

Houghton on the Hill
Neighbourhood Development Plan
Review
2025 – 2041

Consultation Statement
April 2025



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1. Introduction

Legal Requirements

1.1 This Consultation Statement has been prepared by the (RCC) the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland) on behalf of Houghton Parish Council to fulfil the legal requirements of Part 5, Section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 by:

- a) Detailing the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- b) Outlining how these persons and bodies were consulted;
- c) Providing a summary of the main issues and concerns raised;
- d) Reviewing how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

Consultation Process

1.2 The first Neighbourhood Plan for Houghton on the Hill was 'made' by Harborough District Council in April 2018 following a successful local referendum. But, as the Plan was 5 years old, it now needed revising, and a Working Party was formed by the Parish Council in 2021 to lead on this work. The current plan was originally intended to run until 2031, but events have moved faster than expected. Some 140 new houses have been built in the village since the last plan was developed, expanding the population and increasing the demand for services. In addition, the proposed relocation of Scraftoft Golf Course could result in development of the village towards the east.

Alongside these developments, the Covid pandemic has changed the way people work and travel, and there is increasing awareness of the impact of climate and environmental changes on us all.

The Government is currently reviewing climate change and environment regulations with implications for planning regulations. Together these factors mean that now is a good time to update our

- Neighbourhood Plan and ensure it reflects the aspirations of our community.
- 1.3 The first Neighbourhood Plan was the subject of considerable community input. This included a presentation at the annual parish meetings, resident and young people's community surveys, a stakeholder consultation involving community groups, businesses, landowners and statutory service providers, all promoted through, letters, flyers, notice boards and the Parish Council website, followed by a Pre-Submission consultation an independent examination, and a referendum.
- 1.4 The review of the Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Development Plan has been undertaken with consultation involving presentations at the Annual Parish Meetings where members of the Working Party were available to discuss progress with residents, and note any points raised by them, consultation via a Community Questionnaire and a Young Peoples Questionnaire, consultation with a range of key stakeholders and through the Pre-Submission consultation on the Draft version of the revised Neighbourhood Development Plan. The aims of the consultation process were to:
- a) Ensure that the new Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Development Plan was fully informed by the views and priorities of local residents, businesses, and key local stakeholders;
 - b) Ensure that consultation has built upon the community engagement that has taken place throughout the preparation of the first Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Development Plan;
 - c) Engage with as broad a cross-section of the community as possible.
- 1.5 Consultation and preparation of the plan has been led by Houghton on the Hill Parish Council with independent professional support provided by RCC Leicestershire & Rutland and YourLocale Neighbourhood Planning consultancy.
- 1.6 Houghton on the Hill Parish Council website, articles in the published Houghton News and flyers delivered to households have been used to provide information and updates on the Plan progress and is a source of material and evidence used in the Plan's preparation.

- 1.7 The programme of consultation undertaken throughout the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Review, is detailed below.

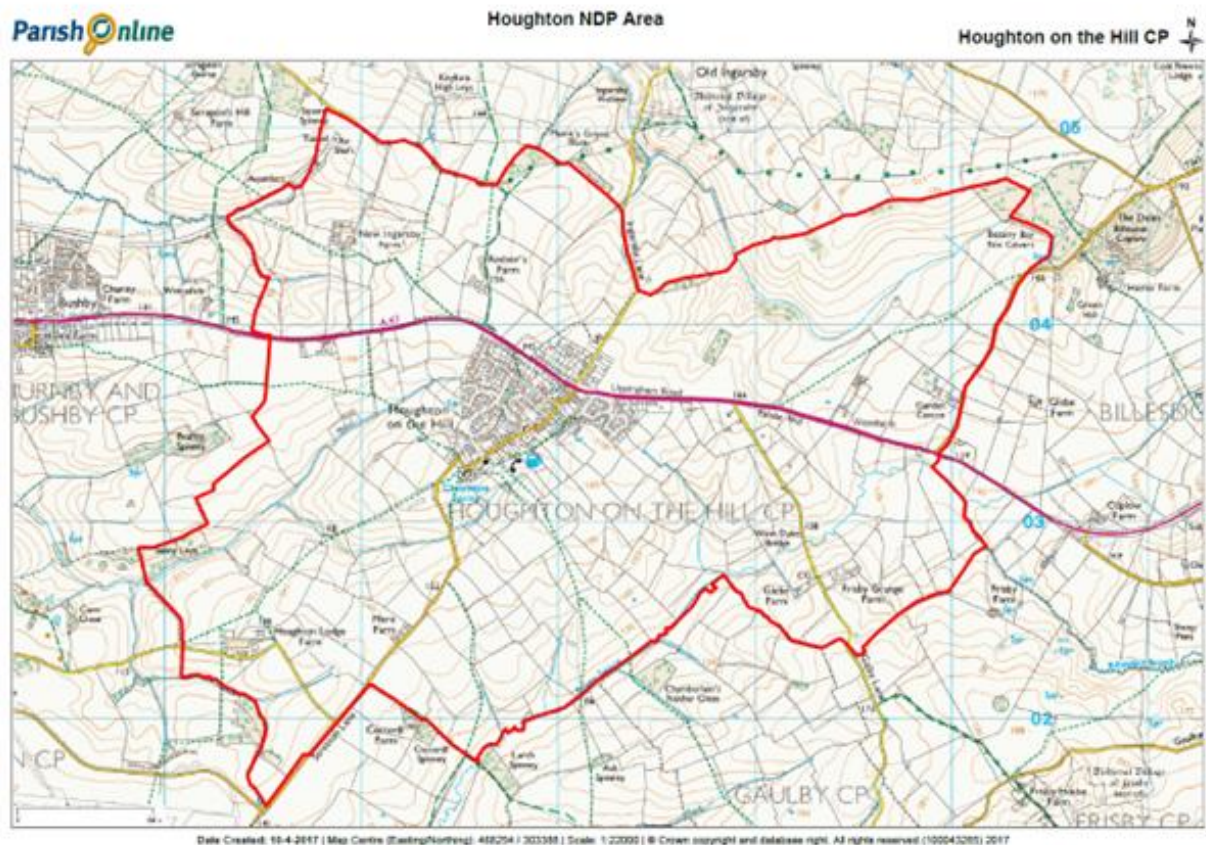
Date	Activity
October - December 2022	Community Questionnaire
November 2022	Young Peoples Questionnaire
2nd February 2023	Stakeholder Consultation meeting
2nd November to 16th December 2024	Pre-submission Consultation

- 1.8 This Consultation Statement provides an overview of the above stages of consultation in accordance with Section 15 (2) of Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 1.9 During this process, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party and Parish Council have also received advice and assistance from Harborough District Council.

2. Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the parish of Houghton on the Hill. It was designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 31st July 2015, following an application made by Houghton on the Hill Parish Council as the 'Qualifying Body', under Part 2, Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 In accordance with Regulations 5/5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Harborough District Council.

- 2.3 A map showing the area to be covered by the plan can be viewed below.



3. Community and Young Peoples Questionnaires

- 3.1 An overview of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaires completed are provided below.

Overview

Community Questionnaire	
Date	October – December 2022
Facilitator	RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland)
Format	Paper survey to households in the designated area
Publicity	Parish Notice Board; Posters; Parish Council Website, village magazine and village Facebook page.
Response	514

Young Peoples Questionnaire	
Date	November 2022
Facilitator	Neighbourhood Plan Working Party
Format	Paper survey offered to households in the designated area
Publicity	Parish Notice Board; Posters; Parish Council Website, village magazine and village Facebook page.
Response	27

Who was consulted

- 3.2 Questionnaires were distributed to all households in the designated area to:
- Identify what people feel about living in Houghton.
 - Define the type/s of development most needed within Houghton.
 - Identify the most preferred sites for potential development within Houghton.
 - Identify the improvements, community projects, additions to local infrastructure, services and facilities required alongside any future development.
 - Identify green spaces, heritage sites and important buildings that are valued or should be protected.

How people were consulted

Community Questionnaire

- 3.3 Working with the RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland), the Houghton Neighbourhood Plan Working Party used the issues, priorities and data already obtained to design and produce a printed Community Questionnaire which was delivered to 792 households in Houghton.
- 3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Working Party also held a surgery for residents at Houghton Village Hall on dates during November to provide further information and support to help with completion of the questionnaire.

Young Peoples Questionnaire

- 3.5 A questionnaire was put together by some of members from the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party (NPWP) and a teenager was consulted for input on the layout and content and to trial the final document. The Young Peoples Questionnaire was offered to all households during the delivery, and subsequent collection, of the main questionnaire to every household in the Parish.

Issues, Priorities and Concerns Raised

- 3.6 The resident's Community Questionnaire had a total of 514 completed returns which were inputted onto an online database for collation and analysis and the Young People's Questionnaire had a total of 27 completed questionnaires returned with the age of respondents ranging from 9 and 17 years old.

- 3.7 All issues, priorities, concerns and comments raised within each questionnaire were collated and presented in separate reports, results of which can be found here:
<https://www.houghtononthehillpc.org.uk/houghton-neighbourhood-development>

How the Issues, Priorities and Concerns have been considered

- 3.8 All The results were used by the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party along with all other consultation and data obtained to:
- a) Rank the preferred sites for development according to the priorities of the community.
 - b) Map important buildings heritage assets, and open spaces to be protected from development.
 - c) Help focus the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and potential policy areas based on key local issues and priorities.

4. Stakeholder Consultation

Overview

Stakeholder Consultation Meeting	
Date	2nd February 2023
Facilitator	RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland)
Format	Presentation & Workshops
Publicity	Invitation
Participants	39

4.1 The meeting was held in order to:

- a) Raise awareness of the Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Development Plan review among key local stakeholders, give an update on activity undertaken and key areas of focus.
- b) Identify opportunities and constraints related to the future development and delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure within the designated area.
- c) Contribute to the core evidence base for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- d) Identify and explore key issues that the Neighbourhood Development Plan review will need to consider
- e) Help to inform the ongoing consultation and engagement process required to produce the plan.

Who was consulted

- 4.2 The aim of this meeting was to engage and consult with all key stakeholders relevant to the review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 4.3 Working in liaison with Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Planning Working Party, the RCC developed a comprehensive list of stakeholder contacts for consultation and engagement throughout the

neighbourhood planning process. All identified stakeholders were officially invited to this meeting.

- 4.4 Those who were unable to attend this consultation meeting had the opportunity to complete and return a comments form.

How people were consulted

- 4.5 A short presentation was given by the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party including an overview of the Community Questionnaire results and the outline schedule for the Plan revision. The RCC ended the presentation by introducing the workshop which asked attendees to consider any Issues, Priorities and Opportunities for them or their organisation under the following key areas:
- Traffic, Transport & Access
 - Landscape, Green Spaces & Heritage,
 - Facilities & Services,
 - Local Economy & Employment,
 - Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy,
 - Environment & Climate Change
 - Vision of Houghton in 10 years' time.
- 4.6 Attendees were split into 5 workshop groups to complete a facilitated discussion on the key issues and priorities for consideration within the Neighbourhood Development Plan supported by reference material including maps of the Neighbourhood Area.

Issues, Priorities and Concerns Raised

- 4.7 All issues, priorities, concerns and comments raised were collated independently by the RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland) and presented in a report which can be found here:
<https://www.houghtononthehillpc.org.uk/houghton-neighbourhood-development>

How the Issues, Priorities and Concerns have been considered

- 4.8 All issues, priorities, concerns and comments raised within each workshop group were used by the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party to:
- a) Build on information collected through previous consultation work to further inform the development of the revised plan.
 - b) Further define the key issues and priorities for consideration and further exploration throughout the plan process.
 - c) Help to define the contents and guide the development of the core evidence base required to back up and inform the Neighbourhood Development Plan

5. Pre-Submission Consultation

Overview

- 5.1 As required under Part 5, Section 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Houghton on the Hill Parish Council with the support of RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland) undertook a 6-week Pre-Submission Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 5.2 Within this period Houghton on the Hill Parish Council in conjunction with RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland):
- a) Publicised the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan to all that live, work, or do business within the Parish.
 - b) Outlined where and when the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan could be inspected.
 - c) Detailed how to make representations, and the date by which these should be received.
 - d) Consulted any statutory consultation body (referred to in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning

(General) Regulations 2012) whose interests may be affected by the proposals within the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- e) Sent a copy of the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan to the local planning authority.

Pre-Submission Consultation	
Consultation Period	2nd November to 16th December 2024
Format	Hard Copy / Online / Public Meeting / Drop-in sessions
Publicity	Letters; E-mails; Flyer; Parish Council Website, posters on notice boards, village community magazine and village Facebook page.
Respondents	46

Who was consulted

- 5.3 Houghton on the Hill Parish Council in conjunction with RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland) publicised the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan to all those that live, work, or do business within the Parish and provided a variety of mechanisms to both view the plan and to make representations.
- 5.4 RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland) formally consulted all statutory consultation bodies identified within Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The bodies and organisations that were invited to make representations are set out below.

Harborough District Council
Homes England
Ancient Monuments Society
Natural England
Leicester, Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
The Environment Agency
CPRE Leicestershire
Historic England
Network Rail

Health & Safety Executive
Highways England
Western Power Distribution
Mobile Operators Association
BT Group PLC
Three
EE Corporate and Financial Affairs Dept
Vodafone and O2
Land Use Planning Dept, Vodafone
East Leicestershire CCG
Midlands Rural Housing
National Grid
British Gas Connections Ltd
British Gas Business
Severn Trent Water
Royal Mencap Society
Centre Bus Service 747
East Midlands Chamber
Federation of Small Businesses
Country Land & Business Association
National Farmers Union
Gypsy and Traveller Services
Federation of Muslim Organisations
Action for Blind People merged with RNIB
Vista Blind
Action Deafness
Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living
Mosaic
Age UK Leicestershire & Rutland
Interfaith Forum for Leicestershire
Voluntary Action LeicesterShire
Local Policing Unit-Harborough North
Sport England
Leicester-Shire & Rutland Sport
East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Leicestershire Fire & Rescue
Leicester City Council
Billesdon Surgery
Downing Drive Surgery

Kings Norton Parish Meeting
Billesdon Parish Council
Hungarton Parish Council
Thurnby and Bushby Parish Council
Stoughton Parish Council
Frisby Parish Meeting
Gaulby Parish Meeting
Little Stretton Parish Meeting
Alicia Kearns MP
County Councillor Simon Galton
District Councillor Peter Elliott
District Councillor Simon Galton
District Councillor Amanda Burrell
Houghton School
Houghton Field Association
Houghton Village Hall
St Catharine's Church
Houghton Methodist Church
Houghton Scouts
Houghton Gardeners Club
Houghton Bowls Club
Houghton Women's Institute
Houghton Rangers football club
Tennis Club
Houghton Guides

Landowners:

Local landowners identified through the consultation process.

Local Businesses:

Local businesses identified through the consultation process.

- 5.5 A total of 46 representations were received from individuals or organisations within the consultation period.

How people were consulted

- 5.6 The draft Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Design Guide was published on the Houghton on the Hill Parish Council website along with all supporting evidence during the 6-week period. Paper copies of these were also available to view at and at the public meeting held in November in Houghton Village Hall where about 50 residents attended. In addition, the consultation was publicised in the village community magazine, Houghton News, between October and December 2024, the village notice boards, and the village Facebook page.
- 5.7 Statutory consultation bodies and other key stakeholders were contacted individually by e-mail and / or letter and invited to make representations on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan by e-mail or by returning a standard written comments form.
- 5.8 Representations on the draft Plan were invited using a standard comments form, available on the website. Responses could also be provided using emails or made in writing.
- 5.9 A flyer publicising the Pre-Submission consultation of the Draft of the Plan and the new Design Guide was delivered to all premises in the Parish. It provided a background to the Neighbourhood Development Plan, a summary of the new Neighbourhood Development Plan and the revisions proposed to the current Neighbourhood Development Plan, how to make representations and a summary of the key points that the revised Plan included as set out below:
- a) An Area of Separation between Houghton and Bushby,
 - b) An allocation of the most suitable sites for any new housing, to satisfy the anticipated additional requirements for the area as advised by Harborough District Council
 - c) Greater emphasis on addressing the impacts of climate change
 - d) Improving biodiversity, greater emphasis on protecting and enhancing walking and cycling within the village and footpath connections to the countryside.
- 5.10 A series of community drop-in sessions were also held on Saturday and Friday mornings (10 – 12) at the Village Hall during November and early

December attracting around 70 attendees in total, where copies of the Plan and the Design Guide were on view along with comment forms and members of the Working Party available to answer any questions.

Issues, Priorities and Concerns Raised

- 5.11 All representations received were collated independently by the RCC (Leicestershire & Rutland) and have been reviewed by members of the Working Party who produced a detailed summary of the representations and provides an explanation of why changes have or have not been made to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This detailed summary of the representations can be referred to here as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Submission material:
<https://www.houghtononthehillpc.org.uk/houghton-neighbourhood-development>

How the Issues, Priorities and Concerns have been considered

- 5.12 All comments received through this consultation were considered and have led to revisions to the pre-submission consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Many of the changes have been minor and required only small amendments to the draft NDP, or to the accompanying Village Design Guide and Codes. These minor changes included amendments to policies, supporting text and mapping to provide detail, clarification, flexibility and the most up to date information.
- 5.13 Some of the comments have led to changes in policies, and figures. These are outlined below:
- a) POLICY L3B: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION NORTH OF STRETTON LANE has been removed. Objections against this site were raised by residents during the consultation. Also, a Planning Application (24/00359/FUL) has been submitted for this site as a Rural Exception Site so it cannot be an allocated site in the Neighbourhood Plan. As a result, this site is no longer included within the Settlement Boundary (Figure 6.1 updated) and is now within the Area of Separation (Figure 6.2 updated). The Reserve site allocation is now numbered Policy L3B and not L3C. The Site

Assessment conclusion in the evidence base has also been updated to reflect this change.

- b) POLICY L4: PHASING OF NEW DEVELOPMENT has been replaced by POLICY L4: INFILL HOUSING.
- c) POLICY L5: CONTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT: GOLF COURSE has been replaced by POLICY L5: DEVELOPMENT WITHIN AGRICULTURAL AREAS.
- d) POLICY D3: WINDFALL SITES AND EXTENSIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY has been revised and the title updated to reflect the revised content and the revision of Policy L5. It is now titled POLICY D3: EXTENSIONS & MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY.
- e) POLICY EM3: FARM DIVERSIFICATION – RE-USE OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS has been removed as the content is now covered within the revised Policy L5.
- f) POLICY EV3: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS, and accompanying figures and description, have been revised as a result of guidance from Harborough District Council in their responses to the consultation. POLICY EV3 is now entitled HERITAGE ASSETS and lists various non-designated assets (e.g. buildings, landscape, and archaeological features) within the Designated Area. Additional information is included in supplementary material located in the online Evidence Base. Accompanying text identifies the nationally designated heritage assets (including a map and a table). The supporting Rationale and Evidence sections have also been updated.

5.14 These changes have been incorporated into the Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which can be referred to here as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Submission material:
<https://www.houghtononthehillpc.org.uk/houghton-neighbourhooddevelopment>

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The publicity, engagement and consultation undertaken to support the preparation of the new Houghton on the Hill Neighbourhood Development Plan has been open and transparent, with opportunity to provide for those that live, work and do business within the Neighbourhood Area to feed into the process and make comment and to raise issues and concerns.
- 6.2 All statutory requirements have been met, and a significant level of additional consultation, engagement, and research has been completed.
- 6.3 This Consultation Statement and the supporting consultation reports referred to, have been produced to document the consultation and engagement process undertaken and are considered to comply with Part 5, Section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.