

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for your response to the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) during the recent Regulation 14 consultation period, your input is valued and with your help we aim to deliver a plan with the widest possible community support.

We are currently responding to all the replies received during the consultation period and considering what changes are to be made to the plan as a result of this feedback.

We note that you are objecting to the inclusion of site GSO.01 and can confirm we have received multiple objections based on similar issues. You can be assured that all the points raised regarding this site will be taken into account, but some appear not to accurately reflect the proposal the plan considers appropriate for this site. Therefore, to clarify matters, we set out below in more detail the reasons for including this site in the draft plan.

It is clear that some respondents do not wish to see any development proposal, no matter how small, that will change this site from its current use; in which case, you are welcome to restate your objection. For those open to further discussion, the NP steering group respectfully ask you consider the content of this email and respond as you see fit.

Firstly, for context, the conclusions of the Steering Group when producing the draft NP were based on information gathered from:

- Resident consultation and feedback over the past two years,
- Current government and County planning policy,
- An independent survey of housing needs in the area (conducted by AECOM in Feb 2024)
- The present land owners, particularly during the 'Call for Sites' exercise,
- Other statutory bodies, such as the District Council and Environment Agency.

Briefly, the main findings from an analysis of the above are:

- Housing development will continue in Grasby, irrespective of the adoption of a NP, based on an analysis of historical trends,
- Maintaining our rural setting, the character of the settlements and access to the countryside is high on resident's wishes,
- Grasby has a lack of smaller and more affordable properties to attract younger families and provide downsizing opportunities for older residents,
- We need to provide housing for the future needs of our aging resident population, e.g. retirement homes, sheltered housing,
- There is demand for public spaces, such as a children's playground or recreational areas in the parish,
- People value the current community facilities such as the school, pub, village hall and church which need to be supported and maintained,
- There is a recognised need to improve services and utilities in the parish, such as local transport links, health services and the water infrastructure.

The NP seeks to balance these various, and in some cases competing, demands of parish residents. It aims to recognise what is good and valued in the area, but also attempts to meet the wider housing development needs of the community over the next 15 years. This is not an easy objective to satisfy and requires careful consideration. Therefore, to deliver a plan acceptable to the majority of residents, as in all walks of life, we will require compromise.

It should be appreciated that opportunities to progress and enforce the wishes of our community should be grasped with both hands whenever they arise. The Neighbourhood Plan is such an opportunity, as once adopted the plan will place a legal framework around future development in the parish. Having no plan

means just that; we are left open to all development proposals, no matter how disagreeable these may be to the local community.

The NP steering group recognises that site GSO.01 has a long and varied planning application history. Therefore, it requires a carefully considered approach to any future development proposal. Hence, the group would like to emphasise the following points to explain the sites inclusion in the current draft plan:

- The site was submitted for development consideration by the previous AND current owners in the parish 'Call for Sites' exercise conducted last year. It was not identified specifically by the NP Steering Group and would not have been considered in the plan otherwise,
- Allocating the site for housing in the NP does not automatically grant planning permission.
- For any future development to occur, a full planning application would be needed. If submitted, this must satisfy all current planning regulations and policies, including those stated in the NP, in order to be considered acceptable by the council. Note: no new planning application has been made for this site to date.
- Screening of the site by the independent consultants AECOM, did not identify any reasons that would prevent development. However, it is appreciated that some specific known issues would need to be resolved, such as:
 - Access from Bentley Lane will require approval by the local Highway Authority and access from Clixby Lane is unlikely to be supported,
 - The public right of way (PROW) must be retained. Development of the site does not necessarily mean the PROW will be enclosed, that will depend on the specific proposal,
 - Boundary trees and hedges will be expected to be retained and maintained.

Furthermore, the following provisions on development will be considered should a future planning application be submitted:

- Only a small part of the site should be used for housing of up to 6 dwellings. Any residential development would be expected to be imaginatively clustered toward the southern end of the field.
- The upper part of the site should remain undeveloped ideally for community amenity use,
- Any development must be compact, have a low visual impact and be energy efficient,
- Only retirement housing or smaller one-to-three-bedroom properties will be supported,
- The NP 'Design Guide' (produced in co-ordination with AECOM) sets out in detail the appropriate design requirements for all potential housing developments in the parish.
- Housing Policy S53 relates to design and access, until a planning application is brought forward it cannot be determined if any proposal contravenes this policy,
- Permission to develop will be subject to securing some community benefit such as providing a public open space, play or recreation area and, if possible, some public parking provision.

Finally, please be assured that there have been no discussions with any developers during the production of the draft NP by the steering group. We are residents too and our overriding desire is to protect and enhance the special place in which we live.

If you have any further comments on site GSO.01 having read this email, we welcome your response.

Yours sincerely,

Grasby and Searby cum Owmbly Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group