

Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan: Basic Conditions Statement

Introduction

- 1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared to accompany the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan. It explains how the proposed Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2012 (as amended) (The Regulations) and how the basic conditions of neighbourhood planning and other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 have been met.
- 2 Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that Neighbourhood Development Plans must meet the following basic conditions:
 - i. the Neighbourhood Development Plan must have appropriate regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - ii. the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - iii. the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the local planning authority, in this case the Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted April 2019);
 - iv. the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan must meet the relevant EU obligations; and
 - v. prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 3 This Basic Conditions Statement addresses these requirements in four sections:
 - Section 2 demonstrates the conformity of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance;
 - Section 3 shows how the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to sustainable development;
 - Section 4 demonstrates the conformity of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan with the adopted Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted April 2019) and

- Section 5 demonstrates compliance with the appropriate EU obligations and other prescribed matters.
- 4 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement, Equality Impact Assessment (included in this document at Appendix 1) and this Basic Conditions Statement.

Submitting Body

- 5 The Neighbourhood Plan is submitted by Fleckney Parish Council, which is a statutory Qualifying Body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

Neighbourhood Area

- 6 This Plan applies to the Parish of Fleckney which was designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 24 March 2016. In accordance with part 2 of the Regulations, Harborough District Council, the local planning authority, publicised the application from Fleckney Parish Council to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The statutory six-week consultation period ended on 7 March 2016. One representation was received to this consultation. This made no specific comments on the application for a Neighbourhood Area but set out the general guidance and legislation for Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 7 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan relates only to the development and use of land within the Parish of Fleckney and to no other Neighbourhood Areas.
- 8 It is the only Neighbourhood Development Plan in the designated area. No other Neighbourhood Development Plan exists nor is being prepared for part or all of the designated area.
- 9 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2018 to 2031. This is to align with the adopted Harborough Local Plan 2011- 2031.
- 10 No provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure, minerals or waste development is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.

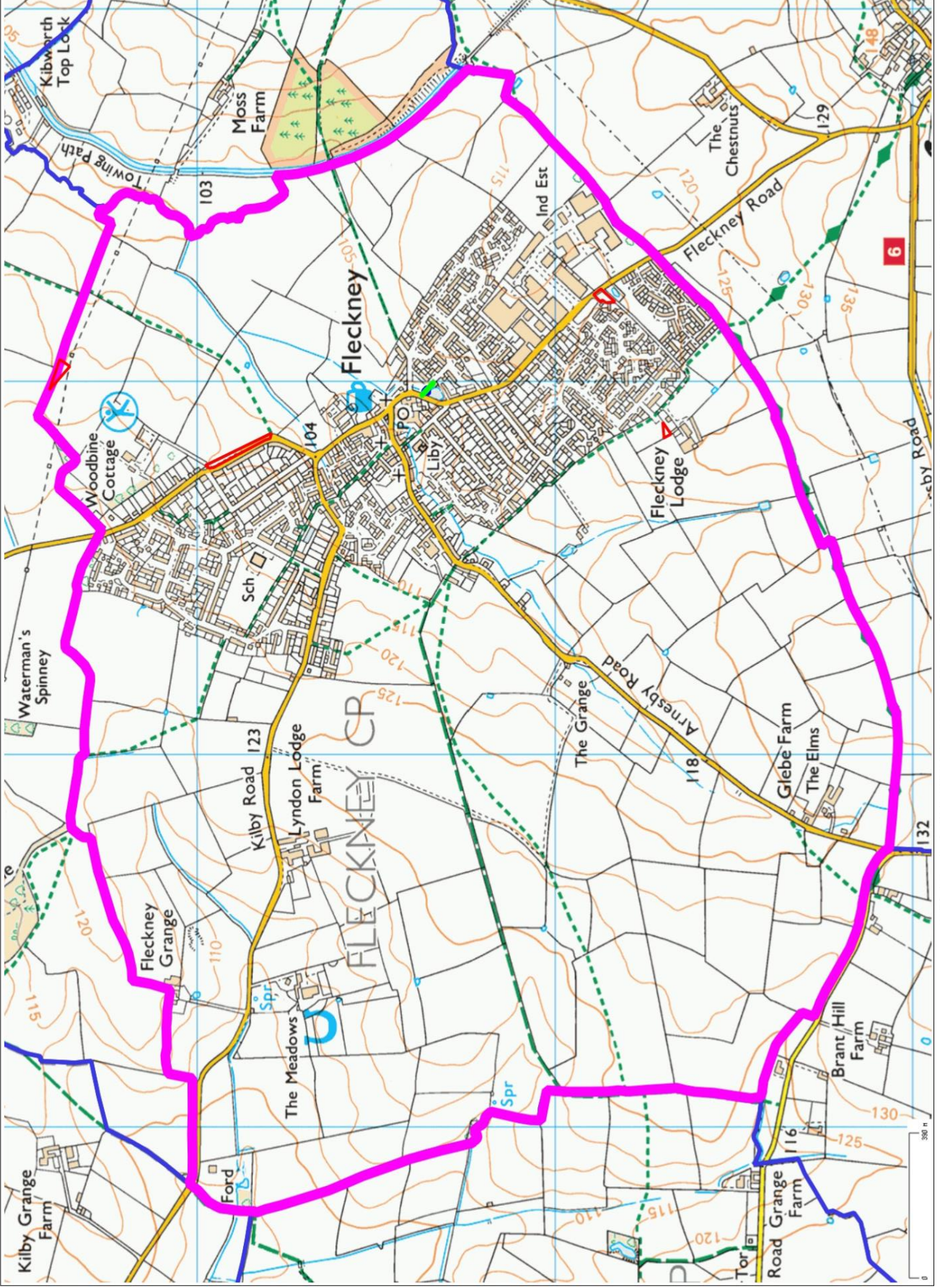
Fleckney: Location

- 11 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the Parish of Fleckney which amounts to 513 hectares. Fleckney lies 9 miles south of Leicester close to the District's border with Oadby and Wigston. Market Harborough is approximately 9 miles to the south-east. The built-up area of Fleckney extends right up to the northern boundary of the parish on Leicester Road and to the southern boundary on Saddington Road.
- 12 Originally an agricultural settlement, Fleckney developed an industrial base related initially to brick making and then the hosiery trade. The village now has a small industrial estate and post-war housing development has seen the population grow to 4,894 (2011 Census).

The village has a good range of facilities including a primary school, several shops, two public houses and two doctors' surgeries. It is well placed for access to both Leicester and Market Harborough.

Involvement of the Local Community and Stakeholders

- 13 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Fleckney Parish Council, supported by the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, with input from the community and stakeholders as set out in the accompanying Consultation Statement. The Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan has been consulted on as required by the Regulations and the responses have been recorded and changes have been made as per the schedule set out in the Summary of Consultee Responses and the Consultation Statement.



Legend
Neighbourhood Plan Area
Parishes



Conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance

- 14 It is required that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This is principally provided by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published July 2018 and it is against this version of the NPPF which the Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed.
- 15 It should be noted that not all sections of the National Planning Policy Framework will be relevant to the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan as there is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to provide policies covering all the provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework. However, where a Neighbourhood Plan expresses a policy it must have appropriate regard to the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as the Planning Practice Guidance.
- 16 A key theme that runs throughout the National Planning Policy Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF specifies that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In order to achieve sustainable development, the planning has three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental
- 17 This section considers the conformity of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan in respect of relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Planning Practice Guidance is published on a dedicated website available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance.
- 18 The areas of Planning Practice Guidance which have been particularly relevant to the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan, in addition to the guidance on Neighbourhood Planning are:
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment;
 - Design;
 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres;
 - Health and Well Being;
 - Natural Environment;

- Open space, sports and recreational facilities, public rights of way and local green space;
- Planning Obligations;
- Rural Housing;
- Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking

19 The following table identifies the sections of the National Planning Policy Framework that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan conforms with and provides a supporting commentary. Reference is also made to the relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F1: Countryside - Protects the Countryside for its intrinsic character, beauty, heritage, wildlife, natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all. States that development will be controlled in accordance with Policies SS1 and GD3 of the Harborough Local Plan.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 78 79, 83, 84, 91, 92 151, 170</p>	<p>How can the character of landscapes be assessed to inform plan-making and planning decisions? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 8-001-20140306)</p>	<p>National planning policy recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. This policy mirrors this approach and has regard to the promotion of the rural economy and allows some forms of appropriate development.</p>
<p>F2: Public Rights of Way Network – Development should protect the Rights of Way and wherever possible create new links to the footpath network. The extension of the existing network will be supported between specified locations.</p>	<p>Paragraph 98</p>	<p>What are the links between health and planning? (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 53-002-20140306) What is a healthy community? (Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 53-005-20140306)</p>	<p>This policy supports the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and supports opportunities to provide better facilities for users.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F3: Ecology and Biodiversity - Expects development not to harm the network of local ecological features and habitats. New development will be expected to maintain and enhance these features for biodiversity gain.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 170, 174</p>	<p>Is there a statutory basis for planning to seek to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible? (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 8-007-20140306)</p> <p>How should local planning authorities set about planning for biodiversity and geodiversity? (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 8-008-20140306)</p> <p>What are local ecological networks and what evidence should be taken into account in identifying and mapping them? (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 8-009-20140306)</p> <p>Why are Local Sites important and how can I find out more about them? (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 8-012-20140306)</p>	<p>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, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.</p> <p>This policy seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and seek positives in biodiversity. It also has identified and mapped components of local ecological networks and features.</p>
<p>F4: Trees and Hedges – This policy seeks to protect against the loss of ancient trees, or hedgerows or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 127, 170, 175</p>	<p>How can I find out whether an area is ‘ancient woodland’? (Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 8-021-20140306)</p> <p>How can I find out whether trees that could be affected by a development proposal are ‘aged or veteran’ trees? (Paragraph: 023 Reference ID: 8-023-20140306)</p>	<p>This policy supports the conservation and enhancement of the natural and local environment. Development resulting in the loss of ancient trees will not be supported. It also seeks to ensure development is sympathetic to local character including the surrounding landscape setting.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F5: Local Heritage Assets - The determination of planning applications, which will affect 'identified' features of local heritage interest, will balance the need for/public benefit of the proposed development against the significance of the asset and the extent which it will be harmed. The Neighbourhood Plan provides a list of Features of Local Heritage Assets.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 185, 197</p>	<p>How should heritage issues be addressed in neighbourhood plans? (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 18a-007-20140306) What are non-designated heritage assets and how important are they? (Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20140306) What are non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest and how important are they? (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20140306) How are non-designated heritage assets identified? (Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 18a-041-20140306)</p>	<p>This policy supports the conservation of heritage assets. It recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and seeks their conservation and enhancement and plans positively with respect to non-designated heritage assets. Designated heritage assets within the plan area have been identified so they can be appropriately taken into account. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plans includes information about local non-designated heritage assets including sites of archaeological interest.</p>
<p>F6: Design - Supports development which reflects the distinctive and traditional character of Fleckney will be supported. Development must be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings, protect important features and residential amenity, have a safe and suitable access and not lead to adverse traffic impacts.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 108, 124, 127, 131</p>	<p>Why does good design matter? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20140306) What does good design achieve? (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 26-002-20140306) How is good design delivered through plan making? (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 26-003-20140306)</p>	<p>This policy seeks to secure high quality design. The subject of good design is attributed great importance in the National Planning Policy Framework and is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people. This policy has regard to this approach and facilitates the promotion or reinforcement of local distinctiveness. It seeks to deliver development that is of a design that reflects the surrounding area and with a good standard of amenity with a safe and suitable access for all.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F7: Local Green Spaces - Identifies Local Green Spaces within Fleckney which will be protected. New development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space will not normally be supported other than in very special circumstances</p>	<p>Paragraphs 99-101</p>	<p>What is Local Green Space designation? (Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 37-005-20140306) How is land designated as Local Green Space? (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 37-006-20140306) How does Local Green Space designation relate to development? (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 37-007-20140306) What if land has planning permission for development? (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 37-008-20140306) Can all communities benefit from Local Green Space? (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 37-009-20140306) What if land is already protected by designations such as National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Scheduled 8Monument or conservation area? (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 37-011-20140306) What types of green area can be identified as Local Green Space? (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 37-013-20140306) How close does a Local Green Space need to be to the community it serves? (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 37-014-20140306) How big can a Local Green Space be? (Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 37-015-20140306)</p>	<p>Regard is had to national policy which allows for neighbourhood plans to identify for protection green areas of importance to them. The Local Green Spaces meet the criteria set out in paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework as demonstrated by Neighbourhood Plan Appendix 2: Local Green Spaces: Summary of Reasons for Designation. The full reasons for designation are included in the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
		<p>Is there a minimum area? (Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 37-016-20140306)</p> <p>What about public access? (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 37-017-20140306)</p> <p>What about public rights of way? (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 37-018-20140306)</p> <p>Does land need to be in public ownership? (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 37-019-20140306)</p> <p>Would designation place any restrictions or obligations on landowners? (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 37-020-20140306)</p> <p>Who will manage Local Green Space? (Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 37-021-20140306)</p> <p>Can a Local Green Space be registered as an Asset of Community Value? (Paragraph: 022 Reference ID: 37-022-20140306)</p>	
<p>F8: Housing Provision – This policy supports the delivery of housing development within the parish, in the form of existing commitments and infill development within the defined Limits to Development.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 68, 77, 78, 117, 118</p>	<p>How should local authorities support sustainable rural communities? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 50-001-20160519)</p>	<p>This policy is responsive to local circumstances and supports housing developments that reflect local needs. The policy promotes sustainable development by seeking to locate housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of existing communities. Housing will be supported in locations where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F9: Infill Housing – This policy supports housing development within the defined Fleckney Limits to Development. Outside of this boundary development will be limited to the re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings, isolated dwellings of innovative design and replacement dwellings.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 68, 77, 78, 79, 117</p>	<p>How should local authorities support sustainable rural communities? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 50-001-20160519) What evidence is needed to support a neighbourhood plan or Order? (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 41-040-20160211)</p>	<p>This policy is responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. The policy promotes sustainable development by seeking to locate housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of existing communities. The policy avoids the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless special circumstances apply.</p>
<p>F10: Housing Mix – Seeks a mix of housing types responsive to local housing needs including the needs of older households and the need for smaller, low-cost homes.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 61, 77</p>	<p>How does the housing need of particular groups relate to overall housing need calculated using the standard method? (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 2a-020-20180913)</p>	<p>The NPPF requires the delivery of homes to be informed by a local housing needs assessment and for planning policies to plan for the identified housing need. The Neighbourhood Plan supports this approach and seeks to deliver a mix of housing in its neighbourhood area that reflects local need.</p>
<p>F11: Affordable Housing – Seeks to ensure priority will be given to people with a local connection to Fleckney Parish.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 61, 77</p>	<p>How should local authorities support sustainable rural communities? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 50-001-20160519)</p>	<p>This policy is responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. It supports the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F12: Bus Services – This policy supports the use of sustainable means of transport. Developments of more than 10 dwellings will only be supported where the new homes are located within 400m walking distance of a bus stop that is served by an hourly weekday bus service. Where necessary infrastructure improvements to bus services will be sought.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 28, 34, 78, 102, 103, 108, 110</p>	<p>How should the impact of land allocations be considered in assessing the transport implications of Local Plans? Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 54-008-20141010</p> <p>How should local authorities support sustainable rural communities? (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 50-001-20160519)</p> <p>Where should policy on seeking planning obligations be set out? Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 23b-004-20190315</p> <p>What evidence is needed to support policies for contributions from development?</p>	<p>This policy supports sustainable development in rural areas, and focuses new housing development in locations which are sustainable, limiting the need to travel by car and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This policy also seeks to ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure.</p>
<p>F13: Car Parking and New Housing Development – Identifies the level of parking provision to be provided.</p>	<p>Paragraph 105</p>	<p>What baseline information should inform a transport assessment of a Local Plan? (Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 54-005-20141010)</p>	<p>This policy seeks to set parking standards taking into account local circumstances such as existing car parking problems that is in part influenced by levels of car ownership, and the type of development that is proposed.</p>
<p>F14: Community Services and Facilities - This policy supports the retention of identified services and facilities unless they are no longer needed or viable or a replacement is provided, of equivalent or better provision.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 84, 91, 92</p>	<p>What are the links between health and planning? (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 53-002-20140306)</p> <p>What is a healthy community? (Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 53-005-20140306)</p>	<p>The policy supports the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages and plans positively against the unnecessary loss of facilities that meet day to day needs.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F15: Infrastructure – New development will be supported by the provision of new or improved infrastructure together with financial contributions where appropriate. This will include improvements to the medical centre and surgery, the primary school, sports centre, two recreation grounds, community library, community infrastructure and village centre improvements. To ensure viability of the development flexibility will be applied in the application of this policy.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 8, 28, 34, 83, 91, 92 and 94</p>	<p>Where should policy on seeking planning obligations be set out? Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 23b-004-20190315 What evidence is needed to support policies for contributions from development? Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 23b-005-20190315 What funding is available for education? 007 Reference ID: 23b-007-20190315 What contributions are required towards education? 008 Reference ID: 23b-008-20190315 Are planning obligations negotiable? 010 Reference ID: 23b-010-20190315</p>	<p>This policy identifies and plans positively for the provision of community and education facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environment. This policy also seeks to ensure that the provision of infrastructure does not undermine the deliverability of the plan.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F16: Village Centre – This policy supports the modernisation and improvement of the Village Centre’s facilities. The sequential test will be applied to planning applications for main Village Centre uses and an impact assessment will be required for development outside of the Village Centre, where more than 100sqm of retail floorspace is proposed. This policy also seeks the retention of Class A1 shops as the dominant within the Village Centre. Development that would lead to the over-concentration of any other one use will not be permitted nor will non main Village Centre uses.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 86, 87, 89, 90</p>	<p>What does the National Planning Policy Framework say about planning for town centres? Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2b-001-20140306 What if the required development cannot be accommodated in the town centre? Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 2b-006-20140306 What is the sequential test? Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 2b-008-20140306 How should the sequential approach be used in plan-making? Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 2b-009-20140306 What is the impact test? Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 2b-013-20140306 How should the impact test be used in decision-taking? Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 2b-015-20140306 When should the impact test be used? Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 2b-016-20140306</p>	<p>This policy supports the role that the Village Centre play at the heart of the local community and takes a positive approach to its management and improvement. It seeks to provide for an appropriate range of uses and facilities.</p>

Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policy	National Planning Policy Framework	Planning Practice Guidance	Commentary
<p>F17: Village Centre Car Parking – This policy seeks the provision and improvement of car and cycle spacing to serve the Village Centre. The loss of car parking will only be supported if it is replaced by equivalent or better car parking provision in terms of quantity, quality and location. New development should incorporate car parking spaces in accordance with parking requirements defined within the Neighbourhood Plan unless it can be demonstrated it is not needed or it is not practical to do so.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 104, 106</p>	<p>What does the National Planning Policy Framework say about planning for town centres? Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2b-001-20140306</p>	<p>This policy seeks to improve the quality of parking in the Village Centre as well as cycle parking which will assist in improving accessibility for cyclists.</p>

Contributing to sustainable development

- 20 Sustainable development is about positive growth- making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development of which there are three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform several roles:
- a) an **economic** objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordination the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a **social** objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing; and
 - c) an **environmental** objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 21 The following section however summarises how the relevant sustainability objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework compare with the policies of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework Sustainability Objective	How the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan supports objective
1 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes	Providing a steer as to where new housing should be focused and the form development should take. Supporting a supply and mix of housing types to meet local needs, including the needs of older households and the need for smaller, low-cost homes. Priority will be given to those with a local connection to Fleckney Parish when affordable housing is allocated.
2 – Building a strong, competitive economy	Support local business and employment, including modernisation and improvements to the Village Centre shops, facilities and services, creating a centre where people can shop, eat, work and play.

National Planning Policy Framework Sustainability Objective	How the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan supports objective
3 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres	The ambition of the plan is also to see the continuation of a thriving local village community supporting the retention of existing services and facilities. The protection of the vitality and viability of the Village Centre is sought through the application of the sequential test, the need for an impact assessment in defined circumstances, and the protection of Class A1 shop uses and other defined main Village Centre uses. The provision of adequate car and cycle parking is also sought.
4 – Promoting healthy and safe communities	Seeks the protection of the countryside, Rights of Way, local green spaces and provision of community facilities providing opportunities for people to meet. Seeks to protect quality of life and improve the Village Centre environment.
5 – Promoting sustainable development	Supports infill housing development within the defined Fleckney Limits to Development with its range of services and facilities. Supports the re-use and conversion of buildings and sustainable economic growth, including improvements to the Village Centre and the provision of rural worker accommodation.
6 – Supporting high quality communications	Not applicable
7 – Making effective use of land	Supports infill housing development within the defined Fleckney Limits to Development and the re-use and adaptation of buildings.
8 – Achieving well-designed places	Includes policies to require good design and reflect local distinctiveness, including landscape as well as the built environment. Seeks the protection of residential amenity.
9 - Protecting Green Belt Land	Not applicable
10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change	Supports the re-use and adaptation of buildings. As there are well-established national and local policies that manage development and flood risk, there is no need for the Neighbourhood Plan to duplicate them.

National Planning Policy Framework Sustainability Objective	How the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan supports objective
11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	Protects the character of the countryside, the network of local ecological features and habitats and Local Green Space. Protects natural landscape from the harmful impacts of development. Requires the impact of development to maintain and enhance ecological corridors and landscape features for biodiversity.
12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	Prevents against the loss of the historic environment, including non-designated assets of local importance.
13 - Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals	Not applicable.

Conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan

- 22 Neighbourhood Development Plans must demonstrate that they are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan for the local area. The current adopted plan for the area is the Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 (Adopted April 2019).
- 23 The following sections identifies how the Policies of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with the relevant strategic policies of the Harborough Local Plan Part 2011-2031 (Adopted April 2019).

Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031

- 24 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is considered to conform to the following policies of the Harborough Local Plan. The table below provides a further explanation of the conformity.

Policy SS1: The Spatial Strategy

Policy GD2: Settlement Development

Policy GD3: Development in the Countryside

Policy GD4: New Housing in the Countryside

Policy GD8: Good Design in Development

Policy H1: Provision of New Housing

Policy H5: Housing density, mix and standards

Policy RT2: Town and Local Centres

Policy HC1: Built Heritage

Policy HC2: Community Facilities

Policy G12: Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Policy G14: Local Green Space

Policy G15: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy IN1: Infrastructure Provision

Policy IN2: Sustainable Transport

Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Harborough Local 2011-2031:	Explanation of Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Conformity with the Harborough Local Plan
F1: Countryside	Policy SS1, Policy GD3	Seeks the protection of open countryside and protects it from unacceptable development. Development will only be allowed that is in accordance with the relevant policies of the Harborough Local Plan.
F2: Public Rights of Way Network	Policy G12	Seeks to protect the Rights of Way and deliver the provision of new footpath and cycle links.
F3: Ecology and Biodiversity	Policy G15	Protects locally designated ecological sites and requires new development to contribute towards the protection and improvements in biodiversity.
F4: Trees and Hedgerows	Policy GD2, Policy GD8, Policy G15	Development will be permitted where, as far as possible, it retains existing natural features, such as trees and hedges. Protects against the loss of ancient trees.
F5: Features of Local Heritage Interest	Policy HC1	Supports the conservation and enhancement of the parish's heritage assets. Development will have regard to the scale of any harm and to the significance of the non-designated asset.
F6: Design	Policy GD8	Supports development which respects and enhances the local character and distinctiveness of Fleckney. Protects the amenities of residents. Seeks to ensure safe access and safe and efficient movement of highway users.
F7: Local Green Spaces	Policy G14	The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Local Green Spaces that meet the relevant national criteria. Protects and preserves high quality green spaces with benefits for the local community

Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Harborough Local 2011-2031:	Explanation of Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Conformity with the Harborough Local Plan
F8: Housing Provision	Policy GD2, Policy H1	Delivers the housing requirements of Fleckney in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.
F9: Infill Housing	Policy GD2, Policy GD4	Supports housing development with the defined Limits of Development of Fleckney. Allows for appropriate development outside of these defined boundaries including the conversion of redundant buildings, rural working housing, homes of exceptional quality and replacement dwellings.
F10: Housing Mix	Policy SS1, Policy H5	Provides for a mix of housing types informed by up to date evidence of housing need.
F11: Affordable Housing	Policy SS1	Provides for housing that meets the needs of Fleckney.
F12: Bus Services	Policy IN2	Supports the provision of public transport enhancement to accompany new development. Provides opportunities to encourage public transport use.
F13: Car Parking and New Housing Development	Policy IN2	Seeks to provide suitable levels of car parking taking into account local circumstances.
F14: Community Services and Facilities	Policy SS1, Policy HC2	Seeks the retention of existing community facilities where they remain viable and appropriate alternatives do not exist
F15: Infrastructure	Policy IN1	Facilitates the provision of infrastructure which is considered necessary to serve a proposed development. Allows issues of viability to be taken into account when considering the cost of infrastructure provision.
F16: Village Centre	Policy RT2	Maintains and enhances the vitality and viability of the Local Plan defined Local Centre of Fleckney. Applies the sequential test and impact assessment to new

Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Harborough Local 2011-2031:	Explanation of Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Conformity with the Harborough Local Plan
		development for main Village Centre uses.
F17: Village Centre Car Parking	Policy IN1	Improves accessibility for cycle users and provide for suitable levels of parking provision.

Compliance with European Union obligations

- 25 A neighbourhood plan or Order must be compatible with European Union obligations, as incorporated into UK law, in order to be legally compliant. There are three directives that may be of particular relevance to neighbourhood plans:
- Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (often referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive). This seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes.
 - Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (often referred to as the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives respectively). These aim to protect and improve Europe's most important habitats and species.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement

- 26 A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan (February 2019) has been used to determine whether or not the contents of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes Regulations 2004. Neighbourhood Plans only require a SEA where they are likely to lead to significant effects. The Screening Report provides a screening opinion as to whether the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant environmental effects. This statement includes a commentary on whether these effects are likely to be significant.
- 27 The outcome of this assessment concludes that whilst environmental effects have the potential to take place as a result of the neighbourhood plan, it is considered unlikely that there will be any significant effects arising from the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan, that were not covered in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Harborough Local Plan. Therefore, it is considered that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is not subject to the requirements of the Directive 2001/41/EC, the 'SEA Directive' and accompanying regulations and therefore will not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken.
- 28 The environmental assessment consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) have been consulted on this Screening Report and their responses are summarised below:

- Historic England – Historic England will confine its advice to the question ' Is it likely to have a significant impact on the environment?', in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. We have identified no significant effects to cultural heritage.
- Natural England – Our advice, on the basis of the material provided, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests, are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.
- Environment Agency – there are a number of SSSIs in relatively close proximity to the Neighbourhood Plan area. Therefore, recommend that you seek the views of Natural England regarding the need for a full SEA to be undertaken.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

- 29 Other European directives, such as the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) or the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) do not apply to the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan.
- 30 The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a substantial effect of the Natura 2000 network of protected sites. A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been undertaken as part of the Harborough Local Plan preparation and concluded that it will not have a likely significant effect on any international important wildlife sites either alone or in conjunction with other plans and projects. These conclusions were made since no such sites are located within the district and no impact pathways were identified linking internationally important wildlife sites outside of the district (e.g. Rutland Water SPA/Ramsar site) to development within Harborough District. Given that Fleckney lies some 30km from Rutland Water SPA/Ramsar, it is considered that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan will not affect any Natura 2000 sites in line with the findings of the HRA. In addition, the Neighbourhood Area does not have any Sites of Special Scientific Interest within in. It is considered that the policies of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan will not have a detrimental affect on Natura 2000, Ramsar sites or other sites of environmental significance. It is concluded that a full Appropriate Assessment is not deemed to be required.
- 31 Other European directives, such as the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) or the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) do not apply to the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan

Other basic conditions

- 32 Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out another basic condition in addition to those set out in the primary legislation. This is that the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects). (See Schedule 2 to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in relation to the examination of neighbourhood development plans.
- 33 As set out in above, a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan concluded that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a substantial effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 34 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.
- 35 Under the Act a document like a Neighbourhood Plan must be assessed through an Equalities Impact Assessment before it can be adopted or implemented. The Equalities Impact Assessment of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix 1) has found no negative impacts on any protected characteristic by reference to data or evidence. As a result, no recommendations are made and the assessment finds the Neighbourhood Development Plan to be appropriate and that the duty prescribed by the Equalities Act 2010 is met.

Conclusions

- 36 The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) are met by the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan complies with paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

Appendix 1: Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan – Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty of care on public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity for specified equality groups. Under the Act a document like a Neighbourhood Plan must be assessed through an Equalities Impact Assessment before it can be adopted or implemented. The Assessment must address the 'protected characteristics' identified within the Act:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to help understand and ultimately protect the groups identified above from any adverse impact. This Assessment considers the needs of these particular groups and how they might be affected by the Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Methodology

The assessment considers whether the Plan has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics (in so far as data is available) by reference to the Key Issues and Policies of the Plan. Where an adverse impact is identified the Assessment considers whether that impact is high, medium or low.

High impact: a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact: some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence.

Low impact: almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation-led.

Baseline Data

This Assessment has relied on Census data for 2011 published by the Office for National Statistics. Data is available for Fleckney for age, disability, race, religious belief and sex. There is no known data for gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation.

In 2011 there were 4,894 people living in Fleckney Parish, 49.8% were Male and 50.2% were Female. By Comparison, the figures for the United Kingdom were 49.3% (Male) and 50.7% (Female).

21.1% of the population was 0-15 years old and 13.3% were 65% or over. The UK proportion of over 65's was 16.3% and 18.9% for 0-15's.

3.3% of the population was from a black or minority ethnic (BME) background. The proportion of the UK population classed as 'non-white' was 14.3%.

65.2% of the population was Christian and 1.8% other religions including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh. By comparison 59.4% of the UK population consider themselves to be Christian whilst 8.3% considered themselves to be Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim or Sikh.

5.5% of residents considered that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot through health and disability and a further 6.9% considered that their activities were limited a little. The comparable proportions for the UK were 8.9% (limited a lot) and 9.3% (limited a little).

67.9% of people who were 16 or over were married or in a registered civil partnership compared to 48.7% of people in the UK.

Gender reassignment and sexual orientation are generally invisible characteristics for which little reliable data exists at local level. There was also no data available for pregnancy or maternity.

Summary

Generally, the proportion of Male/Females is comparable to the national picture.

The proportion of older people is slightly lower than the national picture.

The proportion of BMEs is noticeably lower than the national picture, common with rural areas.

The proportion of Christians is higher to the national average, whilst the proportion of other religions is markedly lower.

Key Issues and Policies of the Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following key issues for Fleckney that the Neighbourhood Plan needs to address;

How to meet the strategic development requirements for housing and employment set out in the emerging Harborough Local Plan

The impact of new development and the need for improved infrastructure (especially transport), services and amenities

Not all new development has been well integrated into the heart of the village

New housing has not met local needs – especially the needs of older households and young families

The erosion of local identity through the loss of heritage assets and the poor design of new buildings

The protection of the local countryside and the natural environment

The need to maintain separation between Fleckney and the neighbouring villages of Wistow and Saddington

The retention of important open spaces within the village

Traffic congestion, speeding vehicles, road safety and parking problems

Need for bus service improvements

Better sports and recreation facilities

Concerns about the vitality of the village centre

These issues are reflected in the Vision for the Fleckney Parish Neighbourhood Plan;



The Neighbourhood Plan contains a suite of policies to deliver against that vision and respond to the issues.

Impact of Policies on Groups with Protected Characteristics

Age

Policy F10 requires new developments to deliver a mix of housing and demonstrate how their proposals will meet the housing needs of older households and/or smaller, low-cost homes.

Policy F7 requires designated local green spaces to be protected and development will not normally be supported on these spaces if harm would occur. As green spaces include spaces which have recreational value this is likely to benefit the young who are engaged in play and this is considered to have potential for a positive impact. Policies F2 seeks the protection of Rights of Way and create new links to the network including footpaths and cycleways.

Policy F14 makes provision for the retention of community services and facilities. This is seen as important for the long-term sustainability of Fleckney. In addition, with an increasing proportion of older people in the population, access to locally based services will become increasingly important, reflecting lower mobility levels. Some of the parish services include a medical centre and surgery, dental practice, allotments, primary school, village hall, sports centre, recreation grounds, churches, bowls club and scout hut. Their retention is considered to have a strong benefit for young and old alike and is considered to have a positive impact. This is further supplemented by Policy F15 which seeks infrastructure improvements which respect to the medical centre and surgery, primary school, sports centre, recreation grounds and village centre improvements.

Policy F16 seeks improvements to the Village Centre shops, facilities and services. This is also seen as important for the long-term sustainability of Fleckney and is considered to have a strong benefit for young and old alike and is considered to have a positive impact.

Disability

In requiring new developments to provide for a mix of homes to reflect evidence of need (Policy F10) there is a possibility that homes could be sought to the benefit of people with disabilities. However, the lack of evidence to include a specific requirement by reference to type of disability prevents a recommendation by this assessment for modification to the policy and leads to a conclusion that Policy F10 perhaps has only the potential for a neutral impact. There is no evidence, however, that would suggest a negative impact.

Policy F2 seeks the creation of footpath links. This has the potential for a positive impact on this characteristic although the degree will be dependent on the nature and definition of individual disabilities.

Policy F6 requires all new development to have a safe and suitable access and consequently there is potential for a positive impact on this characteristic.

Gender reassignment

The potential to secure high quality design under Policy F6 may benefit the public realm and the opportunity for all the community to enjoy their built environment. Any improvement in sense of place and civic pride is generally believed to lead to positive places where people are better able to express themselves without fear of recrimination or hate crime. As a result, there is potential for a positive impact on this protected characteristic. However, due to the limited data related to this characteristic and the potential for tangible impacts being unknown this assessment concludes the impact to be neutral.

Marriage and civil partnership

This assessment found no impacts on this protected characteristic.

Pregnancy and maternity

There are potential benefits for this protected characteristic from the retention of key services and potential for their replacement by equivalent or better provision, such as the village halls (Policies F14 and F15). These impacts might be positive but the lack of data for this characteristic and any tangible evidence suggests that the impact should be considered neutral.

Race

This assessment found no impacts on this protected characteristic.

Religion or belief

There is a potential benefit for this protected characteristic from the protection of key services and facilities (Policies F14 and F15), including the Village Hall with potential for multi-use facilities. However, the uncertain prospects for demand and delivery draw the same conclusion that there is only a neutral impact although the potential for positive impacts should again be noted.

Sex

This assessment found no impacts on this protected characteristic.

Sexual orientation

The potential to secure high quality design under Policy F6 may benefit the public realm and the opportunity for all the community to enjoy their built environment. Any improvement in sense of place and civic pride is generally believed to lead to positive places where people are better able to express themselves without fear of recrimination or hate crime. As a result, there is potential for a positive impact on this protected characteristic. However, due to the limited data related to this characteristic and the potential for tangible impacts being unknown this assessment concludes the impact to be neutral.

Conclusion

The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan provides a suite of policies to respond to the vision for the benefit of the local community including protected characteristics but perhaps most particularly older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, disabled people and those with limited mobility.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not explicitly address the needs of racial or religious groups, or transgender, gay or lesbian groups, or inequalities of sex. However, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks a range of housing types, and seeks retention of and improvements in facilities and services which will benefit these groups equally. It also seeks to provide a higher quality public realm where people with protected characteristics will be less liable to be subject to hate crime.

In conclusion, this assessment has found no negative impacts on any protected characteristic by reference to data or evidence. As a result, no recommendations are made, and the assessment finds the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan to be appropriate and that the duty of care prescribed by the Equalities Act 2010 is met.