evidence on the extent of heritage and archaeological in and around the villages, this policy sets out other, locally based, considerations.



The policy is in accordance with the Local Plan countryside policies, reflecting the NPPF and PPG. It achieves a balance between the principle of enabling limited exceptional development to meet the essential needs of the rural economy and protecting/enhancing the quality of the environment of these hamlets. That reflects the consultation responses that local people place great value on the rural character of Ropsley. It is also intended to address concerns that new development should maintain historical quality and local character, including distinctive building styles. This includes the removal of Permitted Development Rights, for approved schemes, based on the quality of the built environment and the extent of heritage and archaeological assets in and around the settlements.

Should rural exception sites be proposed, they must be based on an identified/quantified need, fulfilling the criteria set out in this Neighbourhood Plan policy and the Local Plan.

#### **R&D 4 - Residential Extensions**

***Residential conversions or extensions should be designed to respect the character of nearby buildings and their setting. This will require particular attention to:***

- a) The choice of materials;***
- b) The scale of development including roof heights;***
- c) Layout within the plot;***
- d) Parking, in accordance with requirements set by the County and District Councils;***
- e) The relationship with adjoining and nearby properties in terms of the impact on the amenity enjoyed by occupiers and the character of the area.***

***Sustainable design features (e.g. sustainable drainage, porous/permeable surfacing for drives and domestic scale renewable energy) are encouraged where feasible, provided that they are incorporated into an overall design that complements the character of the area.***

#### **Explanation**

Residential extensions comprise the majority of planning applications in the area. Permitted Development rights enable a wide range of types and sizes of extensions to be built without the need for planning permission. However, depending on the type of existing dwelling larger extensions or those at the front of a property require planning permission. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, in addition to residential amenity, general design and local character is taken into account. It will encourage detailed design that is appropriate to the setting and character of the area whilst also enabling energy efficiency and water management features to be incorporated into detailed design. The District Council does not have any adopted parking standards, consequently, parking will be considered on a case by case basis by planning and highways officers, dependant on the application.

## Landscape Policies



## **R&D 5 - Landscape Character and Openness**

***Proposals for development should respect the distinct identity of Ropsley & District, including the settlements of Ropsley, Braceby, Sapperton, Great & Little Humby, in the open attractive open landscape of the Kesteven Uplands. Development will be supported, unless individually or cumulatively, it would result in:***

- a) the loss of the visual and physical separation of these settlements;***
- b) adversely affect the setting of heritage assets;***
- c) result in the creation of continuous built development north west across the A52;***
- d) the loss or disruption of key views (see Policy R&D 6).***

### **Explanation**

Across the whole Parish the open rolling landscape of the Kesteven Uplands National Character Area (No.75), at its' western extremity, before the landform slopes down into the lower Trent and Belvoir Vales around Grantham, is fundamental to the character of Ropsley and District. In the NCA report, it is summarised as being "... a deeply rural landscape which has only a very small urban area (Stamford to the south)...Wide road verges with herbs and wildflowers characterise the area... much scattered woodland survives throughout the area with some important semi-natural and ancient woodlands." The land reaches a high point of 117m in Ropsley Rise Wood, the elevation is maintained at around 100m within a rolling landscape across the Parish but there are several significant valleys at around 60m, including Long Hollow and around Great Humby. Anecdotally, the areas is referred to locally as the "Great Divide" reflecting it is the watershed between the Rivers Trent and Welland.

It is acknowledged that there will not be large scale residential development in Ropsley, or neighbouring parishes (e.g. Old Somerby) but the Local Plan allocates land two sites for housing to the south and east of Grantham for around 4200 dwellings, including the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, close to Ropsley. There is also to be a 96 hectare employment site. The proximity of this extensive built development means that the openness of the Ropsley landscape is something that should be protected.

In addition, a policy stance is needed to address other large scale built development including, for example; intensive pig and poultry rearing units, solar farms and wind farms.

During the initial consultation members of the local community expressed the view that they enjoyed living in a distinct rural settlement with attractive views across the surrounding open countryside. Despite the proximity to Grantham, the identity of Ropsley & District is defined by being both physically and visually separate from the neighbouring town. It is considered that the A52/B6403 (the parish boundary) provides a logical, long term and defensible boundary for an expanded Grantham. This is clearly important to the local community and the intent of this policy, to preserve the separate identity and integrity of Ropsley and District Parish and its villages, is reasonable and justifiable.

## **R&D 6 - Key Views**

***The Key View Corridors (listed below and mapped in Appendix 2) contribute to the character and appearance of Ropsley and District and should be respected and not be compromised by the location, scale and appearance of new development.***

### **In and out of the villages**

- a) Ropsley: W and E on Grantham Road (KVs1,2 & 3)***
- b) Ropsley: N, E and W off the lane to Braceby (KV4,5 & 6)***
- c) Ropsley: NW and SE in the vicinity of Ring Dam and Mill Hill (KV7 & KV8)***
- d) Sapperton; W and E, SE and NW in and around village (KVs9,10,11 & 12)***
- e) Braceby: W and E, SE and NW in and around village (KVs 13,14,15 & 16)***
- d) Gt. & Little Humby: N and S with ridges and valleys (KVs 17,18,19,20,21,22,23 & 24).***

### **Key views across open countryside surrounding the settlements**

- i) Ropsley: (KV1 – East, KV2 South and KV 3North- East across to village)***
- ii) Ropsley: Risewood (KV1 South-East from Ropsley Rise Wood down to the village)***
- iii) Gt. & Little Humby: (KV1 &2 NW) open rural landscape***
- iv) Braceby: (KV1 & 2 S from village to Ropsley and other villages.***
- v) Sapperton: (KV3 Village Green SE towards Gt.& Little. Humby, open rural landscape***

## **Explanation**

The policy aims to protect important countryside views and into/from the five settlements. It is based on a local survey which is included as Appendix 2 to this Neighbourhood Plan (published as a separate document). A strong message from the community consultation was the need to retain the rural feel of the villages. Respondents valued the rural atmosphere, open views and access to the natural environment. The nature and qualities of these views reinforces the rural feel of the parish and adds to its charm and character. The NPPF states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: “*a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...and....b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside...and trees/woodland*”.

The new Local Plan states that development proposals in the open countryside which do not meet the criteria set out in Policy SP4 will be restricted, unless exceptional circumstances apply as outlined in Policy SP5. That policy provides a positive framework for (inter-alia) agriculture, forestry or equine development and rural diversification projects, but in terms of landscape character, it must be used alongside Policy EN1 (Landscape Character) which states that “*...Development must be appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape.... In assessing the impact of proposed development... relevant Landscape Character Appraisals should be considered, including those produced to inform the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.*”

This Neighbourhood Plan policy, based on local survey work on key views, can work alongside the Local Plan to provide an effective, locally focused, framework for decision making on rural development proposals. It demonstrates how Neighbourhood Plans can encapsulate the aspirations of a local community in a way that is difficult in a higher level Local Plan. The views are important to the character of the Parish and its rural feel, and it is appropriate to seek to protect them in order to maintain character and local distinctiveness.

## Heritage and Archaeology Policies





## **R&D 7 - Designated heritage assets**

***Proposals affecting designated heritage assets, or their setting, will be considered under Local Plan Policy EN6 and should also take in to account these local factors:***

***a) The need to reflect the concentration of assets and the links between them in the hamlets of Braceby, Sapperton, Great Humby and Little Humby;***

***b) The relationship between the asset, archaeology and local history;***

***In all cases, the proposal in question should preserve or enhance the asset in question and contribute to the quality and character of its setting.***

***Where the above criteria can be met, proposals that sensitively promote and interpret heritage assets will be supported.***

### **Explanation**

The Parish has two Conservation Areas ( in Ropsley and Braceby), 21 Listed Buildings and 3 Scheduled Monuments, see Appendix 3. Consultation revealed that the historic environment is one of the parish's most valued assets and that people wish buildings and structures to be protected from insensitive development. Individually and cumulatively, these designated heritage assets make a great contribution to the quality and character of Ropsley and District. In the new Local Plan Policy EN6 covers the historic environment providing a good overall context for the consideration of proposals affecting designated heritage assets. It is not intended to duplicate EN6, but this Neighbourhood Plan policy adds local detail, taking account of the concentration of assets, in Ropsley District.

This is in accordance with the NPPF (Chapter 16) which states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment taking into account, in particular (Para. 185) “...Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to character” and “...the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring...”

## **R&D 8 - Local (non-designated) heritage assets**

***Any proposal affecting a non-designated heritage asset will be required to demonstrate how it would contribute to the conservation, preservation and enhancement of the architectural or historic interest. This should take account of local styles, materials and details and the character, context and setting of the asset. The loss of, or substantial harm to, a locally important asset will be resisted, unless a full justification, balancing positive and adverse impacts is provided. The local heritage assets are listed below and described in Appendix 3.***

- 1 Ropsley Church (stained glass window).***
- 2 Ropsley (from Long Lane & Old Somerby) Two concrete methane extraction pipes.***
- 3 Little Humby (SW corner of the Green) Pinfold.***
- 4 Little Humby Ford is at Little Humby Green Road/New England Road.***
- 5 Great Humby (N side of the junction between Humby Road and Church Lane) Pond.***
- 6 Braceby (N of Braceby, S of A52 and W of/Long Hollow) WW2 RAF decoy airfield.***
- 7 Little Humby Telephone Kiosk***
- 8 Great Humby triangle.***

Local surveys have identified eight Local (non-designated) Heritage Assets which are part of the character and identity of the Parish. Such assets maybe buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated. This protection is in accordance with the guidance contained in paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

The buildings and features identified which may not be of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify listing, are an important part of the character of Ropsley and District and have been highlighted as such through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan. The policy will help to ensure they are protected and that works to them are designed sensitively, with careful regard to the historical and architectural interest of the building and its setting. Historic England identify that local lists play an essential role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment and locally. The identification and protection of local assets is supported by the District and County Council. Photographs of the buildings and structures and further details of their local historical and heritage significance may be found in the Appendix 3 .

#### ***R&D 9 – Protecting and enhancing archaeological sites***

***Development proposals affecting Scheduled Monuments, other archaeological sites and areas of archaeological potential, or their settings should demonstrate that they:***

***a) have taken into account the impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits;***

***b) identify mitigation strategies to ensure that evidence which could contribute to the understanding of human activity and past environments is not lost;***

***c) include an appropriate desk-based assessment or, if necessary, a field evaluation.***

***In addition, measures should be taken to minimise impacts of development upon the historic landscape character of the area.***

#### **Explanation**

The NPPF (Para. 189 states “...Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, **heritage assets with archaeological interest**, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation”. The Archaeological Field Survey ‘The Archaeology and Developing Landscape of Ropsley and Humby, Lincolnshire’ was undertaken in 1979 and there were some significant findings. Further details of the rich and important archaeology of the Neighbourhood Plan area can be found in the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). Extracts for the HER are included in Appendix 3. The extent of archaeology is a key element of the historic environment and character of the Parish and this policy will ensure that development takes account of archaeological considerations.

## Open Space, Countryside and Nature Conservation Policies



## **R&D 10 – Existing open space and recreation facilities**

***Existing open spaces, recreation facilities and school playing fields should be protected from development. Proposals which would reduce the quality or quantity of these facilities would only be permitted if existing facilities are replaced at a better quality or quantity and in a location agreed by the Parish Council. In such circumstances, financial arrangements should be made to secure the establishment and future maintenance of the facility. The policy covers the locations below and shown on the Proposals Map:***

### ***Ropsley***

- a) Ropsley Recreation Ground/Village Hall Field***
- b) Ropsley C of E Primary School Playing Fields***
- c) St Peters Churchyard***
- d) Village Green off High Street (including land of Hall Close to the rear of the church)***
- e) Incidental open space between Munton Fields and The Chase.***

### ***Braceby***

- f) Four incidental open spaces around and opposite St Margarets Church.***

### ***Great Humby***

- g) Church Green and The Triangle***

### ***Little Humby***

- h) Village Green***

### ***Sapperton***

- i) Village Green***

***Each of these spaces is detailed, with maps and photographs, in Appendix 3. Several of the spaces are also proposed a Local Green Spaces in Policy R&D 11 (below).***

## **Explanation**

Existing open spaces and recreation facilities spaces may be protected in line with the provisions of the NPPF (Para. 92(c) and 97(a, b & c). These spaces are well used and valued community assets which support social and recreational activity and help to define the landscape and character of the area adding to the quality of life for local residents. In addition, the Parish Council will support proposals to enhance and improve the local open space and recreation facilities in the Parish as and when opportunities emerge.

## **R&D 11 - Proposed Local Green Spaces**

***The Local Green Spaces listed below and shown on the Inset Maps will be protected from inappropriate development. Development of these spaces will only be permitted in very special circumstances where harm to the Local Green Space, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.***

- 1. Ropsley War Memorial***
- 2. Ropsley Village Green***
- 3. Great Humby Church Green***
- 4. Village Green, Little Humby***
- 5. Sapperton Green, at the village entrance from road leading to Ropsley.***
- 6. Four linked open spaces around St Margaret's Church, Braceby***

The landscape quality of the Kesteven Uplands and the rural open countryside of the parish has already been described and addressed through other policies, but it is also important that open land within and adjoining the villages is identified and protected to help to maintain local character. Surveys by local people and other research have identified those spaces which are valued by the community and the way in which heritage and archaeology are inter-twined with local landscape and character. The Local Green Spaces proposed under this policy, add to the inclusion of the land in the general open space policy (R&D 10) but take further account of the value of the land is question to the character, heritage and/or biodiversity of the communities where they are located.

The NPPF (Paras. 99 -101) states that designating of Local Green Spaces in Neighbourhood Plans: *“allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.”* but recognising that designating land as a Local Green Space should be consistent with sustainable development and complement investment in homes, jobs and essential services. It is considered that the six areas proposed fulfil the requirements of Para 100, that: *“The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) demonstrably special to a local community, holding a particular local significance, e.g. because of beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or rich wildlife;*
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*

The policy is also in accordance with Para. 101, which state that *“Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”*

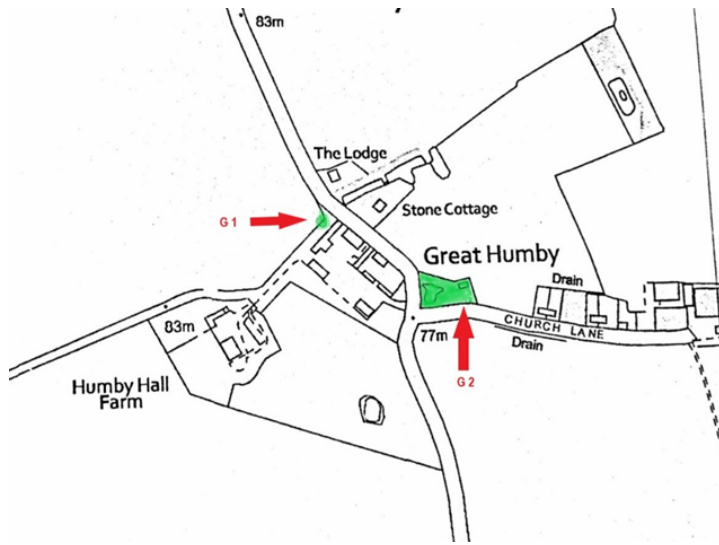
These tables/maps describe and show the Local Green Spaces. More details are given in Appendix 3.

Ropsley	Size in Hectares	Proximity to community	Site Description and Local Significance	Local in Character	Not Extensive
1 (G2) War Memorial Green, junction of Peck Hill and Chapel Hill	0.074	Centre of the village	Green with war memorials commemorating Ropsley residents who lost their lives in WW1 & 2.	Yes	Yes
2 (G4&G5) - Village Green adjacent to the main road and adjoining Small green behind the church, near Hall Close	0.922	The centre of the village with access available from all sides	Larger public grassed area surrounded by trees, outlook from bungalows around it. Used for village celebrations. Includes a bench for quiet reflection.	Yes	Yes

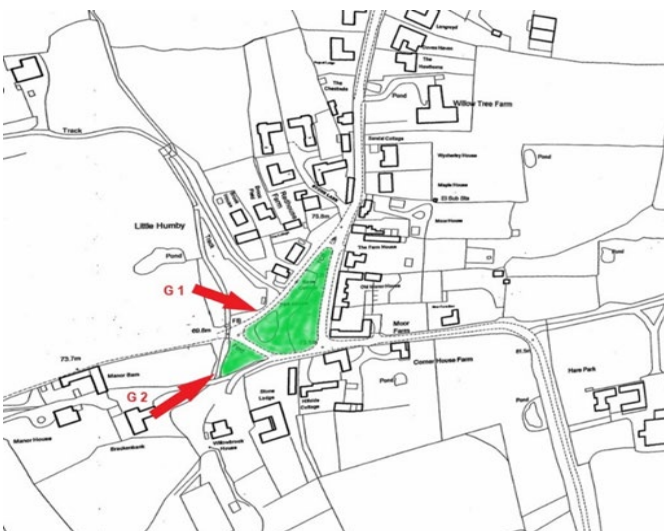




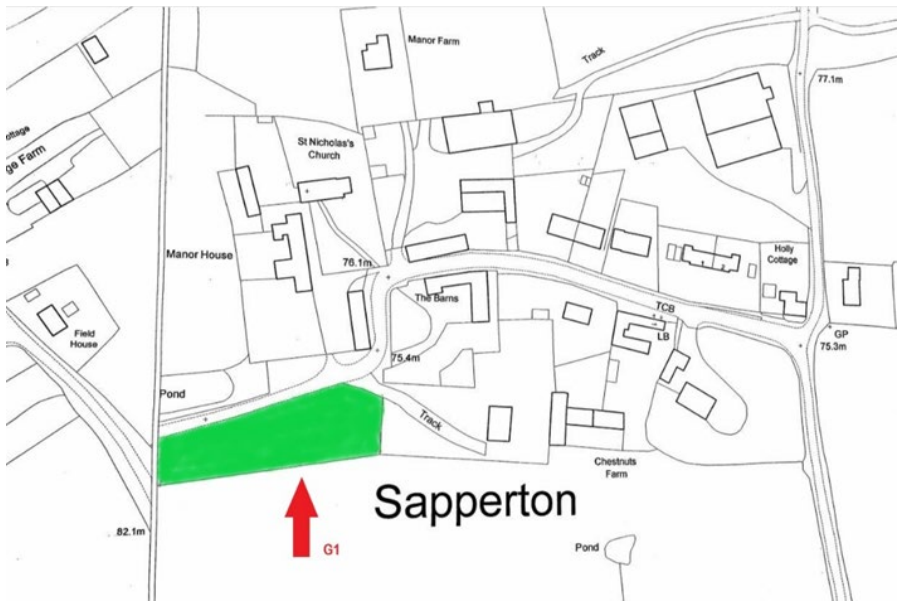
Great Humby	Size in Hectares	Proximity to community	Site Description and Local Significance	Local in Character	Not Extensive
3 (G2) Great Humby Church Green	0.21 Ha	Direct Proximity (in the centre of the village)	Church Green is laid to grass with a well-kept clean pond housing varied wildlife including moorhens, newts, frogs and toads. Trees including, weeping willow, copper beech, horse chestnut and sycamore. A focal point for worshippers who gather there after services, and a resting place for walkers taking advantage of the bench.	Yes	Yes



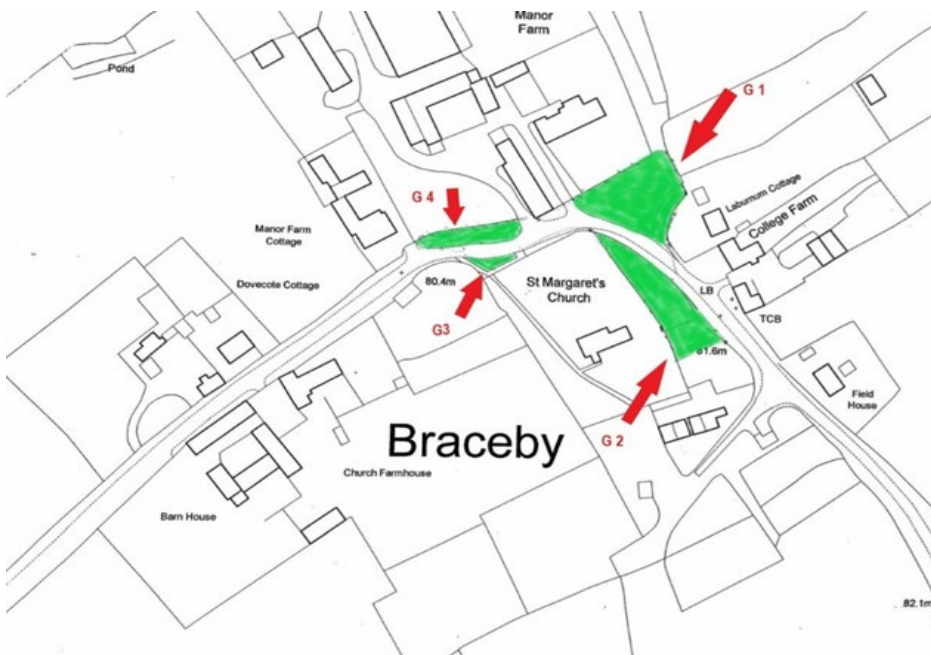
Little Humby	Size in Hectares	Proximity to community	Site Description and Local Significance	Local in Character	Not Extensive
4 (G1 & G2)- Village Green, Little Humby	0.21 Ha	Direct Proximity (in the centre of the village in two parts)	Village Green; grass with lime, cherry, ash trees and a historic pinfold. In the NE corner is a red phone box (defibrillator) and letter box. Used for quieter village recreation: walking, play by children, village events with a bench for peaceful contemplation.	Yes	Yes



Sapperton	Size in Hectares	Proximity to community	Site Description and Local Significance	Local in Character	Not Extensive
5 (G1) - Sapperton Green, at the village entrance from road leading to Ropsley	0.641	At the entrance to the village. accessible to all residents, only a 2 minute walk from even the furthest resident.	Green space marking an entrance to the village, with semi mature trees. This is the only green space the Sapperton community have. It overlooks a beautiful grade II listed manor house to the north and glorious views back across the Ropsley parish to the west which are highly valued locally. The community have planted fruit trees on the green and share in keeping it mown and tidy. It is used for quite picnics and contemplation by residents and passers-by.	Yes	Yes



Braceby	Size in Hectares	Proximity to community	Site Description and Local Significance	Local in Character	Not Extensive
6 – Braceby, 4 linked areas in the village centre, comprising: 0.22Ha. The main green 0.14Ha. Church green 0.13Ha. Smaller green 0.15Ha. Side Green	0.64Ha.	In the centre of the village	<i>These linked sites cluster around the centre of the village next to St. Margaret's Church divided by a quiet main road in a conservation village. Listed buildings front onto them and they in turn provide the setting against a very beautiful village street scene. Local residents care for the greens and they are an important part of the village's local identity and character. They make an important contribution to the physical form and layout of the settlement.</i>	Yes	Yes



## **R&D 12 - Countryside management**

***Development in the open countryside, related to agriculture, forestry, equine, recreation, tourism and other rural land uses, will be supported provided that it does not cause demonstrable harm to:***

- a) the landscape character and quality of the Kesteven Uplands;***
- b) sites of ecological value;***
- c) heritage assets and other sites of archaeological interest; or***
- d) the intrinsic character, beauty and tranquillity of the countryside.***

***In addition considering location, scale and design particular attention will be paid to:***

- e) access arrangements to ensure that the rural quality and character of lanes and byroads (including verges), and;***
- f) lighting, such that the “Dark Skies” quality of the Parish is not diminished, and;***
- g) boundary treatments to avoid the over-urbanisation of the countryside.***

### **Explanation**

The Local Plan Policies SP 4 and SP 5 enable proposals for housing in the countryside, including exceptional circumstances, to be considered but this policy address other forms of development. The community consultation revealed how rural attributes such as peace and quiet, the quality of the surrounding landscape and biodiversity protected from insensitive and inappropriate development. This policy builds on the wider planning context provided by Local Plan and applies it at the Neighbourhood Plan. Any proposal for development is expected to safeguard the landscape character, protect areas of wildlife interest, and the historic environment of the surrounding open countryside.

## **R&D 13 - Nature conservation and biodiversity**

***Proposals impacting on biodiversity will be required to demonstrate how any potential impact on local wildlife sites, habitats and species networks has been taken into account. This will require appropriate measures being put into place to protect wildlife and habitats and enhance biodiversity and to avoid fragmentation. This covers, woodland, trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses, unimproved/semi-improved grassland.***

***If development is permitted, any consequent loss of biodiversity must be minimised and mitigated by the creation of new habitats or the enhancement of existing ones.***

***Development that would result in the loss or damage to protected trees and hedgerows will be resisted unless a scheme for the replacement of trees is agreed.***

***Projects to enhance wildlife habitats and species in accordance with the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Natural Environment Strategy will be supported.***

***Tree planting and hedgerow creation aimed at providing a network of wildlife corridors across the Parish will be supported.***

## **Explanation**

The NPPF states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. In addition, it states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

Many hedgerows have been removed in the past to enlarge field sizes and create more extensive agricultural land. The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 now protects most countryside hedgerows from being removed, but within and around the settlements there are a number of mature trees, the protection of which is important. A number of these have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in force. Whilst the purpose of the TPO is to safeguard the trees, their retention also protects the village character. The policy aims to prevent, where possible, development that would result in loss of or damage to significant trees or hedgerows. Such features are a vital element in the character of the village and its surrounding countryside.



## Community Facilities, Business and Telecommunications Policies



## **R&D 14 - Community facilities & local services**

***Community facilities in the Parish will be protected. Where planning consent is required, the loss of such facilities will be resisted unless:***

- (a) alternative provision, with explicit community support, of equivalent or better quality will be provided and prior to the commencement of development; or***
- (b) it is evident that there is no reasonable prospect of the facility being retained; or***
- (c) it is evident that the service or facility is no longer economically viable\*; or***
- (d) there is little evidence of local use of that service or facility.***

***\*Applicants must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell and let the site or premises for its existing use(s) or another community use at a realistic price for, at least, a 12-month period.***

***This policy covers the facilities listed below:***

***Ropsley Village Hall***

***The Green Man Public House on High Street Ropsley***

***The Churches in Ropsley, Braceby, Sapperton and Great Humby***

***Ropsley Garage on Chapel Hill***

***Ropsley C of E Primary School***

***The improvement and extension of these buildings, and the creation of new facilities, will be supported, subject to compliance with other Neighbourhood Plan policies.***

***Where a loss (e.g. of the last public house) is promoted on market-based grounds, the Parish Council will consider seeking Asset of Community Value designation.***

### **Explanation**

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs the NPPF (Para. 83d) states that planning policies and decisions should enable: *“the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”* In criterion (a) explicit community support would include the views of the parish councils and users of the facility in question. Applicants may also wish to undertake consultation with the local community to demonstrate support for a proposal.

The Local Plan also states that local facilities are important to the sustainability of villages and that proposals that would result in the loss of existing facilities will be resisted. Whilst not acting as service centres, it adds that the small villages also have services and facilities that also need to be protected. There is scope for new provision as part of larger housing developments, but because new development is restricted to no more than 3 dwellings in smaller villages, this will not apply to Ropsley. This, locally focused, Neighbourhood Plan policy complements the protective approach of the Local Plan.

There is a strong sense of community within Ropsley District, but the Village Hall has become run down and does not entirely fulfil the needs of the Parish. Permission has been granted, and funding secured for a new Village Hall. The playing field is well used and will be enhanced when the new Hall has been completed.

Reflecting suggestions from the community consultation there is a Community Aspiration later in this plan supporting the provision of a new, possibly community run, village shop.

## **R&D 15 - Local businesses and employment**

**A) Proposals for the development of new small business units, the expansion or diversification of existing small units and tourism related development will be supported, providing that:**

**(a) it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact resulting from increased traffic, noise, smell, lighting, vibration or other emissions or activities generated by the proposed development;**

**(b) it would not have an unacceptable impact on the character and scale of the site and/or buildings, by virtue of its scale or design, or on the local landscape including Key Views;**

**(c) where relevant, opportunities are taken to secure the re-use of vacant or redundant historic buildings (designated and non-designated) and,**

**(d) Traffic generated by the proposal , including deliveries by HGVs and larger farm vehicles, will not reduce the visual and nature conservation value of the rural lanes identified in Policy MNP 6.**

**B) Home working, where there is a need for planning permission for buildings or activities will be supported where there is no unacceptably adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or on the character of the local area.**

### **Explanation**

The Government supports rural economic development and the NPPF states (Ch. 6 Para. 80) that *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.”* Paras. 83 and 84 specifically concern the rural economy and the latter notes that; *“ Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads.”*

The Parish Council agrees that local employment is an important element of overall sustainability and considers that the Neighbourhood Plan needs to accommodate appropriate proposals for business. The conversion of former agricultural buildings has enabled farm diversification, led to the sustainable re-use of vacant buildings and provided opportunities for the establishment of small businesses which provide employment opportunities for local people. The Parish Council supports business development to maintain Ropsley and District as a vibrant and balanced community. In line with the NPPF, this must be subject to the consideration of residential amenity for nearby houses, visual impact on the countryside and highway safety issues, however the principle in Para. 109 of that *“..development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety..”* is acknowledged.

The second part of the policy recognises the economic environment and social benefits of home working, which also contributes to the overall sustainability of communities. However, it is also recognised that home working should not lead to the erosion of the character of an area lead to an unacceptable erosion of residential amenity.

## **R&D 16 - Telecommunications and broadband**

***Proposals for development that improve electronic communications such as superfast broadband and the mobile phone network will be supported providing any adverse impact on the environment can be adequately mitigated and other Neighbourhood Plan policies on heritage, archaeology open spaces and key views are satisfied.***

### **Explanation**

The Government recognises that reliable broadband internet access is essential for homes throughout the country if they are to benefit from online services. The NPPF states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Superfast broadband access enables people to work from home and thus reduces the need to travel. Some businesses are run from peoples' homes and it is an essential requirement for education purposes. Superfast broadband also enables people in the village, especially the disabled, to access services and facilities that would not otherwise be available.

However, the community consultation revealed that current provision is inadequate in the parish. In terms of service improvements, respondents most wanted to see better internet, broadband mobile phone provision.

## Transport, Active Travel and Countryside Access Policies





### **R&D 17 - Transport and active travel**

***Proposals that would generate a significant amount of movement or affect a known traffic hazard should be supported by measures to maintain highway safety and avoid vehicular/pedestrian conflict. Proposals should be supported by a Transport Assessment/Statement (as appropriate) including measures to address the traffic impacts of the scheme.***

#### **Explanation**

It is acknowledged that transport is the responsibility of the highway authority (Lincolnshire County Council), working with South Kesteven District Council, and that the policy context is provided mainly in the Local Plan and the Local Transport Plan. However, there are local issues which is it correct to address in this Neighbourhood Plan and externally focused elements of this policy highlight the need for a partnership approach. In addition, it is hoped to support an increase in safe cycling, which will help promote the social health and well-being of the community.

The Parish Council will work with the County and District Councils to ensure that the transport needs and traffic issues present in Ropsley and District are considered as part of the large-scale development proposals in Grantham and it will also investigate opportunities for improving provision for cycling in the villages, into surrounding countryside and further afield, to provide links to Grantham. It is recognised that the implementation of the policy will require cross boundary working on funding using Section 106 Agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy and the Local Transport Plan.

### **R&D 18 - Countryside access and rights of way**

***A proposal for development will be supported if it improves or extends the existing network of public footpaths and bridleways in and around the village, especially where it allows greater access to services and facilities or the surrounding open countryside.***

***Development that would result in the loss of existing footpaths and bridleways or create obstacles to the use of these routes by walkers and riders will not be supported.***

***The footpaths and bridleways may be seen on the OS base for the Proposals Map or, in more detail on the County Council definitive Rights of Way Map.***

#### **Explanation**

The NPPF states that opportunities to promote walking should be identified and pursued. It adds that planning policies should provide for high quality networks. The public rights of way network in and around the villages is extensive, and there is a local warden, who ensures that they are kept clear and easy to access. The paths are well marked. It is also acknowledged that the quiet lanes and grass verges provide opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding.

## 10. Community Aspirations



Throughout the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan some issues have been raised through consultation that do not specifically relate to land use or development. To meet the statutory requirement such issues cannot be considered through formal planning policies in a Neighbourhood Plan. In this section those other important aspirations which, although they are not formal planning policies, are linked to development. They are local aspirations and do not constitute or suggest agreement with South Kesteven District Council or other bodies to fund or act on them, but the Parish Council will consider ways of the fulfilling them in manner as part of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### *Community Aspiration 1: Community Assets and Shopping Facilities*

*To complement the protection offered by Policy R&D 14 in this NP and relevant policies in the SKDC Local Plan, the Parish Council will work with others to maintain existing facilities and explore community based options to improve provision, especially a community shop.*

#### Explanation

The local community values the (very limited) facilities available in the village and appreciates that reasonable proximity Grantham offers choices for higher level facilities. The Parish Council intends, therefore, to consider requesting designation of buildings as Assets of Community Value and to look at opportunities to secure investment/funding for alternative means of provision including links with existing business and facilities and farms.

### *Community Aspiration 2: A Local Resources and Services Guide*

*To complement the protection offered by Policy R&D 14 in this Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies in the Local Plan, the Parish Council will seek to produce a local services directory covering the wider area.*

#### Explanation

It is acknowledged that only a limited range of services and facilities can be maintained in the Parish and that most needs can be met in the wider rural area and in Grantham. To maximise awareness and use of facilities, the Parish Council (seeking partnership with adjoining parishes), will produce a Local Resources and Services Guide in hard copy and electronic form. The intention is to help maintain a good quality of life for local residents and contribute to the sustainability of rural life.

### *Community Aspiration 3: Encouraging Volunteering*

*To complement the protection offered by Policies in this Plan and support its' implementation, the parish council will work with others (including the County and District Councils and voluntary organisations) to organise and encourage local volunteering.*

#### Explanation

The community consultation has shown that residents value the environment but that they feel there is too much litter and dog fouling. Working primarily through education (e.g. take it home), backed up by bin provision and cleaning as secondary measures, the Parish Council will seek to address this concern. The Parish Council will also encourage volunteering on positive projects, for example, tree planting, wildlife sites and local heritage.

### *Community Aspiration 4 - Local history and heritage*

*Ropsley and District Parish council will work with the District and County Councils to interpret, enhance and increase the appreciation of the five villages, heritage assets (designated and non-designated), archaeology and social history.*

## Explanation

There is a strong feeling amongst local people, backed up by evidence from reports and surveys, that the Parish with its five villages, has a distinct character and identity. Archaeology, local history, the landscape and the built environment contribute to this character and are much appreciated by residents. In particular, it is intended to develop a local heritage trail for local residents and for visitors.

Using the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base as a platform, this Community Aspiration is intended to add value to the formal policies in this Plan which aim to protect these assets, drawing on local community interest and seeking funding for activities from various sources, including the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### *Community Aspiration 5 - Tree & hedge planting and habitat creation*

*The Parish Council intends that woodland cover should be increased, and nature conservation sites/habitats created and enhanced through:*

*(a) Working with farmers, other landowners to encourage tree planting and hedgerow creation/management through the take up of government environmental stewardship schemes and other locally based support, including the Woodland Trust;*

*(b) Working with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, County and District Councils and landowners to increase landscape and habitat connectivity in and beyond the Parish. There will be a continuing focus on road verges, using the Wildlife Trust "Life on the Verge" project, to seek further designation of roadside nature reserves and enhanced management for all of them.*

## Explanation

Tree planting can be a very valuable element, recognised nationally, in maintaining and improving the landscape quality of the Parish and addressing climate change. In the community survey, the benefits of access to adjoining countryside emerged as one of the main aspects that people like about living in Ropsley. This is a proactive partnership-based approach and it is intended to use the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan to secure engagement from the bodies listed. The policy will complement others in the plan aimed at protecting and enhancing the quality of rural lanes, footpaths, cycle routes and Local Green Spaces.

## **11. Monitoring, Review and Implementation**

The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by the Local Planning Authority and the Parish Council once it has been adopted. The policies in this plan will be implemented by South Kesteven District Council as part of their development management process. Ropsley and District Parish Council will also be actively involved, e.g., as part of the pre-application process and in using Neighbourhood Plan to frame representations on planning applications. This Plan provides a 'direction of travel' through its Vision, Objectives, Policies and Community Aspirations. Flexibility may be needed as new challenges and opportunities and it is intended to review the plan periodically (e.g. every 5 years) in line with the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017), based on several strands of activity (see below) which will be considered in periodic monitoring reports.

- a) Private sector investment in the village. Securing the right type and nature of investment through adaptations and new development will be crucial; and
- b) The statutory planning process, in particular, how the Plan is used to determine local planning applications;
- c) The state of public services (and community assets), together with other measures to support local services for the vitality and viability of the five settlements.

The views of the District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, will be sought on these matters. Monitoring reports might conclude that a partial or comprehensive review of the Neighbourhood Plan is necessary at any time and accordingly trigger that process. In any event, and as acknowledged, the Parish Council will need to return to the plan and its replacement after five years, or so.

In addition, the progress on achieving the Community Aspirations, including partnership, project work and funding will be considered.

### **Funding Mechanisms**

Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought from developers, through either S106 Agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence budget decisions by the District Council and the County Council, including on transport. The Parish Council will also work with other agencies and organisations to develop funding bids to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan aspirations, including; the Lottery, UK Government programmes, EU Funds and LEP programmes.

### **Local Priority Projects**

The list of infrastructure projects below reflects local priorities. This should inform the spending of the Neighbourhood portion of CIL, negotiation of Section 106 agreements and priorities attached to relevant spending programmes and external funding bids.

- Local heritage and social history;
- Countryside management and access to the countryside;
- A Community Shop.

Consideration will also be given to projects from other plans, strategies and projects prepared by the Parish Council or other partners which relate to local aspirations.