

# Dinnington St John's Neighbourhood Plan

2016 – 2028

“FROM TIN TOWN TO GREAT  
TOWN”

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF  
OUR COMMUNITY DELIVERED  
THROUGH THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF A  
DYNAMIC NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PLAN

**CONSULTATION DRAFT**

**2018**

## OUR VISION

“ To actively improve the well-being of residents of Dinnington St John’s Parish through the implementation of the following key strategies:

Housing

Health, leisure and community facilities

Education, employment and skills

Shops and the Town Centre

Natural Environment and

Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure”

# FOREWORD

The Town Council and residents of Dinnington St John's have come together to produce this Neighbourhood Plan as a method of communicating their needs and aspirations as a Community facing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. There are two main reasons why we decided to produce the Plan.

Firstly, Dinnington St John's is a historic and great parish with a tremendous sense of spirit and identity. It is likely to see significant housing and other forms of development over the coming years if the plans identified by Rotherham MBC are delivered. The community wants to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development to ensure that it best reflects the needs of the community. We firmly believe that decisions about the future development of Dinnington are best made at the local level by bodies and individuals who truly understand the local area and its needs and aspirations.

Secondly, it is born out of a sense of frustration with a lack of progress and response to community needs over many recent years. As a result of the Localism Act, we now have a possibility to articulate our wishes through an instrument that has standing in Law and must be taken into account in any planning decisions that are made affecting where and how we live.

The Plan sets out a realistic plan of action in whose delivery we anticipate that everyone will have pooled their resources and efforts. It is not a list of what we do not want. The Plan has been researched using experts in several areas and discussing achievable solutions with other Groups in the UK through the Neighbourhood Plan Forum.

In collecting and collating all of the data regarding our Community it became apparent that we have major problems in very many areas with no communicated "plan" as to how to solve these issues. In simple terms, all of the social and economic indicators that we see for our Community are getting worse, not better. We believe that this is an unacceptable situation for any Community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. If we allow this situation to continue we will be bequeathing to our children a local society that has the following framework:

- A decreasing life expectancy
- A worsening Health situation for all
- At best an Educational achievement picture that is static at a low base
- Less green space than we inherited
- Continued limitations regarding housing independence
- Limited employment possibilities
- Significantly fewer sports and recreational facilities than we inherited
- A dormitory town for the other centres nearby with no "heart"

It is against this picture that the Neighbourhood Plan Group has produced its Plan.

We all believe that we are responsible for our own lives, but we delegate and pay for certain aspects of our existence to organisations that are supposed to use their expertise and economy of scale to give us an improving life. Our deliberations in preparing this plan indicate that there is a lot to be desired in this respect at the moment. At the very least we would expect that the areas we have identified in terms of change should be addressed and figure in RMBC's 123 list.

We are the first Community in Rotherham Borough to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and as such a lot of the activity has been new to most people as well as RMBC. We have arrived at a Plan that points the way for the next 10/15 years that if followed will result in a better place to live and work and will start to rectify the worsening future picture we see today.


I am very grateful to all those who have contributed to the preparation of the Plan. I would especially like to thank my fellow town councillors, the other members of Steering Group, and the many others have contributed to its development.

You, as a resident or other interested body or person, are now invited to read the draft version of the Plan and make any comments you may have.

The deadline for comments is 18 February 2019.

If you wish to comment on the Draft Plan, you can do this by:

 Email to Dinnington Town Council at [dsjtc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dsjtc@hotmail.co.uk).

 Send to, or put in the letterbox at, Dinnington St John's Town Council, The Lyric, 62a Laughton Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2PS.

Wherever possible, please ensure that you clearly specify the policy or section to which your response relates

More information about the Plan including updates and supporting documents can be found at the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.

**Cllr David Smith**

**Chairman of Dinnington St John's Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

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# 1.0 Introduction

## What is the Dinnington St John's<sup>1</sup> Parish Neighbourhood Plan?

In very simple terms, our neighbourhood plan is:

- A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – which will then be used to determine planning applications and other planning decision affecting that area.
- Written by us the local community, the people who know and love the area
- A powerful tool to ensure that we the community get the right types of development, in the right place.

Local people have created this neighbourhood plan which then allows us to develop planning policies that reflect the priorities of our area and have real statutory weight.

A neighbourhood plan is an important document with real legal force, therefore, there are certain formal procedures that it must go through.

Dinnington St John's Town Council as the 'qualifying body' applied to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (Rotherham MBC) in December 2015 to prepare a neighbourhood plan for Dinnington St John's. The Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2016. However, Dinnington St John's Parish Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'Plan') is not the Town Council's plan, it is the local community's plan and as such must be endorsed by a local referendum, which requires a 'yes' vote of 50% or more of those who vote.

Before any referendum is held the draft Plan has to be consulted on, amended as necessary, the submitted plan scrutinised by an Independent Examiner and any recommended changes made. A 'yes' vote means the Plan can then be formally 'made' by Rotherham MBC, who have to use it when making planning and other decisions that affect our Parish.

The designated Neighbourhood Plan Area is defined by the Dinnington St John's Town Council Parish boundary, as outlined in Figure 1.

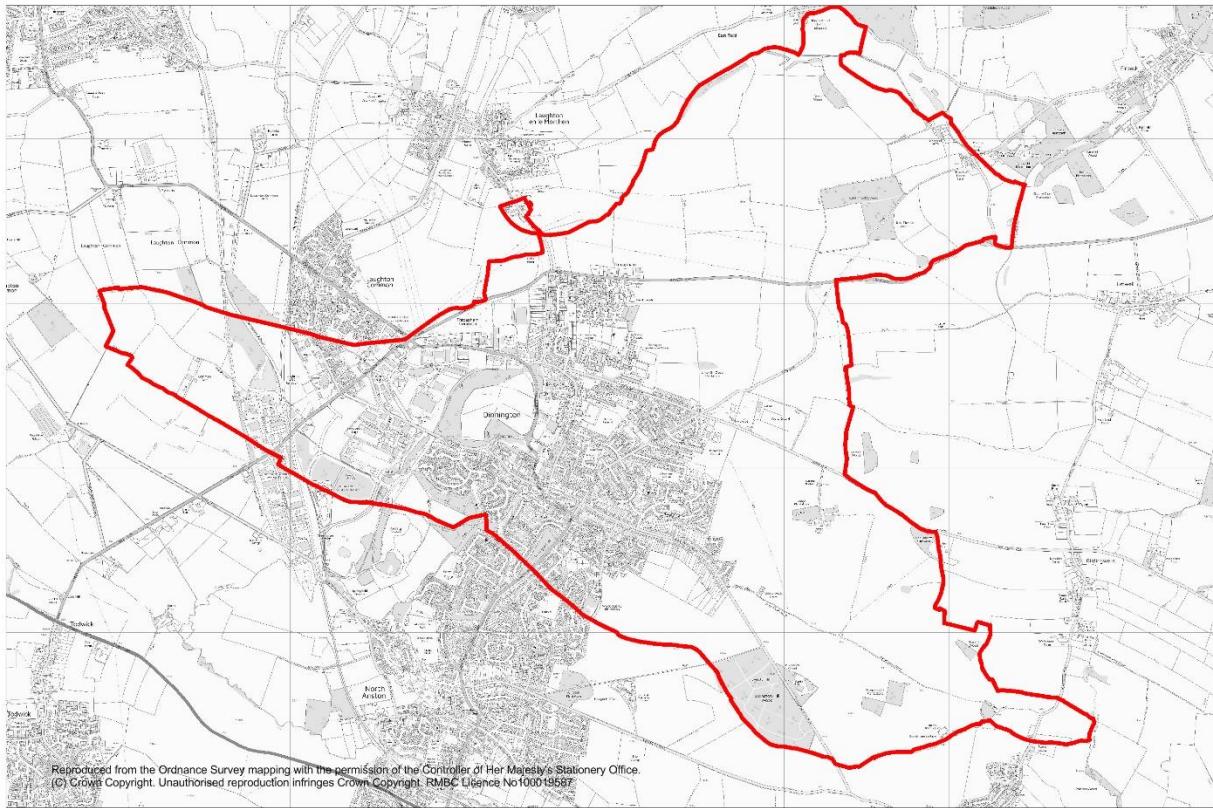
The Plan is informed by extensive research and influenced by robust community engagement and provides a plan for the future of Dinnington and targeted action as to how this might be achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> References to 'Dinnington St. John's', 'Dinnington' and 'The Parish' in this document denote the Parish of Dinnington St John's unless otherwise indicated.

**Figure 1: The Plan Area – Dinnington St John’s Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA**



## Why do we want a Neighbourhood Plan?

A neighbourhood plan enables local communities like ours to have more control over development in their own area by preparing a framework against which planning proposals can be judged.

Dinnington<sup>2</sup> is at a crossing point. It is a historic parish with rich industrial heritage and a great sense of identity and purpose. The demise of the coal industry in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century which it traditionally looked to for jobs, prosperity and sense of identity, created major challenges for it. While there has been some development of the local industry in the intervening period, this has been limited, and unemployment still remains a significant issue. The major changes in employment and deprivation are reflected in the health, skills/education and other achievements of its residents, which are consistently below the national average.

The Parish is likely to face significant development over the coming years if the plans identified by RMBC are delivered. The Rotherham Local Plan (2013-2028)<sup>3</sup> identifies it as a broad location for housing, economic and other forms of growth.

<sup>2</sup> The terms Dinnington, Dinnington St John’s and Parish are all used interchangeably. They all relate to Dinnington St John’s Parish unless indicated otherwise.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200074/planning\\_and\\_regeneration/617/a\\_guide\\_to\\_the\\_local\\_plan](https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200074/planning_and_regeneration/617/a_guide_to_the_local_plan)

We have been clear at the outset that sustainable development is not only necessary but desirable; without it, our community may not flourish and prosper. However, we want to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development. We firmly believe that decisions about the future development of Dinnington are best made at the local level by bodies and individuals that truly understand the local area and its needs and aspirations.

Having a Neighbourhood Plan gives us the opportunity to identify the best ways to deliver development, directing it towards what the local community needs and wants. Sustainable development and regeneration will only occur if it takes an inclusive and coordinated approach that helps deliver the changes required especially in Health, Employment, Education and Skills, Housing, Leisure and Environment.

Further, a neighbourhood plan will bring a financial benefit to an area. Rotherham MBC has introduced a levy on future development called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Without a Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council would receive 15% of any CIL collected, with a Plan it would receive 25% of the CIL collected, and this will be spent in the Parish. With many new homes proposed in Dinnington, this could be a substantial sum.

Dinnington needs and deserves a good plan for its future development. Not one that just focuses on meeting housing numbers, but that provides a plan of action that is shared by everyone, and that will deliver positive and lasting change benefitting the Parish as a whole.

Our Plan focuses on those issues that the evidence has identified as having the most pressing need for action and which can add the greatest value.

It is for anyone and everyone with an interest in Dinnington – residents, visitors, businesses and investors. It will be used to promote investment in the town, guide new development to the most suitable sites, conserve valuable cultural and heritage assets, maintain and enhance its character and sense of place, secure improvements of all kinds, give a continuing voice to the community, and promote a better quality of life for current and future generations.

## Planning Context

The right of communities to prepare a neighbourhood plan was established through the Localism Act 2011. The Plan once ‘made’ will form part of the statutory development framework for the area and will be an important consideration in the determination of planning applications.

There are national rules governing the preparation of neighbourhood plans. Firstly, a neighbourhood plan must have regard to national planning policies, primarily contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (Guidance).

Secondly, the Plan must also be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. The Plan has been prepared to generally accord with the Rotherham Local Plan 2013 - 2028. The adopted Rotherham Local Plan 2013 - 2028 sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies for the Borough up to 2028. It identifies Dinnington as a principle settlement for growth for housing, economic and other forms of development. It includes a broad location for growth to the east of Dinnington for around 700 homes. It should see significant



development over the coming years. The growth and prosperity of Dinnington will be a key indicator as to the success of Rotherham's Core Strategy.

The Rotherham Sites and Policies document forms part of the Rotherham Local Plan following its adoption in June 2018. It identifies the development sites needed across the Borough to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy. This is for new homes and employment development. The Rotherham Sites and Policies document includes detailed policies to guide decisions on planning applications. Many of these policies are relevant to the development of the Plan.

In accordance with Government guidelines the Plan has been developed to generally conform with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan.

The aim of the Plan is not to replicate existing planning policies, but to add value to them by providing local formulated policies that are specific to Dinnington and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. Where there are national and Borough planning policies that meet the needs and requirements of the Parish they are not duplicated here.

Legislation also requires neighbourhood plans and indeed Local Plans to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which is 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' The Plan has the achievement of sustainable development at its heart. Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, meeting present and future needs for housing, work and facilities that support the well-being of the community, supporting actions that build prosperity and by ensuring that local people can shape their surroundings are all good examples of how it will do this. This wish for sustainability has led to differences in attitude towards the utilisation of Green Belt land and brownfield areas that continue to be a point contention between Rotherham MBC and Dinnington Neighbourhood Plan Group. This is an area that requires further clarification and agreement.

A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with EU regulations and of relevance and be compliant with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Directives.

## The process of developing the Plan

The Plan is a community-led plan. Its preparation has been led by the Dinnington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprised of members of the Town Council and non-councillor local residents with a broad range of skills and knowledge regarding community needs and aspirations from local and indeed international experience. The Steering Group has been supported by the Town Council, members of the community, officers from Rotherham MBC, neighbourhood planning consultants *andrewtowlertonassociates* and many others.

## Designation and Raising Awareness

Dinnington St John's Town Council, as the 'qualifying body', applied to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council in December 2015 and the Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2016. The Steering Group's first formal meeting was in November 2016.

## Consultation and Evidence Gathering

The Working Group undertook a rigorous examination of local, district and national data to underpin the policies in the Plan. This included the evidence base produced to support the development of the emerging Local Plan as well as specialist studies and reports specifically prepared to support and justify the policies in the Plan. A Housing Need and Characteristics Study and the Town Centre Masterplan are just two good examples. These and other supporting studies and reports can be found at the Town Council website at [www.dinningtonstjohns.org/index.php](http://www.dinningtonstjohns.org/index.php).

In addition, the Plan has been produced with strong and meaningful input from the community. This has been at the heart of its preparation. This includes meetings, drop-in events and community consultation events. The range of consultation events has ensured that residents of all ages have had an opportunity to have their say. A summary of the community consultation undertaken can be found at the Town Council website at [www.dinningtonstjohns.org/index.php](http://www.dinningtonstjohns.org/index.php).

## Where are we and what happens next?

The Plan is now at the 'pre-submission' stage. This means that the Town Council is satisfied that it has a robust draft Plan and now invites residents, landowners, businesses, agencies and other people to give their views on it. This is in accordance with national rules and regulations covering the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Any comments received during this stage will be considered by the Town Council when amending the Plan.

The revised draft Plan will then be submitted to Rotherham MBC, where they will check and consult with relevant bodies that it has been developed in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. This is in accordance with national rules and regulations covering the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Once it has successfully passed this stage, it will then go to an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it has been prepared in the prescribed manner.

If the Plan successfully passes this stage, with any modifications, it will be put forward to referendum, where everyone on the electoral register in the Parish will be invited to vote on whether or not they support it. It needs to achieve more than 50% of votes in favour to become a 'Made' statutory planning document. This it will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Rotherham.

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

## 2.0 Dinnington St John's – A SPATIAL PORTRAIT

Dinnington St John's is an attractive and popular Parish with a strong sense of identity, based on its past and shaped by major recent developments.

It is located towards the south edge of the administrative areas of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and is in the County of South Yorkshire. Conveniently located on the motorway network, it is almost equidistant from the boundaries of Sheffield and Rotherham 3 miles (5km), and about 5 miles (8 km) from Worksop.

Dinnington is the principal and most populous settlement in the Parish, which also includes the small satellite hamlets of Throapham and St John's.

According to the 2011 Census, Dinnington had a population of 12,517 (up from 11,476 in 2001). It is the most populous Parish in the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough area and serves a wide rural hinterland in the south of the Borough.

It has a town centre (Dinnington), which is the primary focus for retail and cultural activity for the Parish and a wider area. It also has a further education college, secondary school and primary schools as well as many other community facilities, churches, community facilities, as well as significant open spaces.

It has a long and proud history. Excavations show Dinnington to have been inhabited since at least Neolithic times, and it has been suggested that the settlement takes its name from a local barrow, though a more traditional interpretation of "Dinnington" would be "Dunn's Farmstead", or "Town of Dunn's People".

Up to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Parish was made up of a number of small isolated farming settlements, the main one being Dinnington.

It was the sinking of the Dinnington Main Colliery in 1905 that led to the real growth of the settlement. The census of 1911 shows a twenty-fold increase in population since 1901, from 250 to 5,000.

Dinnington continued to expand throughout the 20th century, largely through the growth of new house building following the Second World War. As the housing estates spread, Dinnington began to merge with the neighbouring settlements of Throapham and North Anston.

The decline of the coal industry, which the Town traditionally looked to for jobs, prosperity and identity, had a devastating impact on the Parish from which it has struggled to recover. At one point it was reputedly the most deprived part of the Country according to official statistics. The Parish has been the subject of a series of regeneration programmes and initiatives with limited success.

In recent years, the Parish has seen steady economic and social growth. It is home, for example, to over one hundred local business, but these have only partially filled the employment vacuum left by the closure of the mining industry locally.

In common with other former mining and heavy industrial areas, it continues to face some social, health and economic challenges. Education, skills attainment and ill health levels are all ranked below the national average. Parts of the Parish (especially in the northeast parts of Dinnington Town) are amongst the top 10% deprived nationally. While overall levels of crime and anti-social are relatively low, they remain a top concern for many residents and are major issues in parts of the Parish.

A summary of key statistics can be found at the Town Council website at [www.dinningtonstjohns.org/](http://www.dinningtonstjohns.org/).

## 3.0 Overall Vision and Key Issues

### What are the key planning issues facing the Parish

The Plan seeks to shape and address the development challenges and opportunities that face Dinnington. It focuses on those areas where the evidence has identified the most pressing need for action and on which the Plan can have the greatest impact.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the local community, identified the key planning issues facing Dinnington over the next fifteen years. These are:

- sustaining a level of housing growth to meet identified housing needs, that is proportionate to the size of Dinnington, and retains its essential distinct character and sense of identity;
- supporting future housing that is high quality, well designed and that it of a size, type and tenure that helps meet the changing needs of local people;
- ensuring that adequate health care facilities are made available to the local community with an emphasis on achieving a major improvement in the measurable health of the community;
- promoting the use of brownfield sites for housing and industrial development;
- conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment;
- providing an appealing, safe and healthy environment;
- ensuring that a leisure centre and swimming facilities are made available to all members of the community with adequate support for healthy living activities for all age groups;
- encouraging local education establishments and local business to progress the use of apprenticeship and skills training to develop a more skilled local workforce;
- protecting the Green Belt and other important green spaces;
- enhancing the safety and attractiveness of the Town Centre, including by addressing littering, dog fouling and pollution;
- promoting the Town Centre as the location for retail, services and facilities; and
- supporting economic growth, including encouraging the use of local workers in the construction of new housing and infrastructure improvement in partnership with local business.

The need to address the health issues of the area is an underlying theme of the Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the following definition for what constitutes a health community;

“A healthy community is a good place to grow up and grow old in. It is one which supports healthy behaviours and supports reductions in health inequalities. It should enhance the physical and mental health of the community...” (para 5)

A strong link exists between healthy communities and the planning and design of the built environment. There is an opportunity, through the Plan to assist in creating an environment locally, which supports physical activity and encourages social connection through for example:

- connected movement networks including convenient public transport, cycling and walking opportunities;
- providing parks and open spaces which provide safe and quality space for leisure and exercise
- providing access to multi-use community buildings, thereby reducing the need to travel and providing opportunities for social interaction;
- improving access to healthy food;
- enhancing local employment opportunities for all; and
- homes and neighbourhoods designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet local needs and as well as the changing needs of people.

These examples highlight the strong synergies that exist between pursuing sustainable development and health outcomes, so that in essence delivering a sustainable community is delivering a healthy community. It is underpinned by the sustainability principles in the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Vision

An Vision for the Plan, based on the community’s aspirations for the future provides the framework for the actions in the document. This **Vision** is:

***“To actively improve the wellbeing of residents of Dinnington St John’s Parish through the implementation of the following key strategies  
Housing that meets the needs of the local community and changing needs  
Health, leisure and community facilities accessible to all  
Local education, employment and skills opportunities for all  
Vibrant shops and attractive Town Centre  
High quality natural environment  
High quality Built Environment and supporting infrastructure. “***

## 4.0 PLAN POLICIES

The policies seek to address the key planning issues identified and help deliver the community's vision for the Plan. The policies are grouped under six themes in support of the overall Vision.

- Housing.
- Health, Leisure and Community Facilities.
- Education, Employment and Skills.
- Shops and the Town Centre.
- Natural Environment.
- Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure.

Each theme has its own chapter. Each chapter includes the relevant aims, supported by policies and justification.

Neighbourhood Plan policies must relate to development and land use. However, this does not mean that Neighbourhood Plans cannot include other non-planning related policies that the community would like to achieve. It is important that the Plan makes a clear distinction between planning and non-planning policies. This Plan achieves this by referencing the former as a 'Policy' and the latter as an 'Action.'

It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a proposed development all of the policies contained in it must be considered together when forming a view.

### 4.1 HOUSING

#### **Where are we now:**

- Dinnington is a popular place to live.
- The scale of the proposed housing is too great.
- There is a need for more affordable housing and improvements in some of the existing housing stock.

#### **Where do we want to be:**

- Dinnington offers a choice of housing to support the needs of the local community and people as their needs change.
- The Town provides for a suitable and sustainable level of housing that meets its local housing need.
- Everyone has access to good quality and affordable housing.

## Introduction

One of the most important aspects of the Plan is to consider the amount, type and location of new housing in the Parish for the next ten years plus. From our research and analysis, we found several correlations between the quality and type of housing and the Health and Wellbeing of a community. In this case of Dinnington these findings are very relevant in terms of future development and any upgrading of existing housing stock. With demand for affordable starter homes as well as aged persons accommodation the design and mix of housing that focusses on health and wellbeing issues must be considered at the planning and design stage of any development. Given that the community has a relatively low-income level with a high proportion of households claiming benefits any new housing needs to address the running costs of a home and not just the capital cost. There are many solutions available that can achieve this through energy efficiency and passive housing design.

Attempts to improve the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock to achieve a lower carbon footprint has resulted in health issues caused by ventilation and condensation problems. Any further upgrading also needs to be approached with due consideration to health risks and challenges and not be solely cost driven.

Dinnington has seen a major expansion in the private rented sector, in part due to a major slowdown in the construction of local authority housing. Dinnington has seen a growth of more than 70% in this respect. During the evidence gathering as part of the preparation of the Plan, it became apparent that regulation of this sector was a major concern with a large number of properties that are of a low standard and again are not conducive to a healthy lifestyle and communities. Particular attention is drawn to the use of House of Multiple Occupation which is an area that seems to be growing in part due to the generally limited regulated nature in Rotherham and more widely. Mention of this is made later in the plan.

Dinnington is an attractive place to live. It is accessible to Sheffield, Rotherham and other surrounding towns, has a fine natural and built environment and a fair range of services and facilities. This combined with a relatively low market price means that there is a healthy demand for housing from outside the area as well as demand from anticipated growth in the number of households locally.

## Housing Demand

In recent years, the Parish has seen a lot of housing development, and there is more in the pipeline.

The consultation shows that the local community understands the need for housing growth and the important role Dinnington has, and continues, to play in the economic, social and cultural success of Rotherham and the wider area.

People are very concerned, however, that the Parish is becoming the location for large-scale housing development that does not correspond to its housing needs and infrastructure, is having an adverse impact on the natural environment and makes it difficult to maintain a sustainable and integrated community. It is considered that Dinnington has already accommodated more than its fair share of housing growth. Furthermore, that it is not a suitable and sustainable location for the scale of development proposed and it is wrong that it is now expected to accommodate more.

The community is especially concerned about the adverse impact it will have on the character of the Parish, especially as much of the new housing development is planned to take place on greenfield sites previously in the Green Belt. Additional concerns are its already stretched infrastructure, especially roads and services such as schools, medical facilities and leisure and other community facilities. They also wish to ensure that any housing development that takes place better supports its changing needs and have a greater say over its design and the type of housing it provides.

Rotherham Local Plan sets out the overall housing targets for the Borough. This has determined that there is a minimum requirement of 14,371 new homes to be built in Rotherham Borough between 2013 and 2028.

The Local Plan proposes housing allocations to support this level of growth and how these allocations should be apportioned by different areas of Rotherham Borough.

How much of this housing development the Plan should cater for is complicated by the fact that the overall housing target for Rotherham Borough contained in the Local Plan is not disaggregated to individual settlements or Parishes, including Dinnington. It does, however, identify several housing supply areas, which collectively will provide sufficient land to meet the housing requirements for Rotherham.

Dinnington St John's falls into the "Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common (including Dinnington East Broad Location for Growth)" area for the purpose of housing land supply. It identifies Dinnington St John's, together with the identified surrounding settlements, as one of a number of "Principal Settlements for Growth" that are to provide for a significant amount of housing growth. In addition, Core Strategy Policy CS1 'Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy' identifies Dinnington East as "a broad location for growth".

The Local Plan requires Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common to collectively provide for at least 1,300 homes between 2013 and 2028, including about 700 as part of the Dinnington East: Broad Location for Growth. Also, that the majority of this housing growth should take place on greenfield sites formerly in the Green Belt.

The Local Plan then details the housing sites that will meet the housing requirement for Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common. In terms of Dinnington Parish, new homes are planned to take place on the following sites:

Site	Indicative number of houses
H75 Timber Yard Off Outgang Lane	271
H76 Land Off Oldcoates Road (West)	272
H78 Land Off Athorpe Road	28
H79 Allotment Land Off East Street	15
H80 Land Off Lodge Lane / Silverdales	131
H81 Land Off Wentworth Way	243

These housing sites total approximately 960 homes. This equates to about 8% of Rotherham's overall requirements, whereas the Parish is home to about 5% of the Borough's population.



It should be noted as part of the development of the Plan, the Town Council did put forward alternative housing sites to be considered as part the Local Plan process to those listed above. These it considered provided better more suitable and sustainable locations elsewhere in the Parish which could accommodate all or most of the housing growth planned for it. Further, as many of these alternative sites utilised brownfield, vacant or under-utilised land this would minimise (or indeed avoid) the need to build on greenfield sites in the Green Belt. It was determined through the Local Plan process that Dinnington's housing provision was best met through the sites listed above.

These allocations are not the only source of new housing building in Dinnington over the Plan period. There will be two other sources, which will be in addition to these. The first is housing sites that were granted planning permission prior to April 2013 and where construction has not yet begun or is underway and the second is windfall sites.

The National Planning Policy Framework describes '*Windfall Sites as "Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available"*<sup>4</sup>.

In the past, such 'windfall' sites have made a significant contribution to Dinnington's housing numbers. The development of 12 homes following the conversion of the Lorden's Hill Hotel is just one recent good example. A trend which is expected to continue. Though these sites are not identified, the relatively high land values in the Parish coupled with the level of vacant and inappropriately located land and buildings, mean that windfall sites have the potential to provide a modest source of housing and other forms of development.

In practice, therefore, the level of house building in the Parish that will take place over the Plan period is likely to be far greater than the 960 suggested in the Local Plan. Indeed, the Town Council did unsuccessfully argue through the Local Plan process that an allowance for such windfall developments should be made as part of the overall housing target set for it.

While the community has major reservations about the scale of housing development planned for Dinnington, it reluctantly acknowledges the housing role set out for it in the approved Local Plan.

The Plan does not propose, nor support, further allocations above that which are identified in the Local Plan. Having looked at the level of services and facilities, market conditions and housing need, there is no evidence to suggest that a higher level of housing development should take place than that already agreed. Indeed, it could be argued that the Parish should take a lower proportion since organic growth from the local community only requires around 300 new dwellings in the planning period.

The Plan does, however, seek to ensure that housing growth helps meet local need, has adequate infrastructure (roads, schools, sport and recreation provision etc.) and generally support a cohesive, inclusive and sustainable community.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

## POLICY H1: HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

*New housing development proposals will only be supported on sites allocated for housing in the Local Plan or windfall sites.*

### Housing Mix

Providing an appropriate quantity of housing in sustainable locations is only part of the story.

It is also important that there is a choice of housing to ensure that people can occupy housing that is best suited to their needs. Housing delivered as part of the new developments must be of the right type to address the existing and future needs of the Parish. This is central to a cohesive, inclusive and sustainable community.

This issue of special importance to the Plan as there is some evidence that existing housing delivery is not responding to the specific needs of Dinnington.

As part of the development of the Plan, a detailed examination of the available housing data from the 2011 Census, 2015 Strategic Market Housing Assessment<sup>5</sup> and other sources has been undertaken. This can be found on the Town Council website at [www.dinningtonstjohns.org](http://www.dinningtonstjohns.org).

This provides clear evidence that the need for smaller dwellings (one or two bedrooms) will grow significantly over the Plan period. Some of this need will be created by first-time buyers trying to get onto the property ladder, but perhaps more significantly by the forecast growth in the number of households of retirement age. It also identified that the number of households that have someone in the property with a disability was growing, and the rate is above the national average.

For some time in Dinnington, however, new build housing has largely taken the form of larger (3 or 4 bedrooms) family housing. Results from the 2011 Census, for example, show over 73.9% of households live in housing with 3 or more bedrooms, a figure which is well above the Borough (66.3%) and national (55.6%) averages. Also, and perhaps unsurprisingly that there is an under-representation of smaller type housing units with around 32% of dwellings having 2 or fewer bedrooms against 33% for Rotherham, 39% for the Yorkshire and Humber region and 40% for England.

This means that housing developments need to change to provide more smaller dwellings as well as well-designed specialist housing for example lifetime homes, sheltered housing and other forms of assisted living. The provision of the smaller types of dwellings may also help to address the relatively high number of properties that are under-occupied because of the household reducing in size - for example, elderly households continuing to occupy large family housing.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200059/land\\_and\\_premises/1056/strategic\\_housing\\_market\\_assessment\\_shma](https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200059/land_and_premises/1056/strategic_housing_market_assessment_shma)

The provision of 'Lifetime Homes' encourages stability and social cohesion by making it easier to avoid unnecessary uprooting of households. Integration of such accommodation into residential areas is encouraged to promote security, diversity, inclusion and community cohesion.

This policy aims to guide the type of new housing that is required and in particular to give priority to the provision of smaller homes (one and two bedrooms) and specialist housing to redress the existing shortfall and meet future need. This general approach is consistent with national and local planning both of which encourage planning for a mix of housing which reflects local need.

During the consultation, serious concern was expressed that the sites indicated for development were in part of limited attractiveness to developers. It was felt that the two larger greenfield sites of Oldcoates Road and Wentworth Way would be developed first with a preponderance of larger properties attractive to inward migration. This would in effect be of little or no benefit to the local communities needs for affordable and social housing. The Plan challenges and urges Rotherham MBC to manage this issue in a sustainable way that balances the needs of all and not just the financial demands imposed by developers.

## **POLICY H2: HOUSING MIX**

*New housing development will be required to demonstrate how it relates to the need identified in Appendix 1 for smaller homes (one or two bedrooms), especially for young families and young people and for older people who wish to downsize, or the needs identified in a more up to date assessment of housing need. At least a third of new homes in a development of more than two dwellings should have one or two bedrooms. No more than 50% of new homes in a development of more than one dwelling should have 4 or more bedrooms.*

*Housing for older people or those with a disability will be supported especially where; suitably located within walking distance, on a safe, level route or within easy reach of public transport to the town centre shops and services.*

### **Affordable Housing**

Housing Affordability is a major and growing issue. There is a high disparity between average house prices (both for sale and rent) and average income. In 2015 the average house price in the Parish was £120,000, a figure which is beyond the means of many local people.

At the same time, the number of socially rented properties is falling fast, and at a rate of decline that is far above the national and Borough averages. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of social rented properties in the Parish fell by 20% (-141). At 15% the proportion of social rented properties in 2011 was below the national (18%) and Rotherham (21%) averages.

Consequently, many people who wish to live in the Parish, including those with a local connection, are unable to do so as they cannot find suitable accommodation either to buy or rent.

Consultation with residents shows strong support for the provision of affordable housing. They also consider it important that local people with identified social housing needs should be given reasonable opportunity to be housed within the Parish.

The provision of affordable housing is important in supporting mixed and socially inclusive communities.

The Core Strategy requires that (i) sites of 15 dwellings or more or developments with a gross site area of 0.5 hectares or more should provide 25% affordable homes on site and (ii) sites of less than 15 dwellings or developments with a gross site area of less than 0.5 hectares should provide 25% affordable homes on site or a commuted sum of £10,000 per dwelling to contribute towards provision off-site.

The evidence gathered does not support the Plan developing its own specific affordable housing policy as regards the proportion of newly built dwellings to be affordable but does support the Core Strategy policy and underline the importance that it should be assertively implemented within the Parish.

Where affordable housing is to be provided it should be designed in a manner that makes it indistinguishable from surrounding market and other housing.

Further the Town Council itself intends to take action to increase the provision of affordable housing. It, for example, is in discussions with a not for profit developer about the scope for a affordable housing scheme on land in the Town Council's ownership on the edge of the Town Centre.

## The Existing Housing Stock and Houses in Multiple Occupation

In addition to providing new build housing, it is important that the existing housing stock is used and managed effectively.

Generally, the housing stock is in good condition that meets existing and future needs. Major regeneration programmes in the 1990s saw the replacement and refurbishment of some of the Parish's poor-quality housing stock with new more modern housing, such as at the former White City.

There are some issues with the existing stock. As identified earlier, there are cases where the existing stock is relatively under-occupied because of the trend in households reducing in size - for example, elderly households continuing to occupy large family housing.

Another significant issue is associated with some private rented properties. Dinnington has seen a massive and above average expansion in its stock of private rented properties. The latest reliable figures (from the 2011 Census) show that between 2001 and 2011 the number of private rented properties increased by 70% (229). Further, private rented accommodation is concentrated within the north-eastern part of the Parish such as in Scarsdale Street, Doe Quarry Lane and Leicester Road. In parts of Dinnington, up to 50% of the properties are privately rented.

While the vast majority of private rented properties are not an issue as they are in good condition, well managed and make an important contribution to local housing choice. However, there is a concern with some of the private rented stock. It is often in poorer condition than other forms of housing, and there have been concerns about noise and anti-social behaviour with some of the tenants. In addition, properties being deliberately left vacant is a problem.

The community expects landlords to keep rented accommodation to an acceptable standard within our community. This is for all rented properties, including houses in multiple occupancy.

The negative impact the poor management of some properties is having on some areas of Dinnington is well known and documented. In 2015, part of Dinnington was designated in a Selected Licensing Area aimed at addressing some of the associated issues and to drive up the standards of rented accommodation. While it is considered that this designation and other associated actions by Rotherham MBC has had some impact, it is considered that there is more that can be done. This was a major theme of the consultation with the community, Town Council and others.

While it is recognised that a Neighbourhood Plan has limited powers regarding the management of private sector housing as the policies must relate to development and land use planning, it can still make an important contribution in supporting actions aimed at improving the housing stock, including the private rented sector.

### **POLICY H3: IMPROVING THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK**

*The Plan supports actions aimed at improving the condition of the housing stock, especially of the private rented sector, for the benefit of occupiers and Parishioners.*

Special mention here should be made to the management of Houses in Multiple Occupation. A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is typically a single dwelling occupied by a number of households that share some facilities, e.g. a kitchen or bathroom. Dinnington has seen an increase in HMOs, often through the conversion of what was previously a family home for this purpose. Existing planning rules mean that generally planning permission would not be required to convert a family house or other building into an HMO, but where it is required the Plan seeks that it be done to the highest standards for the benefit of occupiers as well as the wider community.

Through an Article 4 direction, a local planning authority (i.e. in this instance Rotherham MBC) can introduce a local amendment to the planning rules within a specified area where this a good case to do so. This would mean that planning permission would be required to convert a family home into a House of Multiple Occupation (sometimes known as an HMO). It is considered that there is a compelling case to introduce an Article 4 Direction at least covering the designated Selective Licensing Area, if not a wider area. The Town Council is actively pursuing with Rotherham MBC that it does just this as well as other potential planning and other interventions.

## POLICY H4: HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

*Development proposals for the extension and change of use of a family house and other buildings to an HMO use (Sui Generis in the Use Class Order), will only be supported where:*

- a) it does not harm the visual character and appearance of the building, neighbourhood and street scene;*
- b) the scale and intensity of the use proposed would not have an unacceptable impact on amenity for its occupiers and neighbouring residential amenities in terms of noise, outlook, light, privacy, parking, vehicular and pedestrian access, disturbance, and increased levels of activity;*
- c) any associated extensions or external alterations required would not have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenities through reduced levels of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy; and*
- d) amenity space refuse storage and car and bicycle parking are provided at an appropriate quantity and standard of design, and management arrangements for them are put into place.*

*The Plan supports and urges the introduction of an Article 4 Direction by Rotherham MBC for all or part of the Parish that would require planning permission to convert a family home into a House of Multiple Occupation.*

## 4.2 Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

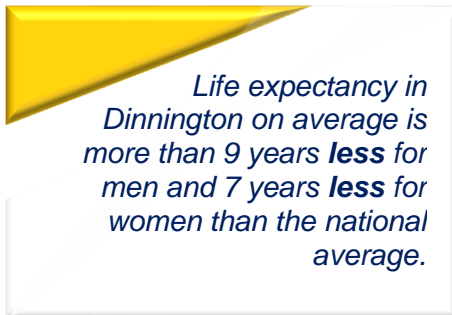
### Where are we now:

- Dinnington has some health, leisure and community facilities which serve the town and the wider area.
- It lacks many facilities that you would expect to see in a Parish of its size, and some of the existing ones are dated. In addition, some leisure and community facilities that were an essential part of the Community have been allowed to fall into dereliction or removed completely.
- The town scores very badly against most internationally accepted health indicators with most of the measures getting significantly worse despite the stated objective of Central and Local Government to ensure that these improve.

### Where do we want to be:

- Level of ill health and disability to achieve at least the national average within the Plan horizon.
- The Town has a range of good quality health, leisure and community facilities that meet the needs of the community and the wider area.
- An agreed action plan with RMBC that takes the aspirations/objectives articulated in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and embeds them in the Dinnington Community as a way of life.

Dinnington faces major challenges in terms of Health and Wellbeing. For many decades the average life expectancy for the whole country has been increasing with an average of 79 years for men and 83 for women. Life expectancy in Dinnington on average is more than 9 and 7 years **less** for men and women respectively than the national average. These figures do not tell the whole picture, however, in that there are hot spots within the community that are far worse due to severe deprivation. In addition, Dinnington faces an explosion in terms of childhood obesity with the already high obesity rates, 23%, for school leavers being made worse by a further increase in rates for 4 to 6 year olds. Given that there is a direct correlation between childhood obesity and adult obesity the average life expectancy for Dinnington will **decrease** during the planning period. Given these stark facts, there needs to be an urgent intervention to help reverse this downward trend. This can only be achieved by a combination of education and facilities for regular beneficial exercise. These are well-developed solutions to the problem but require the infrastructure to achieve this. The Plan consultation process demonstrated the willingness of the local community to respond to this type of solution and investment in terms of facilities such as a leisure centre and/or swimming pool was a recurring theme in the wishes of the community.



*Life expectancy in Dinnington on average is more than 9 years **less** for men and 7 years **less** for women than the national average.*

Dinnington is the most populous community in Rotherham without convenient access (especially by foot or public transport) to a leisure centre. The closest is Aston Cum Aughton Leisure Complex, which is over 6 miles away and poorly served by public transport from Dinnington especially in the evening.

In 2010 The Marmot review (Fair Society Healthy Lives) provided a framework for addressing health and wellbeing inequalities throughout a person's life. Rotherham has embraced this framework in its Health and Well being Strategy. This being the case with the "customer pull" from Dinnington's NHP and a "product push" from RMBC it should be possible to effect a change in lifestyle in Dinnington within 10 years. All we need is the **desire** to start this process.

The need to retain and wherever possible enhance the provision of health and recreation facilities was a major theme of the consultation as was the impact that development will have on the capacity of some facilities, especially schools and medical related areas. There should be a wider range of facilities such as doctor's surgeries, especially in response to the Parish's ageing population and health and other trends which means that it will be less healthy than in previous years.

## Existing Important Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

Achieving a sustainable, healthy and proud Dinnington means it is important that such facilities are available locally and accessible.

The consultation shows that residents greatly value these community facilities and wish to see the most important ones retained and, wherever possible, enhanced.

This is in accordance with national and local planning policies both of which emphasise the need to ensure sufficient community facilities and services the community needs and, “guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs<sup>6</sup>”.

Through the preparation of the Plan, a number of key community facilities have been identified as being especially important to the community due to their location, accessibility to all sections of the community and generally the valuable role they play. These include churches, the recently refurbished Town Hall, primary and secondary schools, post office, numerous pubs, medical facilities and a theatre. It also includes a purpose-built resource centre which brings together a library, Rotherham MBC Neighbourhood Partnership Office, community café, pre-school facility and other sporting, leisure and community uses into a single purpose, conveniently located building. The community wishes their special role to be acknowledged and recognised. Whilst there are many other important community facilities in the Parish, these are considered to have more local significance. The Group considered it important that they focused on the most important ones.

### **POLICY HLC 1: EXISTING IMPORTANT HEALTH, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

*Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, a community facility will not be supported, unless the building or facility is replaced by an equivalent or by better provision in terms of quantity and quality in an equally suitable location, or it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of Rotherham MBC in consultation with the Parish Council that the service or facility is unviable or is no longer required by the community. The following facilities are considered to be especially important to the community:*

- *Athorpe Lodge Care Home.*
- *Church of St.John’s, Throapham.*
- *Dinnington Group Surgery.*
- *Dinnington High School.*

<sup>6</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf)



- *Dinnington Methodist Church.*
- *Dinnington Primary School.*
- *Dinnington Resource Centre.*
- *Dinnington Rugby Club.*
- *High Nook Community Centre.*
- *Job Centre Building.*
- *Lyric Theatre.*
- *Market Area.*
- *Middleton Hall.*
- *Monksbridge Farm Public House.*
- *Squirrel Public House.*
- *St. Joseph's Catholic Church.*
- *St. Joseph's Primary School.*
- *St. Joseph's Court Community Centre*
- *St. Leonards Church.*
- *Ye Old Village Club.*

## New and Enhanced Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

In addition to retaining existing important health, leisure and community facilities, it is important that new ones are encouraged for the expected growth, and the changing needs of its population.

The quality of some of the health and leisure facilities is considered to be poor in terms of their physical accessibility, energy efficiency, comfort and general repair.

The provision of adequate and accessible health facilities is essential to a healthy and sustainable community. Dinnington plays an important role in providing health facilities over a wide area including doctor's surgeries, chiropodists, dentists, pharmacies and related services. There are increasing pressures on medical facilities due to inward migration and an increasingly elderly population as well as the above levels of ill health. Although the provision of health services in Dinnington will, to a large extent, depend on Central Government and Local Authority policies, the Plan can play an important role in highlighting and supporting the special need for enhanced medical facilities

In supporting active and walkable communities, homes, shops, schools, community facilities, open spaces and sports facilities should be within easy reach of each other, creating the conditions for active travel, supporting linked trips and increasing the awareness and convenience to participate in sport and

physical activity.<sup>77</sup> The Plan supports the principle of clustered local facilities within the Parish that are well located in relation to walking, cycling and public transport and road infrastructure.

## **POLICY HLC 2: NEW HEALTH, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

*Development proposals involving the provision of a new or enhanced community facility will be supported where it can be demonstrated to Rotherham MBC in consultation with the Town Council that it contributes to the health and wellbeing of local communities. Where possible facilities should:*

- 1. be co-located and seek where applicable, to integrate services including health, education, social services, arts and leisure;*
- 2. support public transport use or opportunities for active travel; enabling convenient, safe and attractive access;*
- 3. be of a siting, scale and design which respects the character of the surrounding area, including any historic and natural assets; and*
- 4. demonstrate that the local road network is capable of accommodating the additional movements.*

*Development proposals involving the provision of new or enhanced medical facilities or a new leisure centre to serve the Parish will be especially supported and encouraged.*

### Assets of Community Value

The registering of Community Assets is a separate (non-planning) legal process, initiated by a town or Parish council or a community group, and undertaken by Rotherham MBC. The inclusion of these sites on Rotherham MBC's Register of Assets of Community Value will provide the Town Council, or other community organisations within the Parish, with an opportunity to bid to acquire them on behalf of the local community, should the asset come up for sale on the open market.

Two assets in Dinnington have already been registered with Rotherham MBC. These are:

- Birkdale Recreation Ground; and
- New Street Office

Through the consultation process, the community has identified a few other community assets which are considered especially important for community life. The Town Council, therefore, intends to put them forward to Rotherham MBC for designation as an Asset of Community Value. Legislation does not permit a Neighbourhood Plan or the Town Council to designate them.

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<sup>77</sup> Sport England

The Plan can, however, support the retention and where possible the enhancement of any assets designated by Rotherham MBC as an Asset of Community Value.

### **POLICY HLC 3: ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

*Development proposals that support the longevity, appreciation and community value of an Asset of Community Value will be encouraged. Development proposals for a change of use that would result in the loss of an Asset of Community Value will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is not viable.*

## **4.3 EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

### **Where are we:**

- Levels of economic activity are relatively high and above the Borough and national norms.
- Levels of skills, educational attainment and entrepreneurship are below the national average.
- There is evidence that everyone is benefitting equally from the new economic, employment and other opportunities.

### **Where do we want to be:**

- That Dinnington is the main employment centre for the town and the wider area.
- It offers a range of employment opportunities that ensure that the Town retains a young and vibrant population and creates wealth within the town.
- It has an integrated and sustainable approach to economic development which balances the need for economic growth with other key priorities and needs.

### **Introduction**

Dinnington acts as the focus for economic development for the Town and the wider hinterland. This recognised in the Rotherham Local Plan, which seeks to strengthen its economic role for the Town and the wider area.

It has a rich industrial past and was for many years the key commercial and leisure town in the area. Traditionally it looked the coal industry for jobs and economic growth. However, following its demise, it is trying to develop a modern and prosperous local economy that continues to provide wealth and jobs for the Parish and the wider area.

It is home to hundreds of wide and diverse range of small businesses employing less than ten people. Unlike in former times, there is no longer one dominant employer.

These businesses are to be found across the Parish, especially in the many sites and buildings specifically earmarked for businesses. These notably include the Dinnington Business Park to the west of the Town Centre on the site of the former Colliery site. This alone covers 85 acres. A large proportion

of these businesses have migrated to Dinnington attracted initially by Regeneration Incentives. A consequence of this inward migration has been the increase in inward commuting of employees to sustain these businesses due in part to a relatively low skills base locally.

While the economy is generally sound, challenges remain. It fares poorly on many of the other key economic indicators when compared with the national average. A good example is skills and qualifications. The proportion of people in the Parish aged over 16 years with no qualifications is higher (19%) than the national average (15%), but below the Borough average (21%). There is also some evidence that levels of entrepreneurship are relatively low as are average earnings. A high (60%) and growing number of people commute out of the Parish for the work.

The consultation shows that there is concern that the Parish does not have a balanced local economy that meets the needs of everyone. A major theme was the need to ensure that all local people benefited from the new economic and employment opportunities. This is seen as vital in creating a sustainable and economically prosperous community. In particular in reducing the growing number of people in the Parish who commute out to work and responding to the Town's ageing population.

The Plan seeks to do this by helping to create the conditions for all people to participate in the economy, by protecting existing local employment opportunities, improving access to training opportunities, and supporting educational developments at all levels.

## Protecting Existing Employment Sites

Dinnington has a core industrial area which is centred along the western edge of the Parish. In addition, there are smaller pockets of industrial activity which are to be found scattered across it.

Many hundreds of different types of businesses, from new build developments to small-scale manufacturing and workshop spaces. These businesses provide significant job and other economic opportunities for the Parish and the wider area.

A feature of the Parish is that its historical development has meant that some residential and employment areas have developed simultaneously, and businesses are sometimes situated within or adjacent to residential areas. This includes a growing number of residents who work from home. The vast majority of such businesses can operate and prosper in residential areas without issue. There have been some concerns, such as noise, parking and traffic with a small number of sites and buildings that were not designed for, nor can be easily adapted to, meet modern business needs.

National and local planning policy seeks to retain existing employment sites and buildings unless there are special circumstances (such as it does not meet the needs of modern businesses) to justify its loss. A policy position this Plan supports.

The provision of employment land is considered to be more than adequate. A view shared by consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Plan. Discussions with the local business community did not identify any significant appetite for growth in the planning period that would require additional industrial space. This view is also borne out by authoritative studies and reports. A good example is the Sheffield & Rotherham Joint Employment Land Review : Final Report (2015)<sup>8</sup>. Part of

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplanexamination/downloads/file/67/eb35\\_economy\\_-\\_sheffield\\_and\\_rotherham\\_joint\\_employment\\_land\\_review\\_2015](https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplanexamination/downloads/file/67/eb35_economy_-_sheffield_and_rotherham_joint_employment_land_review_2015)

the evidence informing the Local Plan, this review in para 12.11 is stated, *“At the local authority level, and in purely quantitative terms, Rotherham would therefore appear to have more land than the area is anticipated to require over the study period in order to meet projected need”*. More specifically in relation to Dinnington and the wider southern Rotherham, it added in para 12.19, *“more than two thirds (68%) of the total supply of available land in Rotherham are concentrated within the area. Given that Southern Rotherham currently accounts for just one third (33%) of the Borough’s employment floorspace, however, the supply of land in the area could be considered to be somewhat high”*.

The number of people living in Dinnington is increasing, and the makeup of the Borough’s population is changing. Key changes include an increasing number of children in the borough and a rapidly growing older population. Responding to changes in the way we live our lives including how we work, shop and spend our leisure time together with how we access services are key challenges for the Plan. Many people want to live in Dinnington, but there is a limited supply of affordable homes. It is important to ensure that we help keep Dinnington’s social mix and make sure that the borough does not become polarised between wealthy and less well-off residents. We face the challenge of providing a diverse range of housing and ensuring we provide mixed areas with sustainable communities. Employment is the biggest factor affecting income inequality, and so we need to ensure we get more people into work and help them to develop their careers in the long-term. This can be supported through a range of measures, including helping people into work or training and using links with businesses. There are also significant health inequalities in the Borough. The community wants to ensure that members of our community have access to good housing, jobs, skills, training and education, public transport and health and community facilities to help promote equality and inclusion, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed and nobody gets left behind. Achieving strong and resilient communities is a key challenge. Addressing these inequalities and improving Dinnington’s health and wellbeing, both physical and mental, goes beyond improving access to medical facilities and includes a range of measures to improve our social and physical environment.

There is a major concern that not everyone in the Parish who wishes to do so is in an equal position to participate and fully benefit from the new job and economic opportunities. It has relatively higher levels of disability and unskilled workers as well as lower levels of entrepreneurship and skill levels. These issues are well documented and hinder the ability of local people and businesses to access and maximise employment and business opportunities, both in Dinnington and more widely.

Addressing this requires action across several areas including providing not only employment, but also further education, training and apprenticeship opportunities as well as a range of housing, social, leisure and service services. It is considered that Dinnington is better placed than many areas to do this.

Although many actions required are beyond the narrow remit of a neighbourhood plan covering as they do non-planning issues, it is considered that the Plan can make an important contribution.

There are many examples of good practice of how action through the planning system at the local level can do this. This could include improved access to training opportunities, including developing partnerships with local companies to foster apprenticeship schemes, supporting educational developments at all levels, the provision of start-up units and the use of developer contributions.

Special mention here should be made to transport links. Many of the main employment areas are poorly connected by foot, cycle or by public transport to the Town centre and residential areas, and

only conveniently accessible by car. There are no safe and easy walking routes between Dinnington Business Park and the surrounding residential areas, for example. Not only does this deter pedestrian movement but hinders the ability of some local people to access local employment opportunities.

It should also be noted that when we refer to new economic and employment opportunities it means this in its widest sense encompassing all sectors of the economy including the construction sector. There are many good examples of how the planning system has secured training and local employment, including the use of local labour and contractors through developer agreements as part of a major development proposal.

This is considered especially relevant to Dinnington given the level of development that is likely to place here in the coming years.

The Plan supports measures that help create the conditions for all people to participate in the economy.

## **POLICY EES 1: FOSTERING ECONOMIC AND JOBS GROWTH**

*The Plan supports the retention of existing suitable sites and buildings for employment use. Their use for non-employment uses will only be permitted in special circumstances for example where there is no reasonable prospect of the site or buildings being used for employment purposes.*

*The Plan will support and encourage actions and development proposals which will create employment and business opportunities within the Parish. This especially includes, where appropriate:*

- a) the promotion of local employment and training opportunities such as through local labour agreements, including as part of a Section 106 agreement or similar;*
- b) setting up or improving initiatives to develop skills and employment opportunities for local people, including the provision of small and starter units for new businesses;*
- c) the provision of employment units of varying sizes to meet the needs of a wide range of employers and;*
- d) the provision and enhancement of cycle, walking and public transport links to the main housing areas and the Town Centre.*

## **4.4 Shops and Town Centre**

### **Where are we:**

- The Parish generally has a good provision of shops.

- Dinnington Town Centre continues to act as the heart of the Parish, but its attractiveness could be improved.
- There is concern about the spread of hot food takeaways

#### **Where do we want to be:**

- Dinnington Town Centre and shopping areas are popular, vibrant and viable.
- Dinnington Town Centre is the main shopping destination for residents of the Parish and the wider area.
- There is a suitable and sustainable provision of hot food takeaways.

## Introduction

The Parish generally has a good provision of shops that meet many of the day-to-day requirements of local people. The consultation shows that they are important to residents and they wish to see action taken to support their viability and vitality

## Dinnington Town Centre

This shopping provision is focused in Dinnington Town Centre. It is a fairly compact, traditional, town centre that straddles both sides of Laughton Road. It continues to act as the focus for the local community, civic and shopping activity albeit more modestly than historically. It provides a decent range of shops as well as other uses that complement and enhance its role, such as the Lyric Theatre and Dinnington Resource Centre. There are popular Tesco and Aldi supermarkets and nearby transport interchange on the western edge of the Town Centre; these are beneficial but may have skewed the footfall away from its traditional core. There is a good amount of public and private surface car parks in and around it. Some residential properties are also to be found within it.

It is well used and continues to perform adequately, but it faces challenges. Its importance as the main shopping area for the Parish and the wider area has declined and now performs a more local function. It has seen a gradual decline in 'traditional forms' of shops such as those offering fresh food and clothing, a decline which has only been partly offset by an increase in other forms of shops, such as restaurants and hot food takeaways. It also faces competition from other nearby shopping centres such as Worksop, Meadowhall, Sheffield and Crystal Peaks as well as other forms of shopping, particularly online.

The need to enhance its role and attractiveness were identified as a top improvement priority for residents and businesses through the consultation.

The consultation especially highlighted the poor appearance of some of the buildings and spaces which detracted from its character and charm, the need for improved shopping facilities (it does not have many that would be expected for a town of its size to have, for example, a bank, the last one closed recently); the growth of hot food takeaways and vehicular and pedestrian access. Some people that more could be done to improve safety and crime prevention. In addition, they wish to see all development proposals (including outside of the Town Centre) contribute to maintaining its character and attractiveness wherever possible.

Policy CS12 (Managing Change in Rotherham's Retail and Service Centres) of the Rotherham Core Strategy: Local Plan identifies Dinnington as one of three town centres in Rotherham. It seeks to ensure that retail, leisure, service and other main town centre uses will be directed to it if it is of a scale compatible with the centre and will not undermine its vitality and viability (i.e. no large supermarkets, for example). In addition, the Core Strategy specifically supports development proposals that will, *“Improve the range of retail and service provision, reduce vacancies and improve townscape and landscaping”* in Dinnington Town Centre”. It and the accompanying Rotherham Sites Local Plan Sites and Policies document then sets out detailed policies to ensure the delivery. The Local Plan Sites and Policies Documents also defines a boundary for Dinnington Town Centre as well as Primary Shopping Frontages within it where core shopping uses will be concentrated. This Plan supports policies that maintain and enhance the role and attractiveness of Dinnington Town Centre.

### **POLICY STC 1: MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE ROLE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

*Development proposals that maintain and enhance the attractiveness, vitality and viability of Dinnington Town Centre as the primary local location for retail, leisure, community and other uses appropriate to a town centre will be supported.*

As an integral part of the development of the Plan, specialist planners and urban designers from the consultants AECOM were commissioned to create urban design proposals and concepts for the Town Centre. They have identified the best opportunities so that the Town Centre’s built environment can be improved as development takes place. A copy of this report can be found at the Town Council website at [www.dinningtonstjohns.org](http://www.dinningtonstjohns.org).

A summary of key proposals was:

- *“Widen narrow foot way to improve walking conditions and pedestrian flow;*
- *Extend one-way traffic to New Street to extend on street parking;*
- *Implement restrictions on parking times to encourage passing trade;*
- *Resurface paving with high-quality materials to emphasise Laughton Road’s function as the towns’ central retail and gathering space;*
- *Provide planting with raised edges or adjoining seating to prevent vehicle overrun and trees;*
- *De-clutter the Constable Lane gateway at the pedestrian walkway beside the Lyric Theatre to improve legibility and increase footfall to Laughton Road;*
- *Provide interpretation / signage / gateway feature at the bus station end of the Constable Lane pedestrian walkway to enhance gateway function and raise local distinctiveness with reference to Dinnington’s mining heritage;*



- *Provide public art or mural on blank wall to the Lyric Theatre, replacing a blank wall with something of local cultural relevance;*
- *Enhance the blank wall on the Lyric Theatre with replacement of roller shutters to create more active space;*
- *Open up or enhance the existing gateway feature on Laughton Road to widen constricted access and improve visual and spatial connection between Laughton Road and Constable Lane;*
- *Opportunity to enhance underutilised public space at Laughton Road and create clutter free pocket public space with high quality materials; and*
- *Opportunity for increased high quality seating and provision of planting and trees to edge of space to prevent vehicle entry into the space and promote Laughton Road as a gathering space”.*

Consultation with the community has confirmed that the proposals provide a sound basis to improve the Town Centre. This will be used to work with developers, Rotherham MBC, Town Council and other relevant organisations to realise improvements, including through developer contributions.

## **POLICY STC 2: ENHANCING THE CHARACTER, ATTRACTIVENESS, SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

*Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they contribute to enhancing the character, attractiveness, safety and accessibility of Dinnington Town Centre, especially by:*

- a) ensuring that it is of an appropriate scale, is well designed and is of a mass, layout and materials that respond positively to the character of the town centre;*
- b) improving the public realm; and*
- c) improving the town centre environment and legibility for pedestrians, cyclists and car users.*

*They should have regard to and respond positively to the general principles as outlined in the Dinnington Town Centre Design Guide (2017) and summarised above.*

The Dinnington Town Centre Guide (2017) specifically highlighted and detailed the role of well-designed shop fronts in improving the appearance of the Town Centre. It made a number of suggestions on how this shop front design could be enhanced.

This Guide included specific and tailored shop front design guidance for retail and other uses in the Town Centre wishing to install or replace a shop front. The guidance is intended to accompany and build upon the existing the Rotherham Interim Planning Statement Shopfront Design Guidance (2016)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/960/rotherham\\_town\\_centre\\_shopfront\\_design\\_guide\\_2006pdf](https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/960/rotherham_town_centre_shopfront_design_guide_2006pdf)

Generally, the Town Centre has good quality shop fronts, but there has been concern that its character has been eroded by poor and unsympathetic alterations.

Where any proposal would require a new shopfront, these will be encouraged to be of good design and enhance the character of the Town. Particular attention should be given to retaining and reinstating traditional shop frontages; security grilles; lighting; and retention of any heritage features, such as nameplates, decorative stonework etc.

### **POLICY STC 3: SHOP FRONT DESIGN IN DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

*Development proposals to alter, replace or introduce shop fronts will be required to be of high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture, by:*

- a) being visually attractive;*
- b) enhancing streets and spaces through quality design and architecture;*
- c) promoting visual links between the interior of the shop and the street;*
- d) being suitable in terms of crime prevention, community safety and security;*
- e) conforming to the general principles and objectives as outlined in the Shop Front Design Guide Section of the Dinnington Town Centre Design Guide (2017); and;*
- f) having regard to the Rotherham Interim Planning Statement Shopfront Design Guidance (2016)*

### Shops Outside Dinnington Town Centre

Outside of Dinnington Town Centre, there are several shops to be found scattered across the Parish. Some are to be found in purpose build parades such as at off Station Road and Laughton Road; others are stand alone.

All are important for meeting the day-to-day needs of the communities they serve, especially for the above average number of people in the Parish without access to a car and with mobility issues.

The consultation shows residents would also like to see these maintained and enhanced.

This is also in accordance with national and local planning policy which aim to retain and promote neighbourhood shops that meet a local need.

### **POLICY STC 4: SHOPS OUTSIDE DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

*Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, neighbourhood shops outside of the defined Dinnington Town Centre will not be*

*supported unless it can be demonstrated to Rotherham MBC in consultation with the Town Council that:*

- In the case of an adverse impact, that the benefits of development outweigh the impact and that opportunities to mitigate the impact have been considered; or*
- in the case of a loss of use, that it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer viable, and the site has been actively and appropriately marketed for at least six months for shopping purposes at a price commensurate with market values.*

*The development of local shopping facilities to serve the day-to-day needs of their immediate community will be supported subject to satisfying the sequential and, where appropriate, the impact test requirements set out in NPPF and Policy CS12, and satisfying other planning policy requirements including transport, environmental and amenity considerations.*

## Hot Food Takeaways

National Planning Policy advocates a planning role in enabling a healthier environment by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices.

Hot food takeaways (Use Class A5) include shop types such as chip shops, kebab shops, Indian and other takeaways, but not sandwich bars and restaurants and cafes as well as Restaurants (Use Class A3) with takeaway facilities.

A proliferation of hot food takeaways and other outlets selling fast food can harm the vitality and viability of local centres and undermine attempts to promote the consumption of healthy food, particularly in areas close to schools.

In recent years, there has been a big increase in the number of hot food takeaways in Dinnington in the Town Centre and more widely.

Whilst it is recognised that hot food takeaways can contribute to the mix of shopping uses and can provide a popular service to local communities as well as providing employment opportunities, the view is that the Parish now is saturated with hot food takeaways, many of which are near schools.

Hot food takeaways are detracting from the retail offer in the Parish. They are displacing other shops to the detriment of the Town Centre and residents. Clustering of hot food takeaways can lead to dead frontages during daytime hours.

The consultation also shows the community is concerned about some of the negative aspects sometimes associated with these uses, including noise and disturbance, antisocial behaviour and increased litter, especially if several of these uses are clustered together, or are in primarily residential areas.

They are also linked to the growing levels of obesity in the Parish and more widely. Rotherham has one of the highest levels of people with poor health and being overweight. This is evidenced in a series of authoritative reports and studies, just to name two good examples:

- The results of Sport England's Active People Survey (2013-2015), showed that 76% of adults in Rotherham are over-weight or obese. A rate that is well above the national average (65%) and the highest of the 300 plus local authority areas in England. The level in Dinnington is understood to be above the Rotherham average.
- Another good example is the latest National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data produced at small area level for 2014/15 to 2016/17 combined (3 years). This shows that obesity at Reception Year (aged 4-5 years) in Dinnington ward was 12.6% (Rotherham 10.5%, England, 9.4%) and at Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) was 20.7% (Rotherham 21.9%, England, 10.6%)

This is one of the greatest health challenges facing the Parish and the wider area. There is a clear link between increased body fat (obesity) and the risk of medical conditions, including Type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart and liver disease. As the 2011 Rotherham's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011<sup>10</sup> states, "*weight management, smoking cessation services designed to increase healthy life expectancy have the potential to substantially reduce demand on services in later life. Evidence suggests that early preventative initiatives have a lasting impact on community service users*".

"Diet is a key determinant both of general health and obesity levels. Hot food takeaways are a source of cheap, energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods. Research indicates that once a child or adolescent develops obesity, they are more likely to remain obese through adulthood, have poor health and reduced life expectancy. The proliferation of hot food takeaway food shops in the Parish is, therefore, a cause for concern.

The Planning system can make an important contribution to here. As para 06 of the Government's Planning Practice Guide on Health<sup>11</sup>, states, "*Planning can influence the built environment to improve health and reduce obesity and excess weight in local communities. Local planning authorities can have a role in enabling a healthier environment by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices.*"

- *Local planning authorities and planning applicants could have particular regard to the following issues:*
- *proximity to locations where children and young people congregate such as schools, community centres and playgrounds*
- *evidence indicating high levels of obesity, deprivation and general poor health in specific locations*
- *over-concentration and clustering of certain use classes within a specified area*
- *odours and noise impact*
- *traffic impact*

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.rotherham.nhs.uk/files/Organisational/Comissioning/JSNA%20Report%202011%20-%20Summary.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

- *refuse and litter”*

The Rotherham Local Plan contains a policy (SP 22) on Hot Food Takeaways. This seeks to restrict them to the defined and town, district and local centres (but outside of Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages) and limit their number and concentration with these areas.

The Plan provides further detail and context to accompany this more general Borough-wide planning policy. It also reflects that their spread and some of the associated challenges are more of a challenge in the Parish than the Borough and the UK. Other similar neighbourhood plans have successfully introduced such as a policy.

Some of the key aspects of the policy are that it will not permit hot food takeaways within 800 metres of a primary school, secondary school and college. It is considered that 800 meters is an appropriate distance - research and studies (The Takeaway Toolkit<sup>12</sup> developed by the Greater London Authority, and Policy SP 62 in the Rotherham Local Plan, for example) indicate that pupils and students may view anything figure below 800 metres as an acceptable walking distance to access a takeaway. Further, it is considered necessary to include primary as well as secondary schools, as while primary school age children are not allowed out of school at lunchtime and are usually accompanied to and from school there were concerns about use of takeaways by them and their parents on the way home from school.

An approach and policy that is supported by Rotherham MBC as well as health and other partners.

#### **POLICY STC 5: HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS**

*Hot food takeaways (including A3 restaurants with takeaway facilities) will not be permitted where they are within 800 metres of a primary school, secondary school or college (measured in a straight line from any pedestrian access to the school or college), except where they are within a defined town, district or local centre as specified in the Rotherham Local and satisfy Rotherham Local Plan Policy SP22 Hot Food Takeaways.*

## **4.5 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Where are we now:**

- Dinnington generally has a generally good and accessible natural environment.
- Much of the countryside surrounding the town is protected from development by its designation as Green Belt.
- There are many important green spaces within the Parish.

### **Where do we want to be:**

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/takeawaystoolkit.pdf>

- That Dinnington has a good and high-quality natural environment.
- That the Green Belt status of much of the Parish is retained.
- That important local green spaces in the town, which are not in the Green Belt are protected and wherever possible enhanced as an enabler to improving the Health and Wellbeing of the Community.

## Introduction

The landscape of the Parish is largely rural and typified by gently rolling countryside that surrounds and provide an important context and setting for Dinnington Town.

Within the Town itself, whilst it has seen development especially during the 20th century, it retains large areas of green spaces.

Access to open space has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Living close to areas of green space, parks, woodland and other open space can improve physical and mental health regardless of social background.

This landscape and green spaces are highly valued by residents for a wide range of reasons, including visual amenity, informal and formal recreational value, tranquillity, promoting health and wellbeing and supporting the richness of wildlife that can be found in the Parish. Their protection and enhancement are top priorities for the Plan. **Once a green space is lost it is lost forever**, was a major theme of the consultation. Many of the residents of Dinnington have ancestors that were instrumental in the changes to access to green spaces and the natural environment and, therefore, there is an especially very strong desire to ensure that any loss of the natural environment is strongly resisted.

## Green Belt

Much of the countryside surrounding Dinnington is designated as Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary is tightly drawn around the built-up parts of Dinnington.

Agriculture is highly productive in the area, and the Green Belt incorporates land of high agricultural value classified as Grade 2 (very good).

Green Belt is a national designation the main purpose of which is to protect the land around towns and cities from urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Within the Green Belt, there are strict planning controls over the type of development, which can take place within it and are only allowed in special circumstances; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

National and local Planning policy is clear in its support for the Green Belt, emphasising its essential characteristics of openness and permanence. It also states that inappropriate development (such as the construction of new buildings), which is harmful to the role and function of the Green Belt, should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

National rules governing the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans mean that under present rules it cannot have a detailed policy on the Green Belt. Only a Local Plan can set the detailed Green Belt boundaries and associated policies. These are contained in the approved Rotherham Local Plan.

A Plan, however, can reflect and articulate the strong community support for the continued role and function of the Green Belt in the local area. It has been an effective planning tool that is essential to retain the distinct character of Dinnington and help focus development in more sustainable locations, while providing opportunities for recreation and leisure close to where people live, and contains many important assets including sites of nature conservation value

### **POLICY NE 1: Green Belt**

*The Plan supports the continued designation of the open countryside outside of the built-up part of Dinnington as Green Belt. Within the Green Belt, there will be a strong presumption against development that would conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt or adversely affects its open character.*

## Local Green Spaces

Outside of the Green Belt, there are numerous other green spaces that are to be found in the built-up parts of the Parish. These include play areas, playing pitches, communal spaces within housing areas, cemeteries, churchyards, allotments, woodlands and semi-natural green spaces and woodlands

It is important to protect and where possible, enhance this network of multi-functional open space to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play plus as a habitat for wildlife and productive landscape such as allotments.

The protection of important local green spaces was a top priority for the community and is also an objective of Rotherham's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and other important plans and strategies . In addition, the consultation showed that residents considered that the maintenance, quality and safety of some of some of the existing spaces could and should be enhanced.

It is, therefore, important that future development does not lead to further loss of green space and where possible enhances local provision. Community consultation and research undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified several green spaces outside of the Green Belt (important green spaces in the Green Belt will have strong protection from inappropriate development by their designation as such) that are of importance to the community for their recreational, amenity, wildlife or historical value.

Some of these sites are protected through Policies in the Rotherham Local Plan. This identifies and protects the following green spaces (Listed to be added following discussion with RMBC).

As these sites already have existing protections. The Plan does not seek to duplicate these. However, through the preparation of the Plan other important local green spaces, which the community wishes to see equally protected, have been identified.

National planning policy enables a Neighbourhood Plan to give special protection to green spaces of local significance by their designation as a Local Green Space. Where land is designated as a Local Green Space, its development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances.

To be designated as Local Green Space, however, it must meet specified criteria as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. These include:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green space concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

After careful consideration, several green spaces have been identified that are considered to have the greatest local importance and meet the criteria for designation.

## **POLICY NE 2: Local Green Spaces**

*Development proposals that would result in the loss of an identified Local Green Space (as shown on the accompanying plans and identified below) will only be supported other than in very special circumstances:*

- *Dinnington High School Playing Fields, Doe Quarry Lane.*
- *Leys Lane Pocket Park at the junction of Leys Lane and Lamb Lane.*
- *Former Miners Welfare Ground (that part not identified for housing in the approved Sites and Policies Document 2018).*
- *Lodge Lane Recreation Ground (home of Dinnington Rugby Union Football Club).*
- *Green Space on the corner of High Nook Road and Keats Drive.*
- *Green Space on the corner of High Nook Road, Byron Road and Shakespeare Drive.*

## Green Infrastructure

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature. In addition to important environmental gains, access to nature and biodiversity also contributes to mental health and wellbeing.

Dinnington supports a number of nationally important habitats, notably:

- Deciduous Woodland.
- Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland.
- Good quality semi-improved grassland.



Species of birds found locally include, Corn Bunting, Grey Partridge, Lapwing and Redshank.

Local Wildlife Sites are areas that hold important, distinctive and/or threatened species or habitats. They provide refuges for wildlife and wildflowers. Dinnington has five designated Local Wildlife Site:

- Swinston Hill Woods.
- Dinnington Colliery Tip.
- Dinnington Open Public Space.
- Little Moor.
- Dinnington Marsh.

Recent years have seen several actions which have improved wildlife and wildflowers in the Parish. These include the regeneration of the former Dinnington Colliery tip and tree planting. This is something that the Plan supports.

The Parish falls within the Southern Magnesium Limestone National Character Area typified by open, rolling arable farmland enclosed by hedgerows with plantation woodlands. Natural England identifies a number of environmental opportunities for the character area. Those especially pertinent to Dinnington include:

- Protecting and managing existing fragments of semi-natural grassland habitats
- Ensuring the existing woodlands are well managed
- Promoting the use of management practices to encourage native species development and the value of parkland trees and other woodland designed landscapes
- Expanding areas of woodland cover, in particular on steeper slopes on valley sides, on degraded land and in connection with new developments, using native species as far as possible
- Ensuring that new development incorporates networks of green infrastructure that increases the permeability of the built environment where appropriate, maintains landscape character, and not only enhances biodiversity but also allows for a connection between habitat and species movement.

The Plan supports the opportunities to enhance the local environment and through policy NE3, seeks to ensure that future development does not further fragment green infrastructure, but incorporates and where possible adds to it.

### **POLICY NE 3: Green Infrastructure**

*Development proposals should ensure that existing Green infrastructure is protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to provide a high quality and accessible network of well-connected multi-functional spaces for the benefit of wildlife, residents and visitors.*

*Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they maintain the integrity of the Green Infrastructure network, and where appropriate, enhance, restore or create areas that contribute to the network.*

*Where new Green Infrastructure is proposed, the design should reflect and enhance the area's local character, including landscapes and habitats and where possible connect and enhance the existing network within the Parish.*

Figure 2 Green Belt

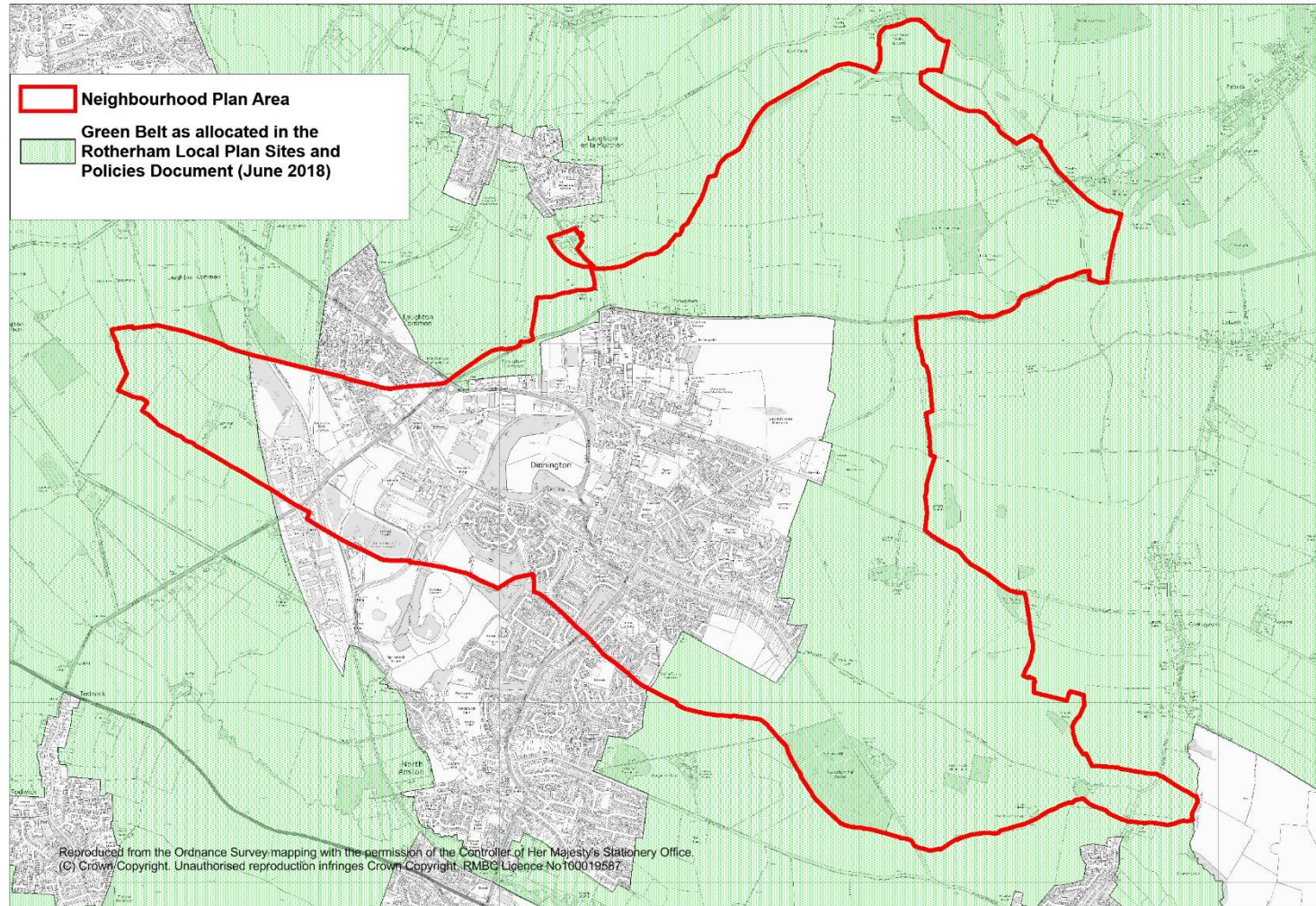
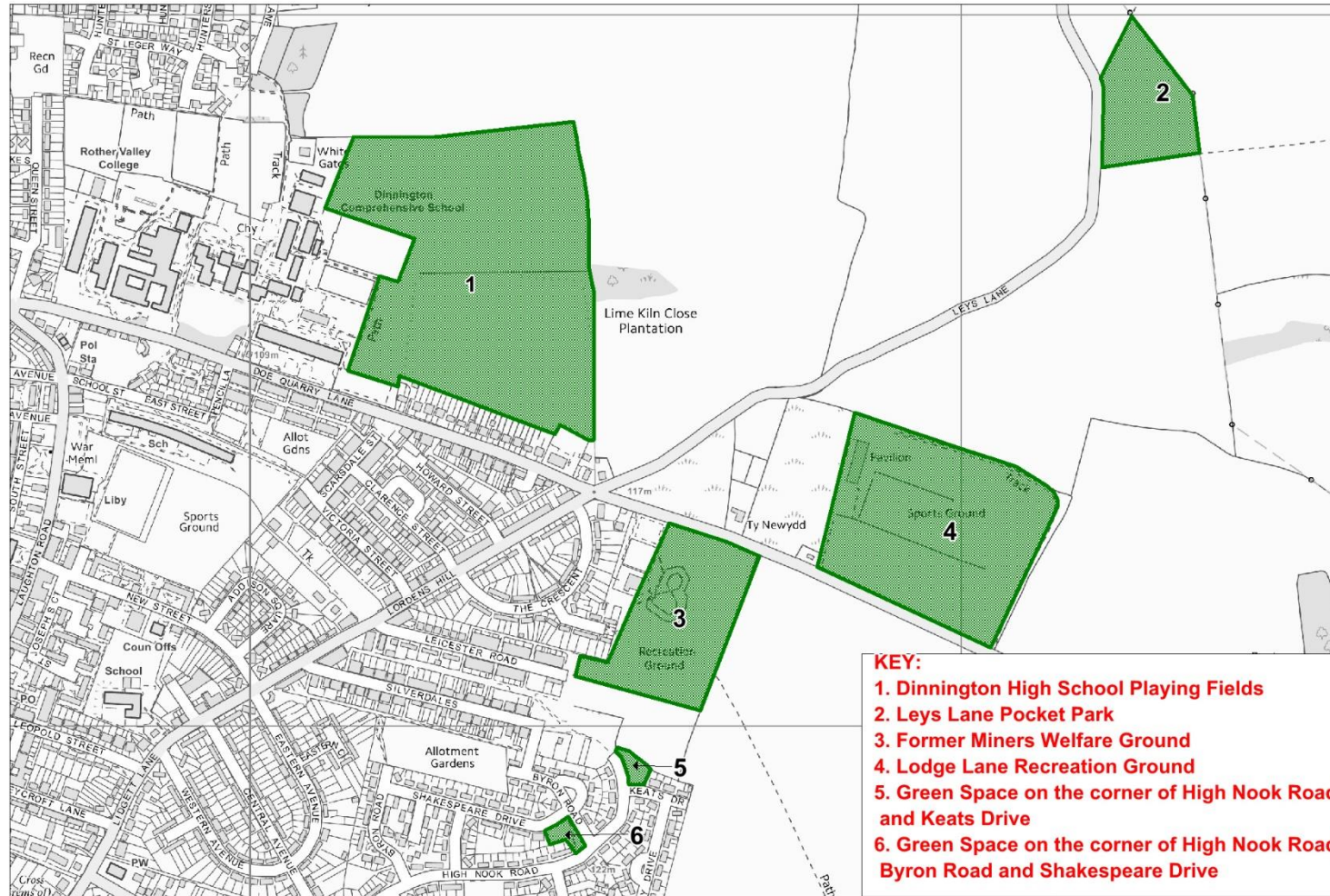


Figure 2 Proposed Local Green Spaces

### Proposed Local Green Space



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## 4.6 Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure

### Where are we now:

- Insufficient and inappropriate infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of the community as a result of development.
- Impact of development on the character of Dinnington.
- Design and layouts of developments sometimes are often not sympathetic to the needs and character of Dinnington.
- Not everyone is benefiting from growth.

### Where do we want to be:

- All new development includes suitable infrastructure to address its needs and any new impact it may have on the wider community.
- Development that integrates into and supports the Parish and contributes to meeting its existing and future needs.
- Dinnington's retains its strong sense of identity and history.

## Introduction

This section looks at the built environment and design. It includes policies which seek to conserve important heritage assets as well how new development can be designed and provide suitable infrastructure to cater for both the existing immediate and future needs of Dinnington.

## Nationally and Locally Important Heritage Assets

Dinnington has a long history. Despite its 20th century identity as a colliery village, there is evidence to suggest settlement here since Saxon times and possibly earlier. The settlement was certainly recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. This is a source of pride in the local community and makes an important contribution to its distinct character and identity.

Perhaps the most obvious demonstration of its history is the many interesting houses and other buildings and structures to be found. This includes stately homes, terraced housing built to house the workers who moved into the area on the sinking of the Dinnington Colliery at the turn of the century, typical Inter-War, the 1960s and 1970s semi and detached housing developments as well as new housing estates of modern design including some flats. Many of these buildings have been identified as being of national historic or architectural interest.

There are 16 heritage assets listed in the South Yorkshire's Historic Environment Record<sup>13</sup>, which is a database that holds information on known archaeological sites, finds, landscapes, buildings and other aspects of the historic environment. These include the site of the former pithead baths, post-medieval

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/herdetail.aspx?crit=&ctid=92&id=4734>

ridge and furrow and the site of the Roman Coin hoard, reflecting the Dinnington's rich industrial and social past.

Many of the surviving historic buildings are to be found clustered in the older parts of the Parish. Some of Dinnington's buildings are recognised as being of national importance.

A Listed Building is one that has been placed on the Government's list of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are 9 Listed Buildings (in 2017) within the Parish that have been identified as being of national significance and importance in view of their special architectural and historic interest. Notable examples include the Church of St John's which dates from the late 12th century, and Dinnington Hall a large former stately home which dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The condition of these Listed Buildings is generally good, with none identified as Heritage at Risk<sup>14</sup> by Historic England.

Designation of these buildings as a Listed Building gives them special statutory protection beyond that which can be provided through a neighbourhood plan. It is important, however, that the Plan highlights the community's appreciation of them and the important role and contribution they make to the distinctive identity and history of the Parish.

**Table 1 Listed Buildings (2017)**

4, Laughton Road,	Laughton Road	Grade II
Church of St John	St John's Road	Grade I
Dinnington Hall	Falcon Way	Grade II*,
Gate Piers and Attached Wall to Front of Throapham House,	Oldcoates Road	Grade II
Hall Farmhouse and Attached Farm Buildings Under Same Roof	14 Laughton Road	Grade II
Limelands	Church Lane	Grade II
Number 1 and Attached Wall Enclosing Courtyard (Premises of Hall Court Veterinary Group)	Laughton Road	Grade II
Remains of Cross,	Plinth opposite St Leonards Church	Grade II
Throapham House	Oldcoates Road	Grade II

## Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest

Throughout the Parish, there are buildings and structures that, while not of sufficient special historic or architectural interest to warrant designation as Listed Buildings, the community holds dear and which make a valuable contribution to a local sense of history, place and identity.

National and local planning policy enables a neighbourhood plan to offer them some level of protection by identifying them as buildings and structures of local heritage interest.

While their identification as buildings and structures of local heritage interest will not significantly change any of the planning controls affecting alteration or demolition, many buildings have permitted development rights which allow some minor building operations and in some cases demolition to be

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/findings/>

carried out without recourse to planning or other permissions. Where a planning application is needed, then its identification as a building and structures of local heritage interest will be a “material consideration,” i.e. the assets local heritage significance will be taken into account when making a decision on the development proposals.

Through the Plan process, several buildings and structures of local architectural and historic importance were identified. These include buildings and structures associated with the Parish's industrial heritage (especially mining related) and history. These have been investigated further to see if they meet recognised criteria<sup>15</sup> developed by Historic England sufficiently to warrant formal designation as a building and structures of local heritage interest. National planning policy requires that an asset must have a significant heritage interest for it to be identified as such. Those identified below are considered to meet the criteria, and the Plan supports their formal identification.

It is understood that Rotherham MBC intends in due course to produce a schedule of Locally Listed Buildings. This will involve the identification of sites across the Borough ,and there is potential that additional assets within Dinnington but not identified within the Plan could be included on this list.

## **POLICY BED 1: Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest**

*The Plan identifies the buildings and structures listed below as Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of local heritage interest.*

- *Dinnington Colliery Pit Wheel (Coronation Park).*
- *Gurnhill Trough (Coronation Park).*
- *Cenotaph (Coronation Park).*
- *Old Library (Laughton Road).*
- *Front of the Old Brewery (currently Panache Café and Fat Stan’s Tattoos, Laughton Road).*
- *Handsworth Woodhouse Co-op Buildings (currently Dave’s Computer Shop, Laughton Road).*
- *Old Dentists (Lidgett Lane).*
- *Croft Cottage (Barleycroft Lane).*
- *Middleton Institute (Barleycroft Lane).*
- *Silverdales Social Club (Lordens Hill).*
- *Carlisle Terrace (Last of “The Barracks”).*
- *Remains of the Old Blacksmiths (Laughton Road next to Twibells).*
- *The Old Plant Workshop (Bottom of Church Lane).*
- *St Leonards Church (Anglican) (including Font, Lectern and Dinnington Miners Banner)*
- *St Josephs Church (Catholic).*
- *The Old Rectory (Currently Jobcentre Plus).*
- *The Older Rectory (Laughton Road)*

<sup>15</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/local-designations/>

*Development proposals will not be supported that harm the historic significance and setting of Dinnington Character Buildings and structures.*

*Development proposals will be required to take into account the character, context and setting of these locally important assets including important views towards and from them.*

*Development will be required to be designed appropriately, taking account of local styles, materials and detail.*

## Dinnington Conservation Area

Much of Dinnington's historic past is to be found on the southern edge of Dinnington Town Centre off New Road and Laughton Road. This is the historic core of the Parish, and where many of its important heritage assets are located.

This historic core of Dinnington is protected by its designation as a Conservation Area. A conservation area is an area of special interest, the character of which should be preserved or improved for local benefit. Rotherham MBC has produced a Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area, which sets out the special characteristics of the Conservation Area, and how this can be safeguarded and enhanced.

## Design Principles and Infrastructure for New Development

The Plan seeks to guide development that will create environments that encourage healthy lifestyles and make a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the area.

Ensuring good design is important to Dinnington, as reflected in the findings of the consultation.

A recurring theme was that the additional infrastructure needs arising as a result of a proposed new development must be addressed at the earliest opportunity. There is concern that the Parish is becoming the location for large-scale development and that the infrastructure, whether that be roads, schools, medical facilities, drainage or any of the range of needs new development can bring, are not being addressed, and maintained, in a timely, long-term or integrated manner. It is imperative that development provide suitable infrastructure to cater for both immediate and further needs. Further that adequate arrangements are in place for their future maintenance especially as this has been an issue in the past.

Another major theme of the consultation was that development, especially new housing, should have regard to the existing built scale and layout and be designed so that it physically and visually integrates and connects into Dinnington. There is concern that some much of the major development that has taken place has been piecemeal and inward looking. The inward-looking nature of some of these developments has resulted in weak links to the wider Parish, and an insular and fragmented feel to them. The Dinnington Business Park (the biggest development in the Parish in recent years) has very limited safe and convenient pedestrian access to the town centre and nearby residential areas. Another good example is the single largest public open space in the Parish (the former Dinnington colliery spoil tip) which has now been landscaped, but is separated from the town centre and residential areas by



busy roads. Development must be integrated into and respond positively to the needs, character and sense of place of the Parish.

Special mention here should be made to new and enhanced pedestrian and cycling links and networks. Not only do they help foster an integrated and sustainable community, but there are also wider benefits. Cycling or walking, has wide ranging long-term health benefits. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability – such as heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes in Dinnington and more widely – are associated with physical inactivity. It is a stark fact that many people do not engage in enough physical activity to benefit their health. Even small increases in activity would have health benefits, with the largest gains coming from inactive individuals. The simplicity of walking and cycling, associated with little cost, makes it physically and economically accessible and thus one of the best and most effective ways to improve health.

There is also a strong wish that the design of proposals should more closely reflect the changing need and characteristics of Dinnington, especially its ageing population and relatively high levels of disability. It should also enhance Dinnington's distinct sense of history and identity.

Further, that development proposals should feature designs that minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. While levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across the Parish are generally relatively low, there are areas where they are very high. Addressing crime and anti-social behaviour is a top improvement priority of the community. It is considered that 'designing out crime' can make an important contribution here. For example, developments that are designed to maximise natural surveillance by making them visible from public spaces and the number of people or vehicles that pass by them.

In addition, and as articulated in the employment section, it is imperative that the benefits from the growth of Dinnington are shared by all. It has some of the most deprived communities as well as some less deprived. We wish to ensure that all members of the community have good access to housing, education, health, jobs and transport. The scale of development underway or planned for Dinnington provides a significant opportunity to do so. The Plan will support and facilitate sustainable growth that delivers development appropriate to its location and harnesses this growth to deliver clear benefits to Dinnington, as articulated in Policy EES 1.

To ensure this, development proposals will be assessed against the criteria in Policy BED2. This also provides further detail and focus to accompany existing national and borough-wide planning policy.

Developers will be asked to demonstrate through their Design and Access Statements (or more detailed masterplans if they are prepared), where required, how they have taken the criteria into account.

## POLICY BED 2: Design and Infrastructure

1. *The design and master planning of development proposals will embrace the role they can play in supporting inclusive and healthy communities.*

*Development proposals, where appropriate, will be assessed against the following:*

- a) *design and layouts that maximise opportunities to integrate development physically and functionally into the Parish through, for example, creating new connections and improving existing ones, and which allow for easy and direct movement to and from the Town Centre and wider built-up part of Dinnington for all ages;*
  - b) *provision of attractive, direct and integrated network of walking and cycling routes;*
  - c) *provision of attractive, safe, secure and accessible buildings and spaces that “design out crime and anti-social behaviour”; and are easy to get around for all, particularly for older people and those with disabilities;*
  - d) *maximises opportunities to enhance the role of Dinnington Town as the main shopping and service centre in the Parish;*
  - e) *design of new buildings and the spaces they create help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability, and accessibility of the Parish;*
  - f) *suitable infrastructure and services to address its needs and any impact it may have on local infrastructure and facilities, especially roads, health, policing and schools;*
  - g) *adequate measures for the future maintenance of open spaces, hard and soft landscaping and other public spaces and facilities; and*
  - h) *they conserve and enhance locally distinctive character having regard to scale, siting, layout, density, massing, height, landscape, appearance, material, details and access.*
2. *Any identified additional infrastructure needs arising as a result of proposed new development should be identified and addressed before planning approval is granted. Approvals will be conditioned so that, where necessary, infrastructure is in place preferable prior to development taking place, but, at a minimum, at appropriate times in the phasing of the development.*

## Development Contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy

Good access to local services is a key element of a sustainable and healthy neighbourhood and additional services will be required to support new development. Not doing so will place pressure on existing services.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new levy that is being raised on certain forms of new development, including housing. It will require developers to make a payment to Rotherham Borough Council based on the size and type of development that is proposed. The proceeds of the Levy will then be used to provide the infrastructure necessary to support growth across the Borough. A proportion of these CIL receipts will automatically be devolved to the local area (in parished areas the concerned town or Parish council) for allocation to neighbourhood priorities. This proportion is set at 25% in areas where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in force. It is additional to any site-specific planning obligation, such as a Section 106 agreement.

The amount to be charged through CIL is set out in Charging Schedule adopted by Rotherham MBC in December 2017<sup>16</sup>. It is expressed as pounds sterling (£) per square metre, on the gross internal floorspace of net additional liable development. For residential uses, the CIL charge rates vary across the Borough, for Dinnington it is £30 per sq.m.

The Rotherham Borough Council Regulation 123 List (December 2016) lists several infrastructure projects / types which Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council may fund, in whole or in part, from CIL receipts. These are mainly strategic in nature but include a number of projects which are relevant to the Parish. These are as follows:

- Doctors Surgeries.
- Public Library extension, refurbishment and redevelopment.
- Police Station expansion at Dinnington
- Dinnington, Anston & Laughton Common - primary extensions
- Dinnington, Anston & Laughton Common - secondary extension
- Improvements to existing green infrastructure, recreation and open space at
  - Local Amenity green space Laughton Road, Dinnington
  - Local Natural Undergate Road Hill, Dinnington
  - Local Amenity green space Constable Lane green, Dinnington
  - Local Natural Manor Lane natural site, Dinnington
  - Local Amenity green space St Leger Avenue Green Space
  - Laughton Common Local Amenity green space
  - Hatfield Crescent Green Space, Laughton Common

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<sup>16</sup>

file:///C:/Users/yourl/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge\_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/CIL\_Charging\_Schedule\_Dec\_2016\_R.pdf

- Local Amenity green space Breck Lane Green, Dinnington
- Local Parks Chestnut Grove Park, Dinnington
- Local Amenity green space Manor Lane, Throapham, Dinnington
- Local Amenity green space Riverside Court, Laughton Common
- Local Natural High Nook Road, Dinnington

These and the several other infrastructure projects/types identified during the preparation of the Plan have been considered. Through this process, a schedule of suitable top local priorities for investment through developer contributions has been identified. Although the order of the list is not intended to imply any priority, the Policy shows the priority types of project where the Town Council will seek to work in partnership with the Borough Council and other bodies, as appropriate, to secure their funding (either in whole or in part) through the use of planning obligations, CIL receipts and other sources.

- New sports/leisure centre.
- Enhancement and maintenance of Town Centre, in line with the Masterplan.
- More affordable housing especially for rent.
- Improved community and medical facilities, including doctor's surgeries.
- Enhanced green and other spaces.

### **POLICY BED 3: Development Contributions**

*Within new developments, contributions towards infrastructure projects/types facilities identified above as local priorities will be sought through planning obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy receipts and similar sources, where appropriate and where in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies.*

*Developers are encouraged to engage with the Town Council prior to the preparation of any planning application to confirm what these local priorities are, to ensure that where appropriate and viable, the facilities proposed to complement any development proposals reflect these aspirations.*

## **5.0 Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan**

The impact Neighbourhood Plan policies have on influencing the shape and direction of development across the Plan area during the plan period will be monitored by Dinnington St John's Town Council.

The Town Council will publish an Annual Monitoring Report. This will assess is the impact of the Plan and the policies it contains, including against agreed 'success measures'. It findings will be shared with Rotherham MBC and other partners. If it is apparent that any policy in this Plan has unintended consequences or is ineffective, it will be reviewed.

The Plan will be reviewed periodically, especially in association with the publication of future stages of the Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy, to ensure it and the Local Plan continue to work together effectively. The Town Council proposes to formally review the Plan on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of the Local Plan if this cycle is different.