

Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2036

**A report to West Lindsey District Council on the
Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan**

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Executive Summary

- 1 I was appointed by West Lindsey District Council in March 2020 to carry out the independent examination of the Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2 The examination was undertaken by written representations. I visited the neighbourhood plan area on 22 March 2020.
- 3 The Plan proposes a series of policies and seeks to bring forward positive and sustainable development in the plan area. It proposes five residential allocations and the designation of three local green spaces. The key success of the Plan is its very sharp focus on a set of bespoke policies.
- 4 The Plan has been underpinned by community support and engagement. The community has been engaged in its preparation in a proportionate way.
- 5 Subject to a series of recommended modifications set out in this report I have concluded that the Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum.
- 6 I recommend that the referendum should be held within the neighbourhood area.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
11 May 2020

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the independent examination of the Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2036 ('the Plan').
- 1.2 The Plan has been submitted to West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) by Scotton Parish Council in its capacity as the qualifying body responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans were introduced into the planning process by the Localism Act 2011. They aim to allow local communities to take responsibility for guiding development in their area. This approach was subsequently embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 and 2018. The NPPF continues to be the principal element of national planning policy.
- 1.4 The role of an independent examiner is clearly defined in the legislation. I have been appointed to examine whether or not the submitted Plan meets the basic conditions and Convention Rights and other statutory requirements. It is not within my remit to examine or to propose an alternative plan, or a potentially more sustainable plan except where this arises as a result of my recommended modifications to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions and the other relevant requirements.
- 1.5 A neighbourhood plan can be narrow or broad in scope. Any plan can include whatever range of policies it sees as appropriate to its designated neighbourhood area. The submitted plan has been designed to be distinctive in general terms, and to be complementary to the development plan in particular. It addresses a range of environmental and community issues and proposes five housing allocations.
- 1.6 Within the context set out above this report assesses whether the Plan is legally compliant and meets the basic conditions that apply to neighbourhood plans. It also considers the content of the Plan and, where necessary, recommends changes to its policies and supporting text.
- 1.7 This report also provides a recommendation as to whether the Plan should proceed to referendum. If this is the case and that referendum results in a positive outcome the Plan would then be used to determine planning applications within the neighbourhood area and will sit as part of the wider development plan.

2 The Role of the Independent Examiner

- 2.1 The examiner's role is to ensure that any submitted neighbourhood plan meets the relevant legislative and procedural requirements.
- 2.2 I was appointed by WLDC, with the consent of the Parish Council, to conduct the examination of the Plan and to prepare this report. I am independent of both WLDC and the Parish Council. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan.
- 2.3 I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role. I am a Director of Andrew Ashcroft Planning Limited. In previous roles, I have over 35 years' experience in various local authorities at either Head of Planning or Service Director level. I am a chartered town planner and have significant experience of undertaking other neighbourhood plan examinations and health checks. I am a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service.

Examination Outcomes

- 2.4 In my role as the independent examiner of the Plan I am required to recommend one of the following outcomes of the examination:
- (a) that the Plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (b) that the Plan should proceed to referendum as modified (based on my recommendations); or
 - (c) that the Plan does not proceed to referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 2.5 The outcome of the examination is set out in Sections 7 and 8 of this report.

Other examination matters

- 2.6 In examining the Plan I am required to check whether:
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area; and
 - the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provision about development that is excluded development, and must not relate to more than one neighbourhood area); and
 - the Plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under Section 61G of the Localism Act and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.
- 2.7 I have addressed the matters identified in paragraph 2.6 of this report. I am satisfied that the submitted Plan complies with the three requirements.

3 Procedural Matters

3.1 In undertaking this examination I have considered the following documents:

- the submitted Plan.
- the Character Profile Report
- the Basic Conditions Statement.
- the Consultation Statement.
- the Green Space Assessment.
- the various documents relating to specific consultation/engagement events;
- the SEA/HRA screening report.
- the representations made to the Plan.
- the Parish Council's responses to my Clarification Note.
- the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2012 to 2036.
- the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014 and subsequent updates).
- relevant Ministerial Statements.

3.2 I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the Plan area on 22 March 2020. I looked at its overall character and appearance and at those areas affected by policies in the Plan in particular. My visit is covered in more detail in paragraphs 5.9 to 5.16 of this report.

3.3 It is a general rule that neighbourhood development plan examinations should be held by written representations only. Having considered all the information before me, including the representations made to the submitted plan, I was satisfied that the Plan could be examined without the need for a public hearing. I advised WLDC of this decision once I had received the responses to the clarification note.

4 Consultation

Consultation Process

- 4.1 Policies in made neighbourhood plans become the basis for local planning and development management decisions. As such the regulations require neighbourhood plans to be supported and underpinned by public consultation.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 the Parish Council has prepared a Consultation Statement. The Statement reflects the Plan area and its policies. It also provides specific details on the consultation process that took place on the pre-submission version of the Plan from February to April 2019.
- 4.3 The Statement sets out details of the consultation events that were carried out in relation to the initial stages of the Plan. Details are provided about the engagement with the statutory bodies and the public consultation events in the area. Specific events highlighted include:
- initial consultation on issues and themes (March 2017);
 - production/distribution of community survey (June/July 2017);
 - the call for land consultation (Jan/March 2018);
 - consultation on site allocations (November 2018); and
 - the meeting with landowners (December 2018).
- 4.4 The Statement also sets out details of the responses received to the consultation process on the pre-submission version of the Plan (Table 2 of the Statement). It also sets out how the Plan responded to those representations. The exercise has been undertaken in a very thorough and proportionate fashion.
- 4.6 From all the evidence provided to me as part of the examination, I conclude that the Plan has sought to develop an inclusive approach to seeking the opinions of all concerned throughout the process. WLDC has carried out its own assessment of this matter as part of the submission process and has concluded the consultation process has complied with the requirements of the Regulations.

Representations Received

- 4.7 Consultation on the submitted plan was undertaken by the District Council for an eight-week period that ended on 22 January 2020. This exercise generated comments from a range of statutory and local organisations. They are listed below:
- Environment Agency
 - Forestry Commission
 - Health and Safety Executive
 - Historic England
 - Lincolnshire County Council

- Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service
- National Grid
- Natural England
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Sport England
- Kirton-in-Lindsey Town Council
- Severn Trent
- Robert Littlewood
- Anglian Water Services
- Richard Connole
- Justine Connole
- West Lindsey District Council

4.8 I have taken account of all these representations as part of the examination of the Plan. Where it is appropriate and relevant to do so I refer specifically to the representation concerned in this report.

4.9 In most cases the various bodies raise no comments or objections on the submitted Plan. This reflects the collaborative way in which the Plan has been produced in general, and the positive way in which it has incorporated the earlier comments from these and other bodies in particular.

5 The Neighbourhood Area and the Development Plan Context

The Neighbourhood Area

- 5.1 The neighbourhood area is the parish of Scotton. In 2011 it had a population of 642 persons living in 249 households. It was designated as a neighbourhood area on 13 February 2017.
- 5.2 The neighbourhood area sits in open countryside to the east of the A159 approximately 10 km to the north east of Gainsborough. It is largely rectangular in shape with the A159 as its western boundary. In a broader context the neighbourhood area is located to the west of the Lincoln Cliff from which it is separated by the valley of the River Eau. Scotton is the principal settlement in the neighbourhood area. There are several residential and other properties along the A159 at Scotton Common to the west of Scotton.
- 5.3 Scotton is heavily influenced by its location in this wider natural landscape. It is a quiet and secluded village. It has a strong nucleated pattern. It also reflects its agricultural context and heritage. The pattern of roads in the village is complex. It includes Eastgate, Westgate and Crapple Lane. There is no obvious main street or through road. This adds to its sense of character and provides an attractive sense of arrival to all concerned. St Genewys Church off Eastgate sits at the heart of the village. It is a prominent and largely unchanged building at the highest point of the village. The village has an attractive mix of houses of different periods. It also has an attractive relationship with the surrounding countryside.

Development Plan Context

- 5.4 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) was adopted in April 2017. It sets out the basis for future development in the central Lincolnshire area up to 2036. The CLLP provides a very clear spatial context for development in the Plan area. Its Policy LP2 provides a focus for development by way of a settlement hierarchy as follows: the Lincoln urban area, the main towns, the market towns, larger villages, medium villages, smaller villages, hamlets and the countryside. Within this hierarchical approach Scotton is identified as a 'Medium Village'.
- 5.5 Policy LP2 also provides a clear context for the development of neighbourhood plan policies. In the context of the settlement hierarchy it identifies that limited development will be supported to support their function and/or sustainability. Policy LP4 identifies that Scotton should accommodate new growth in the Plan period of 10% of the existing number of dwellings.
- 5.6 The CLLP includes a wide range of other policies. The Basic Conditions Statement helpfully captures these against the various policies in the submitted Plan. In summary, the following CLLP policies have been particularly important in underpinning neighbourhood plan policies:

- LP2 The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
- LP4 Growth in Villages
- LP15 Community Facilities
- LP23 Local Green Spaces and other Important Open Space
- LP24 Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities
- LP25 The Historic Environment
- LP26 Design and Amenity
- LP55 Development in the Countryside

- 5.7 A review of the CLLP has now started. Consultation took place on Issues and Options in 2019. A revised Plan is anticipated to be published later this year. Given the very early stage of this Plan review it has not had any direct influence or significance on this examination. Nevertheless, I have referred to the Plan review process in my recommended modifications insofar as they have a bearing on the monitoring and review of any made neighbourhood plan.
- 5.8 It is clear that the submitted Plan has been prepared within the context provided by the Local Plan. In doing so it has relied on up-to-date information and research that has underpinned the Local Plan. This is good practice and reflects key elements in Planning Practice Guidance on this matter.

Unaccompanied Visit to the neighbourhood area

- 5.9 I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the Plan area on 22 March 2020.
- 5.10 I drove into the neighbourhood area from Kirton in Lindsey and the A15 to the east. This highlighted the significance of the Lincoln Cliff in the wider landscape. I saw the way in which the village sat very comfortably within this wider setting.
- 5.11 I looked initially at the overall character and appearance of the village. I saw its various traditional buildings and the attractive way in which more modern development had been incorporated into the historic street pattern. I saw the importance of St Genewys Church in the townscape and the wider topography of the village.
- 5.12 I took the opportunity to look in detail at the proposed local green spaces. I saw that they were very distinctive and individual in their character and appearance. In particular I saw the impressive recreation ground to the south of the Church.
- 5.13 I paid particular attention to the proposed housing allocations (Policies 1-5) as part of the visit. I saw their characteristics and the size and location of the various sites. As appropriate to their locations within the wider context of the village I looked at their relationship with adjacent buildings and the wider countryside surrounding the village.
- 5.14 Throughout my visit I looked at the various community facilities. They are clearly serving the purpose anticipated by the relevant policy in the Plan. Their availability reinforces the sustainability of the village and contributes towards its vitality. I saw the

scale and significance of the Village Hall, and its relationship with the Church to the north and to the recreation ground to the south.

- 5.15 I then walked round the more modern development off Westfield. Whilst its design and articulation were different to other dwellings in the village, I saw how it comfortably and sensitively sat within the wider fabric of the village. I then drove to Scotter Common to the west of the village so that I could see the individual cluster of properties along the A159.
- 5.16 I finished my visit by driving to Scotter to the north, to Northorpe to the south and back to Kirton in Lindsey to the east. This part of the visit emphasised further the importance of the Lincoln Cliff in the wider locality.

6 The Neighbourhood Plan and the Basic Conditions

6.1 This section of the report deals with the submitted neighbourhood plan as a whole and the extent to which it meets the basic conditions. The submitted Basic Conditions Statement has helped considerably in the preparation of this section of the report. It is a well-presented and informative document. It is also proportionate to the Plan itself.

6.2 As part of this process I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To comply with the basic conditions, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area;
- be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations; and
- not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6.3 I assess the Plan against the basic conditions under the following headings:

National Planning Policies and Guidance

6.4 For the purposes of this examination the key elements of national policy relating to planning matters are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in February 2019. This approach is reflected in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

6.5 The NPPF sets out a range of core land-use planning issues to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The following are of particular relevance to the Scotton Parish Neighbourhood Plan:

- a plan led system – in this case the relationship between the neighbourhood plan and Central Lincolnshire Local Plan;
- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- building a strong, competitive economy;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving local communities;
- taking account of the different roles and characters of different areas;
- highlighting the importance of high-quality design and good standards of amenity for all future occupants of land and buildings; and
- conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.6 Neighbourhood plans sit within this wider context both generally, and within the more specific presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 13 of the NPPF

indicates that neighbourhoods should both develop plans that support the strategic needs set out in local plans and plan positively to support local development that is outside the strategic elements of the development plan.

- 6.7 In addition to the NPPF I have also taken account of other elements of national planning policy including Planning Practice Guidance and ministerial statements.
- 6.8 Having considered all the evidence and representations available as part of the examination I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to national planning policies and guidance in general terms. It sets out a positive vision for the future of the neighbourhood area. In particular it includes five housing allocations and proposes the designation of three local green spaces. The Basic Conditions Statement maps the policies in the Plan against the appropriate sections of the NPPF.
- 6.9 At a more practical level the NPPF indicates that plans should provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made and that they should give a clear indication of how a decision-maker should react to a development proposal (paragraph 16d). This was reinforced with the publication of Planning Practice Guidance in March 2014. Paragraph ID:41-041-20140306 indicates that policies in neighbourhood plans should be drafted with sufficient clarity so that a decision-maker can apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. Policies should also be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.
- 6.10 As submitted the Plan does not fully accord with this range of practical issues. The majority of my recommended modifications in Section 7 relate to matters of clarity and precision. They are designed to ensure that the Plan fully accords with national policy.

Contributing to sustainable development

- 6.11 There are clear overlaps between national policy and the contribution that the submitted Plan makes to achieving sustainable development. Sustainable development has three principal dimensions – economic, social and environmental. It is clear that the submitted Plan has set out to achieve sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. In the economic dimension the Plan includes policies for specific housing allocations, for general windfall development and for extensions and alterations to existing homes (Policies 1-5, 6 and 7 respectively). In the social role, it includes a policy on local green spaces (Policy 10), on community facilities (Policy 11) and on the provision of a new burial ground (Policy 9). In the environmental dimension the Plan positively seeks to protect its natural, built and historic environment. It has a specific policy on important local detailed features (Policy 12). The Parish Council has undertaken its own assessment of this matter in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan

- 6.12 I have already commented in detail on the development plan context in West Lindsey District in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.8 of this report. I am satisfied that subject to the

incorporation of the modifications recommended in this report that the submitted Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan.

- 6.13 I also consider that the submitted Plan delivers a local dimension to this strategic context. The Basic Conditions Statement helpfully relates the Plan's policies to policies in the development plan. I am satisfied that the submitted Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan.

European Legislation and Habitat Regulations

- 6.14 The Neighbourhood Plan General Regulations 2015 require a qualifying body either to submit an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 or a statement of reasons why an environmental report is not required.

- 6.15 In order to comply with this requirement WLDC undertook a screening exercise on the need or otherwise for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be prepared for the Plan. The report is thorough and well-constructed. As a result of this process it concluded that the Plan is not likely to have any significant effects on the environment and accordingly would not require SEA. The screening report reached this conclusion on the following basis:

- no sensitive natural or heritage assets will be significantly affected by policies contained in the Plan;
- the policies are in general conformity with those within the CLLP;
- the Plan does not allocate large (10 or more dwellings) development sites or promote a large amount of development; and
- the Plan does not contravene significant elements of the CLLP.

- 6.16 The screening report includes a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan. It comments that there are no protected sites within 15Km of the neighbourhood area. It concludes that the Plan is not considered to have the potential to cause a likely significant adverse effect on a European protected site. It also concludes that there will be no likely significant in-combination effects.

- 6.17 The screening reports include the responses received as part of the required consultation. In doing so they provide assurance to all concerned that the submitted Plan takes appropriate account of important ecological and biodiversity matters.

- 6.18 Having reviewed the information provided to me as part of the examination, I am satisfied that a proportionate process has been undertaken in accordance with the various regulations. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I am entirely satisfied that the submitted Plan is compatible with this aspect of European obligations.

- 6.19 In a similar fashion I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. There is no evidence that has been submitted to me to suggest otherwise. In addition, there has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the

preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known. On the basis of all the evidence available to me, I conclude that the submitted Plan does not breach, nor is in any way incompatible with the ECHR.

Summary

- 6.20 On the basis of my assessment of the Plan in this section of my report I am satisfied that it meets the basic conditions subject to the incorporation of the recommended modifications contained in this report.

7 The Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 7.1 This section of the report comments on the policies in the Plan. In particular, it makes a series of recommended modifications to ensure that the various policies have the necessary precision to meet the basic conditions.
- 7.2 My recommendations focus on the policies themselves given that the basic conditions relate primarily to this aspect of neighbourhood plans. In some cases, I have also recommended changes to the associated supporting text.
- 7.3 I am satisfied that the content and the form of the Plan is fit for purpose. It is distinctive and proportionate to the Plan area. This is particularly the case in respect of Policies 1-6. The wider community and the Parish Council have spent time and energy in identifying the issues and objectives that they wish to be included in their Plan. This sits at the heart of the localism agenda.
- 7.4 The Plan has been designed to reflect Planning Practice Guidance (Section 41-004-20170728) which indicates that neighbourhood plans must address the development and use of land.
- 7.5 I have addressed the policies in the order that they appear in the submitted plan.
- 7.6 For clarity this section of the report comments on all policies whether or not I have recommended modifications in order to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.
- 7.7 Where modifications are recommended to policies they are highlighted in bold print. Any associated or free-standing changes to the text of the Plan are set out in italic print.

The initial sections of the Plan (Sections 1-6)

- 7.8 These introductory elements of the Plan set the scene for the policies. They are commendable in the way that they are proportionate to the Plan area and its subsequent policies. The Plan is very well-presented. The distinction between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. It is helpfully supported by charts, tables and maps.
- 7.9 Section 1 provides information about the background to the preparation of the Plan. It describes the nature of a neighbourhood plan in general terms, and the circumstances in which a Plan has been prepared for Scotton. It is a particularly effective and concise introduction to a neighbourhood plan. It identifies the neighbourhood area and clearly defines the Plan period.
- 7.10 Section 2 comments about the way in which the Plan has been produced. It overlaps with the Consultation Statement. Paragraph 2.2 is particularly effective in describing the process by which the Plan was prepared and the number of people who attended the various events.
- 7.11 Section 3 sets out details about the neighbourhood area and how they have affected the development of the Plan. It includes commentary about its history together with a Scotton Neighbourhood Plan – Examiner’s Report

variety of geographic and other information about its present circumstances. It is helpfully supported with a series of excellent maps, tables and charts. It is a particularly effective background to a neighbourhood area. Paragraph 3.18 helpfully sets out a table of Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats in Scotton.

- 7.12 Section 4 comments about the social and economic circumstances of the neighbourhood area. Most of the information is helpfully presented in a tabular format.
- 7.13 Section 5 sets out a Vision for the Plan. It properly describes the essence of sustainable development within an attractive village and the wider neighbourhood area. The Vision is underpinned by four carefully-selected objectives.
- 7.14 Section 6 introduces the concept of sustainable development. The Plan addresses this matter in greater detail in the Basic Conditions Statement.
- 7.15 The remainder of this section of the report addresses each policy in turn in the context set out in paragraphs 7.5 to 7.7 above.

General comments on housing delivery

- 7.16 This section of the report addresses the ability or otherwise of the submitted neighbourhood plan to deliver its strategic allocation of new dwellings that arise from the CLLP. It overlaps with the representations made by WLDC. The Plan's approach is two-fold. The first is to allocate five sites for residential development (Policies 1-5). The second is to include a more general policy on windfall development (Policy 6). The latter policy provides general policy guidance on any unallocated sites which may emerge during the Plan period.
- 7.17 The matter is addressed at this point in order to provide an overall consideration of this important issue that arises from the CLLP. Thereafter I will consider each allocation in its own right and within this wider context. In principle the allocation of residential development sites provides a greater degree of certainty for the delivery of new residential development. However, this approach does not guarantee delivery and a range of circumstances may arise in the Plan period to prevent or delay delivery. Clearly over time some of the allocated sites will come forward and others may not.
- 7.18 In the case of the neighbourhood the strategic target is the delivery of 26 dwellings. The Plan provides evidence about the 15 dwellings that have already been developed or are otherwise committed within the CLLP period. The Plan aims to deliver the residual number of dwellings. In total the five allocated sites would deliver 16 new homes in the event that they came through the planning process and delivered their anticipated yields. However, the Plan includes a degree of double-counting given that the proposed allocation of land south of Eastgate (Policy 5 - site 15a) already has planning permission (135056 and subsequent consents). This is shown in Table 11 and is referenced in paragraph 12.1 of the Plan. In these circumstances the effect of the Plan's policies would be to deliver eight new dwellings on four additional sites.

- 7.19 Given all the available evidence I am satisfied that the Parish Council has taken a proportionate approach to this matter. In its response to the clarification note the Parish Council provided clarity on the deliverability and viability of the sites concerned. This information overlaps with the limited amount of comments to the development of the proposed sites in general terms, or the criteria associated with their development in particular. I have made specific comments about the extent to which the site north of Eastgate (Policy 2) meets the basic conditions. Nevertheless, in the round I am satisfied that the submitted Plan will deliver sufficient new dwellings so that it is in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan. Plainly at this stage it is difficult to anticipate the number of homes which may come forward as windfall development. However, the difference between the strategic target and the combined number of dwellings that would arise from commitments and the allocated sites included in the Plan is minimal. In addition, Policy 6 provides a supporting context for windfall development to come forward within the extensive Plan period.
- 7.20 Plainly the situation will need to be monitored and the Plan reviewed where necessary. The delivery of the committed and the allocated sites will be key to this process. In this context I recommend modifications to Section 21 of the Plan which focuses on its monitoring and review. In particular I recommend that this section includes additional information on housing delivery, and the need for corrective action where necessary. I also recommend that the review process is explicitly related to the review of the adopted CLLP.

At the end of paragraph 21.2 add:

'The monitoring and any potential review of a made neighbourhood plan will have a focus on the delivery of the committed and the allocated sites within the neighbourhood area. Where necessary the Plan will be reviewed by the Parish Council to take corrective action in the event that some or all of the sites do not come forward. Within the context of its annual monitoring process the Parish Council will consider the need for a partial or a full review of the Plan within five years of it being made or the adoption of the review of the CLLP (whichever occurs first). Thereafter the need for any subsequent partial or full review of the Plan will be undertaken on a five-year cycle'

Policy 1: The allocation of land at the Three Horseshoes Public House (PH)

- 7.21 This policy proposes the allocation of land at the Three Horseshoes PH for residential purposes. The policy suggests that the site could accommodate up to two dwellings.
- 7.22 I sought clarification from the Parish Council on the extent to which the proposed site area would overlap with the existing uses at the Three Horseshoes PH. It clarified that the developable part of the site is that to the rear (west) of the car park. It also clarified that the PH itself and the existing car park would be unaffected by the proposed development. In this context I recommend that the site is more clearly shown on Map 3 to bring the clarity required by the NPPF and to assist WLDC in determining planning applications which will arise from this policy.

- 7.23 I am satisfied that the proposed residential allocation is consistent with the identification of the public house as a community facility in Policy 11 of the Plan. There is no inherent tension between the two uses. In addition, the development of the properties concerned may assist in its overall viability and/or running costs and allow any necessary investment to take place.
- 7.24 I am also satisfied that the design code principles identified for the development of the site are generally robust and are both appropriate and distinctive to the site. However, I recommend modifications to principles a), b) and c). Principle a) comments that the development should include two- and three-bedroom houses. Nevertheless, as the site will only include two properties this approach is very prescriptive. I recommend that the criterion is modified so that it takes on a general format, and that the preference for two- and three-bedroom houses is captured in the supporting text. Principle b) refers to the height of buildings on the site. This may cause uncertainty given the way in which the site is defined on the revised Map 3. In these circumstances I recommend that the principle refers to the heights of the buildings in 'the immediate locality'.
- 7.25 On principle c) the relationship between the developable site and the existing car park has been clarified by the Parish Council and will be reflected on a revised Map 3. On this basis the design principle is unnecessary and I recommend its deletion.
- 7.26 I also recommend the deletion of principle e) which seeks to ensure that the continued use of the public houses does not cause amenity issues to the occupiers of the new houses. I have reached this conclusion for two related reasons. The first is that there is no inherent tension between the two uses and the Parish Council has considered this issue in allocating the site for residential use. The second is that the eventual grant of planning permission for new development (here the new dwellings) cannot impose restrictions on the use of other facilities.
- 7.27 Finally I recommend a detailed modification to design code g) on residential amenity. It reflects that the test is the unacceptability of any harm rather than the generation of any harm.
- 7.28 The policy is associated with an asterisk in relation to the criterion on small dwellings. The Parish Council advised that this was a typographical error which should be deleted. I recommend accordingly. I also recommend that the error in the relationship between the numbering of the map and the policy is corrected. WLDC suggests that principle d) on building materials sets out a relationship with the details in the Character Areas work. This is already addressed in Policy 12. However, I recommend a modification to the supporting text to highlight this relationship.

In the first part of the policy delete the asterisk and replace 'Map 4' with 'Map 3'

Replace design code principle a) with 'they should be small homes appropriate to the character and the scale of the site'

In design code principle b) replace 'on the site' with 'in the immediate locality'

Delete design code principles c) and e)

In design code principle g) replace ‘detrimental’ with ‘unacceptable’

Revise Map 3 to show the boundary of the developable site to the rear of the car park.

At the end of paragraph 8.2 add: ‘Policy 1 sets out a policy context to shape the eventual development of the site. Map 3 identifies the developable area and its relationship with the Three Horseshoes Public House. The first design principle comments about the delivery of small homes appropriate to the character and the scale of the site. This will be a matter for the development management process. However, the Parish Council anticipates that the houses will have either two or three bedrooms. The fourth design principle relates to building materials. Designs should take account of the details in the Character Areas appraisal and Policy 12 of this Plan. There are several features identified in the Westgate area which could be applied to the development of this site’

Policy 2: The allocation of land north of Eastgate

- 7.29 This policy proposes the allocation of land to the north of Eastgate for residential purposes. The site is currently a residential garden. The wider residential curtilage has a separate access to Eastgate. The Plan comments that it could accommodate a single dwelling. Paragraph 9.2 comments that if it is sensitively developed and kept at one dwelling the site can avoid harm to the heritage assets in the immediate locality.
- 7.30 I looked at the site carefully when I visited Scotton. The position of the existing dwelling on the site would provide an opportunity for the development of an additional house either to its rear or fronting onto the roadside. In either scenario the space available would be limited. Acacia Cottage is located to the immediate south-west of the proposed site. It is an attractive Grade II listed building. WLDC comment about the sensitivity of the site in general, and its proximity to Acacia Cottage in particular. It concludes that the development of a new house to either the rear or to the side of the existing dwelling would be unacceptable.
- 7.31 I have taken account of all the evidence available to me as part of the examination of the Plan. In my judgement its identification as a housing allocation does not meet the basic conditions. Whilst the Plan comments that the site could be developed sensitively to safeguard the integrity of heritage assets in the immediate vicinity the policy offers no evidence directly to support this assertion. In addition, the Design Code Principles in the policy simply comment that harm should not arise without offering any guidance to a developer about how this could be achieved and any assurance to the wider community that adequate measures were in place to secure an appropriate form of development. In these circumstances I recommend the deletion of both the policy and the supporting text.
- 7.32 I appreciate that this will be a disappointment to the Parish Council. However, this recommended modification does not necessarily mean that an acceptable development could not come forward on this site as a result of a planning application which relied on the general approach on Policy 6 of the Plan. Plainly it would need to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposal had regard to national

and local planning policies in respect of proposals which had an impact on heritage assets. In this context any such planning application would need to reference such policies and demonstrate the way in which the proposal concerned addressed them in a satisfactory fashion. I am also satisfied that the deletion of this particular site (and its associated single dwelling) would not otherwise affect the ability of the Plan to be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan or to deliver the strategic growth required for the parish in particular. This overlaps with my earlier observations and findings in paragraph 7.19 of this report.

Delete the policy

Delete paragraphs 9.1-9.3

Policy 3: The allocation of land off Westgate (Site 9)

- 7.33 This policy proposes the allocation of land off Westgate for residential purposes. It is currently part of the existing curtilage of a house on the wider site. The site is on the corner of Westgate and Middle Street. It has existing vehicular access to the existing residential property on the site off Middle Street.
- 7.34 The site is an infill plot within the existing village. Subject to design issues it could be developed for residential purposes in an attractive fashion. It has achieved a high level of community support as part of the plan-making exercise. In this context I recommend that the developable part of the site is more clearly shown on Map 3 to bring the clarity required by the NPPF and to assist WLDC in determining planning applications which will arise from this policy.
- 7.35 The policy takes an appropriate approach towards the development of this site. It includes a range of environmental, design and parking related design code principles. I recommend a detailed modification to design code d) on residential amenity. It reflects that the test is the unacceptability of any harm rather than the generation of any harm
- 7.36 The policy is associated with an asterisk in relation to the criterion on small dwellings. The Parish Council advised that this was a typographical error which should be deleted. I recommend accordingly. I also recommend that the error in the relationship between the numbering of the map and the policy is corrected. WLDC suggests that principle d) on building materials sets out a relationship with the details in the Character Areas work. This is already addressed in Policy 12. However, I recommend a modification to the supporting text to highlight this relationship.

In the first part of the policy delete the asterisk and replace ‘Map 4’ with ‘Map 3’

In Design Code d) replace ‘detrimental’ with ‘unacceptable’

At the end of paragraph 10.1 add: ‘Policy 3 sets out a policy context to shape the eventual development of the site. The fourth design principle relates to building materials. Designs should take account of the details in the Character Areas appraisal

and Policy 12 of this Plan. There are several features identified in the Westgate area which could be applied to the development of this site'

Revise Map 3 to show the boundary of the developable site.

Policy 4: The allocation of land off Westgate (Site 13)

- 7.37 This policy proposes the allocation of land off Westgate for residential purposes. It is a greenfield site to the rear (west) of the existing properties off Westgate. The site is part of a larger extent of land to the west of Westgate. The proposed allocation has been restricted in scale to take account of access and surface water issues.
- 7.38 On balance I am satisfied that its allocation meets the basic conditions. Both the wider parcel of land and the proposed allocated site have a closer relationship to the village than to the surrounding countryside. In addition, the eventual development of the site would reflect the distinctive layout and arrangement of buildings within the built-up part of the village.
- 7.39 The policy takes an appropriate approach towards the development of this site. It includes a range of environmental, design and parking related design code principles. I recommend a detailed modification to design code e) on residential amenity. It reflects that the test is the unacceptability of any harm rather than the generation of any harm. I also recommend modifications to Principle c) which refers to the height of buildings on the site. This may cause uncertainty given the way in which the site relates to existing dwellings to the east. In these circumstances I recommend that the principle refers to the heights of the buildings in 'the immediate locality'.
- 7.40 The development of the site will result in a new element of the western boundary of the village with the countryside. This matter is partly reflected in design code principle d). I recommend modifications to this principle so that it requires the incorporation of a sensitive western boundary. WLDC suggests that principle d) on building materials sets out a relationship with the details in the Character Areas work. This is already addressed in Policy 12. However, I recommend a modification to the supporting text to highlight this relationship.
- 7.41 The policy is associated with an asterisk in relation to the criterion on small dwellings. The Parish Council advised that this was a typographical error which should be deleted. I recommend accordingly. I also recommend that the error in the relationship between the numbering of the map and the policy is corrected.

In the first part of the policy delete the asterisk and replace 'Map 4' with 'Map 3'

In design code principle c) replace 'on the site' with 'in the immediate locality'

In design code d) replace 'any boundary...provide a' with 'a boundary treatment should be provided to the western boundary of the site. It should reflect the relationship between the village and its surrounding countryside and incorporate'

In Design Code e) replace ‘detrimental’ with ‘unacceptable’

At the end of paragraph 11.1 add: ‘Policy 4 sets out a policy context to shape the eventual development of the site. The fourth design principle relates to boundary treatments. Designs should take account of the details in the Character Areas appraisal and Policy 12 of this Plan. There are several boundary features identified in the Westgate area which could be applied to the development of this site’

Policy 5: The allocation of land south of Eastgate

- 7.42 This policy proposes the allocation of land south of Eastgate for residential purposes. It is the northern part of a wider site (15a) which was promoted in the earlier stages of the plan making process. It already has planning permission.
- 7.43 Historic England comments that the proposed development would affect the significance of two heritage assets – St Genewys Church (Grade I) and Acacia Cottage (Grade II). It contends that in the absence of a proper assessment of the impact of the development on these assets the allocation does not have regard to national policy in general, and paragraph 185 of the NPPF in particular.
- 7.44 I have considered these comments very carefully both in general, and in the context of my own observations of the proposed development site. Plainly the site is sensitive given its location on the edge of the village. In particular the wider context and setting of the Church is an important consideration. This reflects both its listed status and its largely unaltered format and appearance. Nevertheless, planning permission already exists for a degree of development on this site and it is not the role of a neighbourhood plan to detract from the deliverability of such proposals. Indeed, in this case the Parish Council has actively embraced the site within its overall assessment and analysis of the extent to which the Parish can deliver its strategic housing allocation.
- 7.45 The policy takes an appropriate approach towards the development of this site. It includes a range of environmental, design and parking related design code principles. I recommend a detailed modification to design code g) on residential amenity. It reflects that the test is the unacceptability of any harm rather than the generation of any harm. I also recommend modifications to Principle b) which refers to the height of buildings on the site. This may cause uncertainty given the way in which the site relates to the existing dwellings in this part of the village. In these circumstances I recommend that the principle refers to the heights of the buildings in ‘the immediate locality’.
- 7.46 The development of the site will result in a new element of the south eastern boundary of the village with the countryside. This matter is partly reflected in design code principle f). I recommend modifications to this principle so that it requires the incorporation of a sensitive boundary.
- 7.47 The policy is associated with an asterisk in relation to the criterion on small dwellings. The Parish Council advised that this was a typographical error which should be deleted. I recommend accordingly. WLDC suggests that principle d) on building

materials sets out a relationship with the details in the Character Areas work. This is already addressed in Policy 12. However, I recommend a modification to the supporting text to highlight this relationship. I also recommend that the error in the relationship between the numbering of the map and the policy is corrected.

In the first part of the policy delete the asterisk and replace ‘Map 4’ with ‘Map 3’

In design code principle b) replace ‘on the site’ with ‘in the immediate locality’

In design code f) replace ‘any boundary...provide a’ with ‘a boundary treatment should be provided to the south eastern boundary of the site. It should reflect the relationship between the village and its surrounding countryside and incorporate’

In Design Code g) replace ‘detrimental’ with ‘unacceptable’

At the end of paragraph 12.2 add: ‘Policy 5 sets out a policy context to shape the eventual development of the site. The fourth design principle relates to building materials. Designs should take account of the details in the Character Areas appraisal and Policy 12 of this Plan. There are several features identified in the Eastgate area which could be applied to the development of this site’

Policy 6: Windfall Residential Development

7.48 This policy addresses windfall development. It has three related parts as follows:

- windfall development in Scotton and Scotton Common;
- development elsewhere; and
- the need for development to be associated community support.

7.49 The first part of the policy comments about the potential for windfall residential development. Its effect is to support infill development within the developed footprint of Scotton and for single dwellings between two dwellings at Scotton Common. Paragraph 13.1 of the Plan helpfully sets out the community’s view that the remaining elements of the residual development to meet the strategic housing target should be in these locations rather than on greenfield land on the edge of the village. This paragraph sits within the context of comprehensive supporting text in Section 13 of the Plan.

7.50 Given that Scotton and Scotton Common have very different characteristics I am satisfied that the policy makes an appropriate distinction between the two parts of the neighbourhood area. I can see that the Plan (para 7.4) considers that Scotton Common has a sufficient number of dwellings to allow it to be identified as a hamlet (as defined in Policy LP2 (7) of the CLLP). No evidence or comments were received as part of the consultation process to challenge this assertion. I am also satisfied that the first part of the policy includes an appropriate series of environmental and design criteria. I recommend a detailed modification to criterion g) on residential amenity. It reflects that the test is the unacceptability of any harm rather than the generation of any harm

- 7.51 As submitted the format of the second and third parts of the policy is more complicated. They largely provide supporting text-type comments about potential sites elsewhere and the need for community support for such schemes. In places these two elements of the policy overlap with the submitted supporting text.
- 7.52 I recommend modifications to address these matters. In particular I recommend that the second part of the policy more closely reflects the CLLP policy approach to development in the countryside. As submitted this part of the policy avoids any direct relationship with this important part of the development plan.
- 7.53 The third part of the policy addresses the wider issue of community support for development which is also incorporated in the CLLP. In the wider context of the submitted Plan in general, and this policy in particular, I am satisfied that it can remain in the policy. Nevertheless, I recommend that the elements of supporting text in the policy are deleted. In any event they are already included in the extensive supporting text.
- 7.54 Finally I recommend the correction of an error in paragraph 13.13.

In the first part of the policy and criterion g) replace ‘undue’ with ‘unacceptable’

Replace the second part of the policy with:

‘Proposals for residential development elsewhere in the neighbourhood area will only be supported where they meet the criteria included in Policy LP55 Part D of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. In addition, development proposals should demonstrate that they have undertaken an assessment of other alternative potential development options within the developed footprint of Scotton’

In the third part of the policy retain the first sentence and then delete the remainder. In the retained first sentence replace ‘will need to’ with ‘should’

In paragraph 13.13 replace ‘Spridlington’ with ‘Scotton’

Policy 7: Extensions and alterations of existing dwellings

- 7.55 This policy sets out guidance for extensions and alterations to existing dwellings. Its ambition is to ensure that such works respect the character and appearance of the property concerned. It generally does so to good effect. In its response to the clarification note the Parish Council clarified that the photographs on page 42 had been chosen to highlight the issues which can be associated with over-extended dwellings. I recommend that the photographs are deleted from the Plan given that they fail to provide any clarity to the policy and do not depict properties which have been sensitively extended.
- 7.56 I recommend a series of modifications to the wording used so that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF. In particular I recommend that the fourth criterion on

residential amenity is simplified. As submitted, it includes a combination of policy and supporting text. I also recommend consequential modifications to the supporting text.

In the opening part of the policy:

- **remove the number 1 from the start of the policy**
- **delete ‘Where appropriate’**
- **replace ‘permitted’ with ‘supported’**

Replace criterion 4 with ‘they respect the scale, nature and the location of surrounding residential properties and do not result in an unacceptable reduction in the amenity of the occupants of those properties’

At the end of paragraph 14.3 add:

‘Policy 7 sets out a criteria-based policy to address such proposals.

The fourth criterion refers to residential amenity issues. In particular extensions should not result in a loss of daylight, over-shadowing or create overbearing relationships between buildings where this would be detrimental to nearby residential amenity’

Policy 8: Conversion of rural buildings

- 7.57 This policy acknowledges that existing buildings in the countryside are often suitable for re-use and provide opportunities to deliver important rural facilities and economic development. It seeks to ensure that the best use is made of any potential conversion opportunities. It aims to ensure that consideration is given to delivering benefits to residents and businesses in the wider parish, whilst respecting the existing building and its wider context in terms of any neighbouring buildings and the countryside.
- 7.58 The policy has three related components. The first part establishes general principles for the conversion of the buildings concerned. The second part is headed as ‘Preferred Uses’. However, its effect is to establish criteria with which any conversions would need to comply. The third part comments about the conversion of the buildings concerned to market housing.
- 7.59 The General Principles part of the policy the approach sets out a preference for certain types of development rather than a policy. This would not bring the clarity required by the NPPF. To remedy this issue, I recommend that parts 1 and 2 of the policy are combined to set out principles for the conversion of existing buildings. Thereafter a separate part of the policy would address proposals for their replacement with new units. In this context the submitted third part of the policy would remain as a freestanding element of the wider policy approach.
- 7.60 I also recommend an expansion of the submitted supporting text to explain this modified approach.

Replace part 1 and 2 of the policy with:

‘Proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings for employment or community purposes will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- **the building concerned is capable of conversion without significant extension, rebuilding or external alterations;**
- **the proposal makes a positive contribution to the street scene and its wider landscape setting;**
- **the proposal respects the integrity of any historic buildings; and**
- **the proposals will not create any unacceptable amenity, environmental or traffic issues in the immediate locality of the site concerned**

Proposals for the conversion of existing rural buildings for other uses, including residential use, will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the use of the building concerned for employment or community uses is neither viable nor practicable. In these circumstances, applicants should provide information to demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or to lease the site for employment or community purposes at a realistic market price. The marketing period should be at least for a period of 12 months’

At the end of paragraph 15.1 add:

‘The policy sets out an approach which supports the conversion of such buildings for employment and community uses. Where the applicant wishes to pursue an alternative approach the second part of the policy requires the submission of information about the way in which the premises have previously been marketed at a realistic market rate without any successful take up for employment or community uses. In these circumstances the marketing period should be at least for a period of 12 months.

Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings will be considered on their merits and within the context of the criteria identified in the first part of the policy’

Policy 9: Land for a new Burial Ground

- 7.61 This policy offers general support for a new burial ground. It is based on the limited capacity of the Churchyard which has only twenty plots remaining for future use.
- 7.62 In general terms I am satisfied that the policy approach is appropriate. In particular it will allow the Parish Council to determine the most appropriate site within the Plan period. Importantly it highlights that any new burial ground should be located within or adjacent to the developed footprint of the village.
- 7.63 The policy is criteria-based. However, the four criteria in the policy are technical matters controlled by other bodies rather than by the District Council in its capacity as the local planning authority. I recommend that the matter is further consolidated within the supporting text to remedy this issue. I recommend that they are deleted from the policy. I also recommend their replacement with two planning related criteria that will

provide both a context both for site selection and to assist WLDC in its determination of any future planning applications.

Replace the policy with: ‘Proposals for the development of a new burial ground within or immediately adjoining the developed footprint of the village will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- **they would not have any unacceptable impact on the amenities of residential properties in the immediate locality; and**
- **they would provide appropriate parking provision and service access and would not have any unacceptable impact on the local highway network’**

In paragraph 16.1 replace ‘To accommodate.....around’ with: ‘Policy 9 provides a supporting context within which proposals can be developed within the Plan period. It provides two criteria against which they will be assessed at the planning application stage. The development of a burial ground also involves the consideration of technical criteria as determined by the Environment Agency. These include matter such as’

Policy 10: Local Green Spaces

- 7.64 This policy proposes the designation of three local green spaces (LGSs). The supporting text comments about how their proposed designation would overlap with national guidance on this matter in NPPF 99-101.
- 7.65 Appendix 1 provides a proportionate assessment of the three proposed LGSs against the criteria in the NPPF. Having looked at the evidence and the proposed LGSs I am satisfied that they meet the criteria in the NPPF.
- 7.66 The NPPF also requires that LGS designations should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan Period. I am satisfied that both of these important considerations are met in the submitted Plan. The proposed LGSs feature within a Plan which has identified five housing allocations as part of its contribution towards the strategic delivery of housing in the District. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that the three LGSs are incapable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period. Indeed, in many cases they are established elements of the local environment and are sensitively managed as green spaces by public bodies.
- 7.67 The policy correctly applies the matter of fact approach to the designated LGSs. It meets the basic conditions.

Policy 11: Community Services and Facilities

- 7.68 This is an important policy within the wider context of the Plan. It seeks to retain identified community facilities and only offers support to changes of use to other uses where one of three criteria are met. The policy and the supporting text (paragraph 18.5) identify three community facilities as follows:

- the Church;
- the Village Hall; and
- the Three Horseshoes public house.

- 7.69 Other parts of the policy offer support towards the development of new community facilities within and adjoining the village
- 7.70 The importance of the identified facilities was clear when I visited the neighbourhood area. In addition, the three circumstances identified in the policy where changes of use of the three facilities would be supported are both realistic and take account of commercial viability. This may be particularly important with regard to the public house which, whilst an important community facility, is also a commercial organisation.
- 7.71 I recommend two modifications to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. The first ensures that the policy is specific about the facilities that are affected by the policy. As submitted, it implies that there are other facilities which are not listed in the policy, within paragraph 18.5 or shown on Map 7. The second clarifies that the changes of use included in the second part of the policy refer to those which would involve the change of use to a non-community use. These recommended modifications overlap with the helpful responses from the Parish Council on this policy in general, and in particular its confirmation that there are no other community facilities in the neighbourhood area.

In the first part of the policy replace ‘include’ with ‘are as follows’

In the second part of the policy add ‘to a non-community use’ between ‘facility’ and ‘shall’

Policy 12: Safeguarding important and distinctive landscape features

- 7.72 This policy takes a wide-ranging approach. It addresses a series of distinctive issues to the neighbourhood areas as follows:
- general design principles;
 - the identification of green lanes
 - the identification of key views
 - landscape issues; and
 - the protection of heritage assets
- 7.73 The policy is successfully underpinned by extensive supporting text. It helps to explain the importance of the various matters to the character and appearance of the parish. In general terms I am satisfied that the policy takes an appropriate approach.
- 7.74 I am satisfied that the Plan’s definition of green lanes reflects the detailed work and research. It also reflects their inherent characteristics. This element of the policy has been written in a non-prescriptive fashion which allows development to proceed where

it would be sympathetic to the setting and character of the identified lanes. In coming to this judgement, I have taken account of the two representations from local persons which raise concern about the policy approach.

- 7.75 I am also satisfied that the identification of key views in the parish is appropriate. They are important public vantage points rather than private views. In addition, they form an essential part of the character of the village. For clarity I recommend that the policy incorporates the schedule of views.
- 7.76 Given the comprehensive nature of the policy I recommend that it is broken down into its component elements. This will bring clarity both for developers in preparing proposals during the Plan period and for WLDC in determining such proposals. This approach will also allow the various design and building material issues to be grouped together. I also recommend detailed modifications to the wording used in the policy. Otherwise it meets the basic conditions.

Retain the opening part of the policy (as numbered 1). Incorporate the following criteria in the submitted policy with this part of the policy (and re-letter as appropriate) - d/e/f/g.

In criterion f) (as submitted) replace ‘must’ with ‘should’ and demonstrable’ with ‘unacceptable’

**Incorporate criterion a) as a freestanding second part of the policy (part 2).
Insert a full stop after ‘Map 10’.**

Replace the submitted remainder of the criterion with:

‘Development proposals within the identified green lanes should be sympathetic to their rural nature and should not have an unacceptable impact on their character and appearance’

**Incorporate criterion b) as a freestanding third part of the policy (part 3).
Insert ‘listed below’ between ‘important views’ and ‘as identified’
Insert a full stop after ‘Map 9’.**

List the five views (numbers and descriptions)

Replace ‘and should be protected’ with ‘The identified key views’

**Incorporate criterion c) as a freestanding fourth part of the policy (part 4).
Replace ‘and should be protected’ with ‘The Area of Great Landscape Value’**

Other Matters - General

- 7.77 This report has recommended a series of modifications both to the policies and to the supporting text in the submitted Plan. Where consequential changes to the text are required directly as a result of my recommended modification to the policy concerned, I have highlighted them in this report. However other changes to the general text may be required elsewhere in the Plan as a result of the recommended modifications to the policies. It will be appropriate for WLDC and the Parish Council to have the flexibility

to make any necessary consequential changes to the general text. I recommend accordingly.

Modification of general text (where necessary) to achieve consistency with the modified policies.

Other Matters – Wording of Text

- 7.78 WLDC has helpfully provided commentary on specific elements of the Plan. In most cases they identify typographical errors and update other matters. I recommend that the Plan is modified to incorporate the various matters raised. Plainly there will be a degree of overlap between these matters and those which naturally arise from the other general recommendation in paragraph 7.77 above.

Modification of general text to correct typographical errors in the Plan as identified by WLDC in its Regulation 16 comments.

8 Summary and Conclusions

Summary

- 8.1 The Plan sets out a range of policies to guide and direct development proposals in the period up to 2036. It is distinctive in addressing a specific set of issues that have been identified and refined by the wider community.
- 8.2 Following my independent examination of the Plan I have concluded that the Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan subject to a series of recommended modifications.
- 8.3 This report has recommended some modifications to the policies in the Plan. Nevertheless, it remains fundamentally unchanged in its role and purpose.

Conclusion

- 8.4 On the basis of the findings in this report I recommend to West Lindsey District Council that subject to the incorporation of the modifications set out in this report that the Scotton Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to referendum.

Referendum Area

- 8.5 I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the Plan area. In my view, the neighbourhood area is entirely appropriate for this purpose and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that this is not the case. I therefore recommend that the Plan should proceed to referendum based on the neighbourhood area as approved by the District Council on 13 February 2017.
- 8.6 I am grateful to everyone who has helped in any way to ensure that this examination has run in a smooth and efficient manner.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
11 May 2020