

Planning Statement

Permission in Principle Application for Erection of 9 Dwellings & Change of use to Community Open Space, Land West of Barton Road, Carlton

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Planning Statement – Permission in Principle Application - 9 Dwellings & Full Application for Change of Use of Land to Community Open Space, Land West of Barton Road, Carlton

1.0 Introduction, Site Description and Proposal

1.1 Introduction:

This Planning Statement is prepared in support of a Permission in Principle (PIP) application for a small-scale residential development of 9 dwellings and the change of use of land for the provision of 0.91 hectares of community open space on land west of Barton Road, Carlton, in the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth. The PIP route is a two-stage process under national legislation – Stage 1 establishes whether the site is suitable in principle for housing-led development, and Stage 2 (Technical Details Consent) considers detailed plans at a later stage. Accordingly, only the issues of *location, land use and amount of development* are to be assessed at this stage, with all other technical or design matters reserved for future approval. This Statement addresses both national and local policy considerations, including points raised in the Council's pre-application advice (ref. 24/10127/PREHMO).

1.2 Site Description:

The application site comprises a parcel of agricultural land at the northern edge of Carlton, a small rural village roughly 1 mile north of Market Bosworth. The eastern portion of the site (approximately 0.383 ha fronting Barton Road) forms the area proposed for up to 9 dwellings, while the adjoining western portion (approximately 0.1 ha) is proposed to be changed to community open space. Together they form a single, continuous landholding on the west side of Barton Road. Both parcels lie immediately *outside* the defined settlement boundary of Carlton (as established in the local plan) and are comprise an open field bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. The surrounding context is mixed: to the south lies the existing village fringe (including a small 7-dwelling development from 2005), and to the east, across Barton Road, is a rural exception housing scheme of 11 affordable dwellings. Beyond the site's northern and western boundaries stretches open countryside. The site thus represents a *logical extension* of the village at its northern extremity, adjoining established residential uses on two sides while opening onto farmland on the other sides.

1.3 Proposal:

The PIP application seeks to establish the principle of erecting up to 9 residential dwellings on the western parcel, together with the change of use of the adjoining western area of land to a community open space (e.g. village green or recreational area). The proposed residential *land use* is housing within a rural village context, and the *amount* is specified as a maximum of 9 units (the precise number and housing mix to be determined within the range at Technical Details stage). The community open space is intended to serve Carlton's residents by providing additional recreational land. The proposed open space would be located in close proximity to an existing play area maintained by the parish council to the east.

Access to the housing parcel is anticipated via an existing field gate off Barton Road (granted in 2010), which can be upgraded to adoptable standards at the detailed stage. No detailed layouts or elevation plans are submitted at PIP stage, in accordance with regulations – however, it is envisaged that the 9 dwellings would be arranged in a sensitive layout respecting the village edge, with substantial landscaping on the new boundaries to soften the transition to open countryside. All design, scale, layout, landscaping and access details will be provided at the Technical Details Consent stage, should permission in principle be granted. At this juncture, the Applicant seeks agreement

that the location of the site, the proposed land uses (housing and open space), and the amount of development (9 dwellings and 0.91ha open space) are acceptable in principle.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 Site History:

The application site itself has limited planning history. A 2010 planning permission (ref. 10/00677/FUL) allowed the formation of a new gateway and access onto Barton Road at the site, which provides the baseline for vehicular entry and which has immediate access to the raised footpath on the western side of Barton road. There have been no applications for residential development on these parcels until the present proposal. The land has continued in agricultural use (arable/grazing) up to now.

2.2 Surrounding Development:

Carlton village has experienced a small number of developments in its recent history which form important context. Notably, a rural exception housing scheme for 11 affordable dwellings on land opposite the site (east of Barton Road) was approved in 2012 (ref. 12/00889/FUL). These homes were delivered to address local needs and are managed by a housing association with occupancy restricted to those with a local connection.

2.3 Pre-Application Advice (2024):

The Applicant sought formal pre-application advice from Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council under ref. 24/10127/PREHMO, for a proposal of 9 dwellings and community open space on this site. The Council's written response (dated 4 October 2024) acknowledged the presumption in favour of sustainable development in national policy but raised concerns that the site lies outside the settlement boundary and within designated countryside.

The pre-app report cited potential conflict with Core Strategy Policy 13 (Rural Hamlets) and Policy DM4 (Safeguarding the Countryside) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP), noting that Carlton, as a "Rural Hamlet", is not allocated for significant growth and lacks many services. The Council indicated that new market housing in such locations is generally considered unsustainable due to likely reliance on cars for transport.

Landscape and visual impact was also a key issue: officers felt that 9 dwellings would represent an unwarranted urban intrusion into open countryside north of the village, potentially harming its "open, verdant" rural character and creating an engineered suburban appearance at what is currently a green approach to Carlton. These initial concerns – including landscape impact, sustainability of location, and policy compliance – have been carefully considered in this Statement. The applicant's position is that such concerns can be overcome or mitigated, and that at the PIP stage they should not preclude establishing the principle of development. In particular, this proposal will be shown to deliver substantial public benefits (housing supply, community open space, biodiversity gains, etc.) that weigh strongly in favor, and detailed matters (design, landscaping, access arrangements) can be addressed at the Technical Details stage as appropriate.

3.0 Legislative Background (Permission in Principle)

3.1 Consent Route:

The Permission in Principle (PIP) consent route for housing-led development was introduced to provide a simpler, faster way to establish the *in-principle* acceptability of small housing sites. The PIP process has two stages. Stage 1 – Permission in Principle (to determine whether the site is suitable in principle, considering location, land use, and amount of development) and Stage 2 – Technical Details Consent (to assess detailed plans and ensure the scheme meets technical and site-specific requirements). A PIP establishes a binding consent in principle if granted, but it does not by itself allow development to commence – development cannot proceed until the subsequent Technical Details Consent (TDC) is obtained, at which point the permission is akin to a full planning permission.

3.2 Scope of Considerations:

Importantly, the scope of what can be considered at the PIP stage is strictly limited. By law and confirmed in PPG, the local planning authority *“assessment of Stage 1 PIP applications is limited to location, land use and the amount of development”*. All other matters – such as layout design, architectural detail, landscaping, drainage, ecology mitigation, highway design, etc. – *must* be deferred to the Technical Details stage. Statutory consultation requirements that relate to detailed issues (for example, impacts on listed buildings, protected species, traffic capacity) are engaged at the TDC stage rather than at PIP. Consequently, an application for PIP does not need to be accompanied by detailed technical reports or drawings, and the Council cannot require such information at this stage.

The following sections therefore concentrate on the in-principle policy considerations of *location*, *land use*, and *amount*, leaving finer technical points to be resolved later.

4.0 Planning Policies

4.1 Development Plan Overview:

For Hinckley & Bosworth, the relevant Development Plan documents include:

- Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy (adopted 2009): Key strategic policies – in particular: Policy 13: Rural Hamlets, which guides development in small settlements like Carlton; Policy 17: Rural Needs, which relates to exceptions for local needs housing; and Policy 19: Green Space and Play Provision, relevant to the provision of open space.
- Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (SADMP, adopted 2016): Detailed development management policies – notably: Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (echoing the NPPF’s golden thread), Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation (which strictly controls development in the countryside outside settlement boundaries), Policy DM6: Enhancement of Biodiversity (requiring biodiversity net gain for major development), Policy DM7: Preventing Pollution and Flooding (ensuring developments do not increase flood risk), Policy DM10: Development and Design (requiring high quality design that complements local character and protects amenity), Policy DM17: Highways and Transportation (ensuring safe access and no severe traffic impacts), and Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards. These policies inform the assessment of location sustainability, environmental impact, and design for the proposal.

4.2 Settlement Hierarchy & Countryside Policies:

Carlton is identified in the Core Strategy as a “Rural Hamlet”, the lowest tier of the settlement hierarchy. Core Strategy Policy 13 states that in Rural Hamlets, new housing development will be

supported only within settlement boundaries and generally limited to infill or local needs schemes; development outside the boundary is normally resisted unless it meets specific rural needs criteria. In this case, the site lies *outside* Carlton’s village boundary and thus falls under countryside policies. Policy DM4 (SADMP 2016) is especially relevant: it provides that the countryside will be “safeguarded from unsustainable development” and permits only certain types of development in countryside locations (e.g. rural enterprise, re-use of existing buildings, outdoor sport or recreation uses, rural workers’ dwellings, etc.). General market housing is not listed as an acceptable countryside use under DM4. Furthermore, DM4 stipulates that even permissible countryside developments must not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic beauty, open character and landscape character of the area, must not undermine the separation between settlements, and must not create or extend ribbon development. By proposing new housing on greenfield land outside the boundary, there is an acknowledged policy conflict with DM4 (and by extension with Policy 13) in strict terms. This conflict will be weighed in the planning balance.

4.3 Housing Supply and Out-of-Date Policies:

A critical material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), particularly the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged in this case, because the relevant Development Plan policies for housing are out-of-date. Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. The most up-to-date published position (as reported to the Council’s Planning Committee on 9 September 2025) identifies only 3.89 years supply as of July 2025.

Accordingly, the principle of new housing on this site must be considered in the context of that tilted balance. The adopted settlement boundary and countryside protection policies (CS Policy 12, SADMP DM4, etc.) carry reduced weight in this situation, since they act to constrain housing supply and are not delivering the required housing numbers. The lack of a 5-year supply also indicates that additional sites, including small village sites such as this, are needed to meet housing needs. The provision of 9 additional dwellings would make a modest but important contribution to the Borough’s supply. In a scenario of persistent undersupply, even small sites are valuable – NPPF paragraph 73 acknowledges the important role of small and medium sites in meeting housing requirements. This proposal accords with that objective by efficiently using a site of 1ha for nine homes.

In Hinckley & Bosworth itself, a recent appeal was allowed on the Barwell edge site (APP/K2420/W/24/3348387, 13 March 2025). The Inspector accepted that although the site was in a green wedge and would incur landscape/edge effects, those harms were not sufficient to outweigh the benefits of housing, especially in light of the council’s shortfall in housing supply. That Inspector explicitly applied the tilted balance under NPPF and concluded that the benefits of new housing and open space justified the proposal. This is a compelling local precedent for permitting housing on edge-of-village sites when supply is constrained.

4.4 National Policy on Rural Development:

The NPPF also provides guidance specific to rural areas. Paragraph 83 of the NPPF confirms that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities – for example, development in one village may support services in a nearby village. A site adjoining an existing village is not considered “isolated” just because it lies outside a defined boundary. This is an important consideration here: the proposal site

directly adjoins the built-up area of Carlton (indeed, it would *round-off* the village's north end), so it is not isolated in the ordinary sense.

The NPPF (para 110) further recognizes that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this must be taken into account in decision-making. Developments in rural villages will inevitably have less access to public transport than urban locations, but that does not automatically render them unsustainable – the scale of development and the availability of alternatives like walking, cycling, or community transport should be considered. National policy also gives weight to using small undeveloped sites within or on the edge of existing settlements to meet housing needs, as a means of boosting supply and choice. These NPPF provisions strongly support the principle of permitting appropriate small-scale housing in villages like Carlton, especially where it can help sustain local facilities or provide needed homes for local people.

4.5 Summary of Key Policies:

In summary, the Development Plan points toward a restrictive stance on open-market housing in the countryside (Policies CS13, DM4), while the NPPF and recent decisions tilt the balance in favour of sustainable small-scale growth where benefits outweigh harm. Other relevant policies include those on design and environment (e.g. DM10, DM6, DM7) which will primarily come into play at the Technical Details stage – the applicant will ensure any future detailed scheme complies with these (for instance, by achieving the now-mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain per DM6, and incorporating SuDS under DM7). The following Planning Assessment will evaluate the proposal against the thrust of these policies, focusing on the PIP-stage considerations of Location, Land Use, and Amount, and undertake a planning balance as required by NPPF 11(d).

5.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development – Location and Land Use

5.1 Location Relative to Settlement:

The site's location adjacent to Carlton village is considered suitable for residential development in principle. Although outside the formal boundary, the parcel physically *abuts* existing homes to the south and east, effectively making it a contiguous extension of the village rather than an isolated outpost. A group of dwellings adjoining a settlement should not be viewed as “new isolated homes” in the countryside. Here, the proposal would extend the line of residential development northward by a modest distance, keeping it visually and functionally connected to Carlton. Future occupants would be part of the Carlton community, not remote from it. This distinction is important: the NPPF's aim to avoid isolated dwellings is satisfied, since the development clusters with the existing village.

5.2 Sustainability of Settlement:

5.2.1 Service and Facilities

Carlton is categorised as a small Rural Hamlet with limited services. It does possess some community facilities: notably the St. Andrew's Church and Community Hub in the village centre, and The Gate Hangs Well public house at the eastern end.

Carlton benefits from the LC12 Bus Service which runs from Witherley to Measham via Atherstone, Market Bosworth, and Carlton. The service operates on weekdays, with one morning and one afternoon round trip. The bus service stops in Carlton at "opposite Gate Hangs Well" and is operated by Arriva Midlands operates the service.

The village also has recreational assets such as the) two village greens, and a network of footpaths (the Leicestershire Round long-distance footpath passes through Carlton). These amenities contribute to local quality of life and would be readily accessible to new residents of the development by walking or cycling.

5.2.2 Access on foot

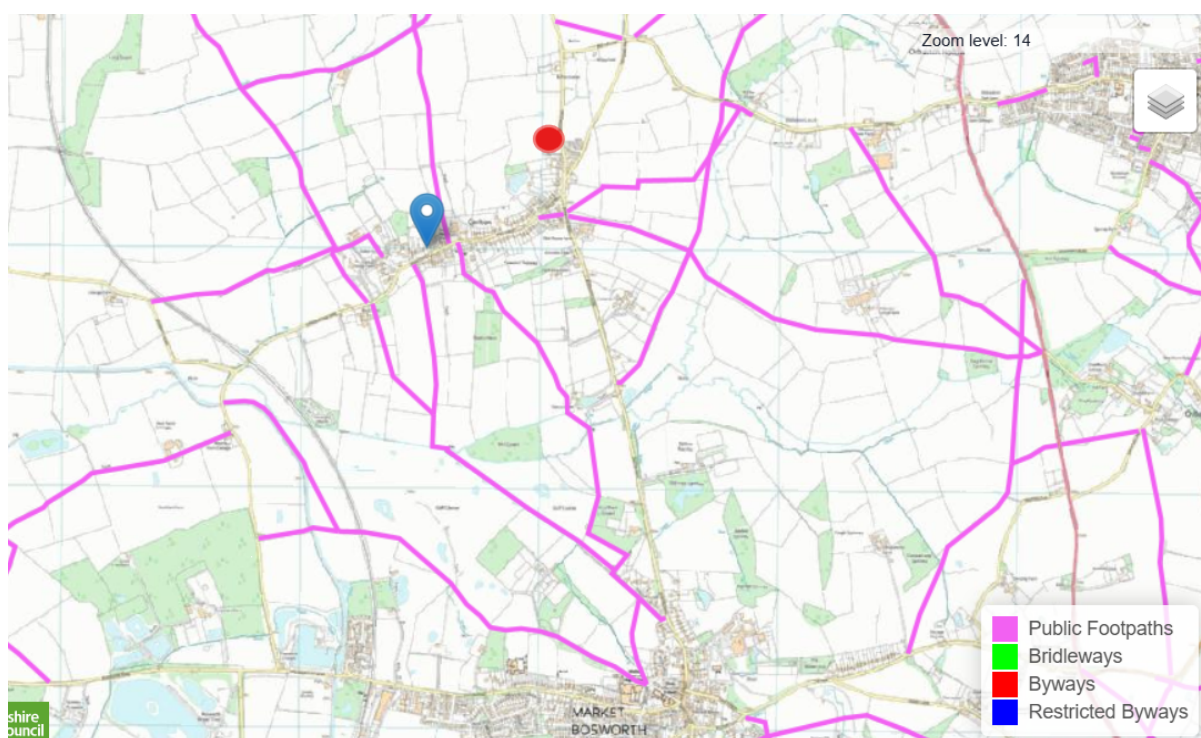


Figure one: Extract from Leicestershire County Council Public Rights of Way Map showing application site with red marker

In terms of walking, a footway is located immediately outside of the application site that provides for easy walking opportunities to the centre of the village located to the south, thereon Footpaths S69/2 and S77/1 provide a route on foot directly to Market Bosworth to the south with a walking distance of 2,000metres. Market Bosworth benefits from a range for services including schools, range of shops, surgery, dental practice regular bus service, restaurants and sports facilities.

2.2.3 Access via Cycling

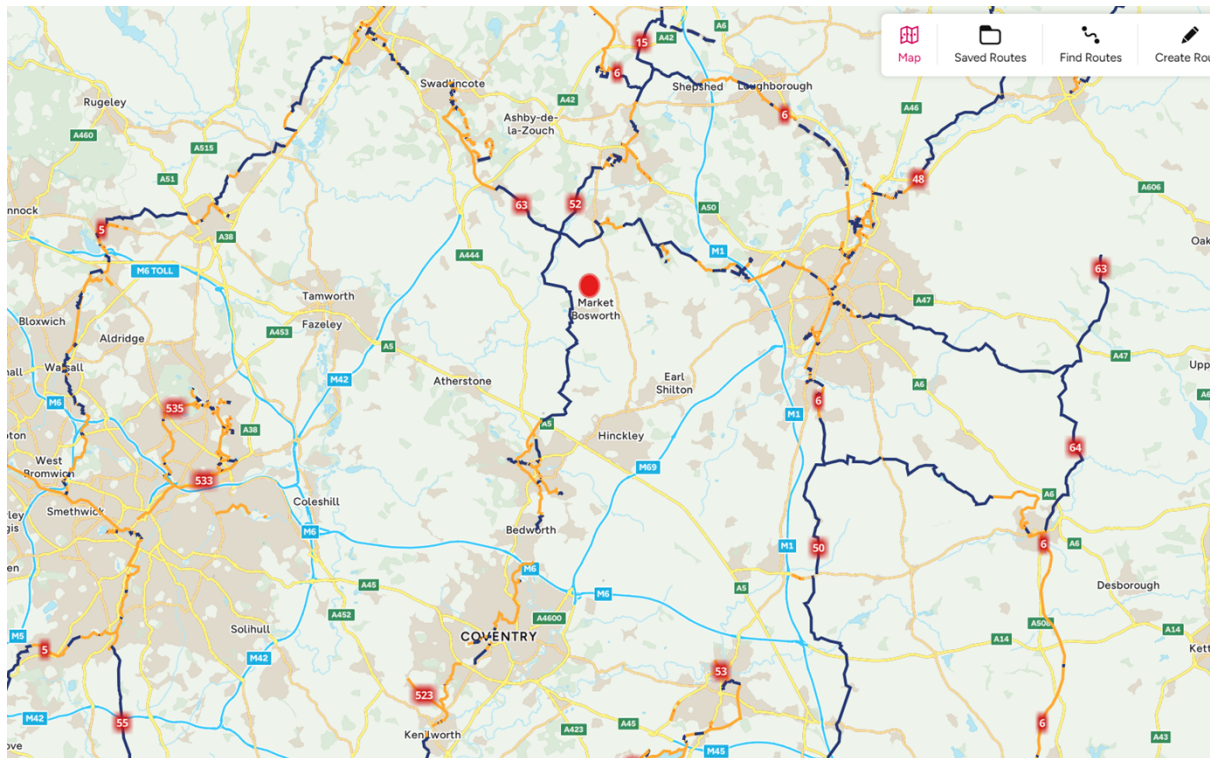


Figure two: Extract from National Cycle Route Map showing site annotated with red circle to the north of Market Bosworth

Carlton benefits from significant cycling opportunities. Although superseded by Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design, the earlier LTN 2/08: Cycle Infrastructure Design (Department for Transport, 2008) noted that “around 60% of car trips are typically under 5 miles” and that, with appropriate conditions, “a significant proportion of motorists could transfer to cycling.” Similarly, Planning Policy Guidance 13: A Guide to Better Practice (DETR, 2001) recognised the bicycle as the ideal mode of transport for journeys up to 8 km, highlighting its potential to replace short car trips—particularly those under 5 km—and to integrate with longer journeys by public transport.

While LTN 1/20 has replaced LTN 2/08, it does not define typical cycling distances. However, the widespread adoption of electric bicycles since the publication of LTN 2/08 has increased both the feasible range of cycling and its accessibility across different age groups and fitness levels.

In this context, nearby settlements such as Market Bosworth, Hinckley, and Old Arley all lie within approximately 5 miles of the site and are therefore comfortably within cycling distance—particularly for those using electric bicycles.

Attention is drawn to National Cycle Network Route 52 located to the west of Carlton village. The Sustrans website cites this running north from Warwick through Coventry, Nuneaton and Coalville to link with National Route 6 just west of Loughborough.

Thus, while day-to-day life in Carlton does rely to an extent on private car use (as the Council noted), the site is by no means “unsustainably” located in the broader context. The NPPF explicitly acknowledges that “opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas” – it would be unrealistic to expect a rural hamlet to have the transport

choices of a town. What matters is that this small development *avoids* an undue sense of isolation and that it can contribute to rural vitality rather than detract from it. In this regard, adding 9 households to Carlton will help maintain the vitality of the rural community, in line with NPPF paragraph 83. New residents will patronize local facilities (helping, for example, to sustain the village pub and church activities) and will support services in nearby villages such as Market Bosworth. The scale – 9 dwellings – is modest and proportionate to the settlement (increasing Carlton’s housing stock by only about 5-6%). This is not “significant development” in the NPPF sense, and so it will not undermine sustainable development objectives; on the contrary, it is the kind of incremental growth that national policy envisions to enable villages to “grow and thrive” organically.

5.3 Land Use – Housing and Open Space:

The proposed uses are considered appropriate for the site and the community. This proposal for 9 dwellings presents an opportunity to meet local housing needs in a measured way. This aligns with the NPPF’s call for housing in rural areas to reflect local needs and circumstances. Moreover, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough overall has to maintain a pipeline of sites. The NPPF urges councils to support windfall sites and gives *great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes*.

Although just outside the formal boundary, this site is contiguous with the existing settlement, essentially functioning as an “edge of settlement” infill. It can therefore be viewed as a suitable small site that the NPPF says should be looked upon favourably to boost supply. The other component of the proposal – 0.91 ha of community open space – is an inherently suitable use for this location.

The importance of providing community open space in this location is strongly supported by the Borough’s own evidence base. The Hinckley & Bosworth Open Space and Recreation Study (2016) (page 79) identifies that Carlton has deficiencies in formal parks, facilities for teenagers, and allotments. Consultation with Carlton Parish Council for that study confirmed that provision for natural areas, amenity spaces, and play areas was insufficient, and that there were no formal parks, facilities for young people, or allotments. The Parish Council also highlighted a need for an area of recreational land to include a playing field for young people and teenagers, informal open space for all, car parking, and space for a village hall or clubhouse. The study concluded that the types of open space in greatest demand were amenity areas, facilities for young people, and allotments. The proposed 0.91 ha community open space directly responds to this evidenced local need, fulfilling one of the very forms of provision highlighted in the Borough’s study

The open space (adjoining the western edge of the housing parcel) will remain undeveloped and can be laid out as a natural amenity area. In planning policy terms, the provision of public open space addresses Core Strategy Policy 19 (which seeks adequate green space and play provision in development) and would count as a positive factor in the planning balance. It is noted that Policy DM4 actually *supports* outdoor recreation use in the countryside (one of its listed exceptions) – here, while the housing triggers DM4 conflict, the open space portion of the scheme is consistent with the kind of development envisioned as acceptable in a countryside location (outdoor recreation that cannot be sited within a settlement). Thus, the land uses proposed (housing + open space) are logically complementary and suitable for this edge-of-village site.

5.4 Amount of Development – Scale and Quantum:

The proposal is for up to 9 dwellings. In terms of density, this equates to roughly 23 dwellings per hectare on the residential parcel, which is a low to medium density in keeping with the village-edge context. Nine units is considered a proportionate amount for Carlton: it will not overwhelm the

settlement or place undue strain on local infrastructure. The Council's pre-app advice did not indicate that 9 was too many in numeric terms; their concerns were more about principle of any new housing outside boundary. We submit that 9 dwellings strikes an appropriate balance – it is enough to make efficient use of the land and secure community benefits (open space and biodiversity enhancements at scale), yet it remains a minor addition relative to the size of Carlton. If significantly fewer houses were proposed, the ability to deliver the open space and meaningful affordable or specialist housing contributions might be compromised; if more were proposed, it might tip into a larger estate that could be out of character.

5.5 Rural Hamlet Policy:

As discussed, the proposal does depart from Core Strategy Policy 13 and SADMP Policy DM4, since it introduces new build housing outside the defined village boundary where open-market housing is not normally supported. The development does not fall under the strict exceptions listed in DM4 (it is not a rural enterprise, re-use of an existing building, etc.). Therefore, a degree of conflict with the *development plan's countryside protection aims* is acknowledged. However, two points significantly diminish the weight of this conflict: (1) Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land and (2) the Council can demonstrate no fundamental harm to strategic objectives – there is no designated Green Belt, AONB, or other protected area here that the policies seek to guard, and the scale is minor.

Under NPPF paragraph 11(d), this conflict activates the “tilted balance” in favour of granting permission unless clear harm is identified. The Council's own pre-app letter concedes that *“the housing policies in the development plan are considered to be out-of-date”* and that the application should be determined under para 11(d) with the presumption in favour. The effect is that while the proposal is technically a departure from the local plan, it is not one that automatically merits refusal – instead, the decision must rest on whether the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or whether specific NPPF policies indicate refusal (none do in this case, since this is not a protected landscape or similar area).

5.6 Landscape and Countryside Impact (Policy DM4 Criteria):

Policy DM4 includes qualitative criteria to ensure any countryside development does not harm key characteristics of the rural area. These criteria are closely related to landscape and settlement pattern. We address them in turn:

- **Intrinsic Character and Beauty of Countryside:** The Landscape Character here is documented in the Borough's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) as the Barton Village Farmlands character area. This area is noted for its undulating land, mixed farmland, strong hedgerows and tree cover, and *“small linear hilltop villages”* like Carlton that are *“well-integrated into the landscape”* with a *“harmonious”* character. The proposed development would take place on a small portion of farmland directly adjacent to the existing village edge, on two sides.

By concentrating new built form next to existing built form, the scheme maintains the broader pattern of clustered village development rather than introducing sporadic development in isolation. The visibility of the new houses will primarily be in the immediate approaches to Carlton on Barton Road. There will undoubtedly be a change in visual appearance – an open field will become a contained residential enclave – but the impact can be mitigated and moderated to avoid “significant adverse effect” on the wider countryside. The site is not subject to any special landscape designation and does not contain any landmark views or features identified for protection. It is effectively a gap between the

village and the countryside beyond. The proposed residential housing would be bounded to the north and west with landscaping buffer which would also contribute on site bio diversity net gain, whilst providing a defensible barrier against future development and creating a natural end stop to the village.

- **Separation Between Settlements:** The nearest settlements to Carlton are other small hamlets: Barton in the Beans lies to the north, and Nailstone lies to the east. The development site is on Carlton's northern tip. Even after adding 9 houses here, a substantial open gap will remain between Carlton and Barton in the Beans (over 1 km of farmland). The proposal does not bring any two villages perceptibly closer. It is entirely adjacent to Carlton and does not extend development in the direction of another settlement beyond the existing built envelope. The pre-app report raised the point of maintaining "*the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements*" – this scheme does not threaten any coalescence or erosion of separation. It fills in a corner of a field next to an established village cluster; it is not a leapfrogging development halfway to the next village. Thus, Policy DM4's separation criterion is satisfied. The open space component to the west will also remain undeveloped, preserving the open character along the approach to Carlton from Nailstone's direction. In summary, there is no impact on inter-settlement gaps of any planning significance.
- **Ribbon Development:** *Ribbon development* is typically defined as linear sprawl of houses along a road, extending outward from a settlement in strip fashion. While the development is located along Barton Road at the edge, it is not intended to create a continuous line of sporadic frontage development. Instead, the 9 dwellings are likely to be arranged in a courtyard style, farmstead proposal. It would likely comprise a joined up footprint with mixture of two, 1.5 and single storey development of red brick construction under clay tile roofs. This scheme would mimic the development style to the immediate south.

5.7 Taking the above into account, the proposal can be seen as compliant with the qualitative aims of DM4, even if technically a departure in terms of location. The Council's pre-app letter itself noted that the conflict with DM4 "will need to be carefully weighed in the planning balance along with other relevant considerations". We have shown that any conflict is mitigated by the proposal's adherence to good planning principles for countryside development (limited extent, contiguous siting, retention of character through landscaping, etc.).

5.8 Design and Village Character (Policy DM10):

Although design details are reserved for later, it is worth noting that Policy DM10 requires development to complement or enhance the character of the area. The applicant is committed to a high-quality design at Technical Details stage that reflects Carlton's rural village character. Sufficient space will be allowed for landscaping and gardens so that the scheme does not appear cramped or overly urban. The pre-application feedback expressed concern that an engineered access, parking

areas, and new houses would alter the current rural approach to the village, creating a more suburban feel. These aspects can all be addressed in the design phase: for example, the access road can be designed as a simple lane with grass verges rather than an urbanized highway; driveways can be gravel or permeable paving to reduce visual impact; ample green buffering can screen parking courts.

Since PIP does not lock in any particular design, the Council will have full control at TDC to insist on revisions or conditions to ensure the development “*complements the character of the surrounding area*,” as DM10 stipulates. At this stage, we assert that there is no in-principle reason why 9 dwellings could not be designed in a manner consistent with Carlton’s character. Many villages have grown incrementally over time with small groups of houses, and done sensitively, such additions become a seamless part of the village fabric. There are no insurmountable design constraints identified that would make 9 units inherently incompatible with the site or area.

Access, Highways and Transport

5.9 Access Feasibility:

The site is fortunate to have an existing established access point onto Barton Road with access to a raised footpath into the village (from the 2010 permission). This access can likely be utilized or slightly realigned/improved to serve the development.). The amount of traffic generated by 9 households will be small – on the order of perhaps 45-60 vehicle movements per day in total – which will not materially affect the operation or safety of the road network.

Initial consultation with the Leicestershire County Council Highway Authority at pre-app stage raised no fundamental objection, subject to receiving further details (the Highway Authority’s formal comments were to follow, but no immediate red flags were indicated). Policy DM17 supports development that would not have significant adverse impacts on highway safety, and DM18 requires adequate parking provision on-site. Both of these are readily achievable: there is sufficient land within the site to accommodate on-plot parking for each dwelling (in line with local parking standards), and the internal road can be designed to meet adoptable geometry if required.

Occupiers of the proposed development would have access to the LC12 Bus Service as referred to. The bus stop is located at the Gate Hangs Well Public House located 170 metres to the south of the proposed site access.

5.10 Traffic Impact and Connectivity:

Under the NPPF (para 116), development should only be refused on transport grounds if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be “severe” or if there are unacceptable safety issues. For 9 dwellings, it is evident that neither threshold is met – such a minor addition cannot trigger severe network effects. The pre-app report quoted this NPPF policy, emphasizing that refusal on highways grounds is not justified unless there is a clearly unacceptable impact. In this case, no such impact exists.

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.11

The entirety of the site lies in Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of fluvial flooding). There are no watercourses on or immediately adjacent to the housing parcel. The Council’s Drainage Officer

reviewed the pre-application proposal and had no objection, confirming that the location is suitable with regard to flood risk. The primary consideration is to ensure that surface water runoff from the new impermeable areas (roofs, driveways, road) will be managed so as not to increase flood risk downstream.

The development will incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) in line with Policy DM7 and best practice. The pre-app response recommended standard conditions and approaches for drainage, all of which the applicant will adhere to (e.g. considering water quality in SuDS design, following the surface water hierarchy for discharge). In summary, the development is not at risk of flooding and will be designed to ensure it does not cause off-site flood risk, meeting the requirements of DM7. There are no drainage constraints that would affect the in-principle decision.

Ecology and Biodiversity

5.12 Leicestershire County Council Ecology officers, in their pre-app input, noted that the arable land is of low biodiversity interest, though hedgerows and field margins are valuable and should be retained where possible. The proposal will indeed retain all significant hedgerows on the site's perimeter, save for any sections needed to form the site access (if the existing gate needs widening). Any minor hedge loss for access will be compensated with new native hedgerow planting around the site boundaries. The site offers a significant opportunity to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The community open space can play a dual role by providing recreation while also being managed to enhance biodiversity. For example, parts of it could be sown as wildflower meadow, native trees and shrubs could be planted, and perhaps a pond or wetland scrape could be created (also serving SuDS needs). These measures would boost habitat units. The ecology officer did advise that if the open space is heavily used by the public, there could be some tension between recreation and habitat (disturbance to wildlife). This will be accounted for in the detailed design: a balance can be struck, e.g., by zoning the open space – a portion can be a wild area with restricted access (for biodiversity offsetting), while another portion is a mown area or footpath route for public enjoyment. Overall, achieving the 10% net gain is feasible on-site, as confirmed by the ecology response. Policy DM6 will thus be complied with. In conclusion, there are no known ecological constraints that make the site unsuitable in principle. On the contrary, through new landscaping and habitat creation, the development can result in a net positive for local biodiversity. All necessary surveys will be secured at the appropriate stage – this is a matter of detail, not principle, and can be conditioned as needed.

Residential Amenity

5.13 Policy DM10 also addresses amenity – ensuring that new development does not adversely affect the amenities of existing neighbors and provides adequate amenity for its own future occupants. At PIP stage, we confirm that the site is large enough to accommodate 9 dwellings with appropriate separation distances both internally and to nearby existing dwellings. The detailed layout at TDC stage will be designed to respect the privacy and daylight of those existing homes.

The new houses themselves will be built to high quality with sufficient private garden space (again as per the Good Design Guide and nationally described space standards). The community open space will serve as a valuable amenity for both existing and new residents, offering a place for recreation and relaxation. Noise or disturbance from the new residential use will be negligible – 9 homes produce normal domestic noise, and traffic generation is low, so existing residents of Carlton will not experience any significant change in their environment. The Council's Environmental Health team flagged a potential issue of land contamination due to historic agricultural use (possible agro-chemicals, etc.). This is a standard consideration; the applicant will conduct a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment at TDC stage and, if necessary, agree a remediation strategy. This ensures the land

will be safe for future occupants (as gardens, etc.). Such a requirement can be handled via condition (pre-commencement) as indicated by the Environmental Health officer. There are no insurmountable amenity issues identified. The site can be developed without harm to neighbors and to provide a high standard of amenity for new residents.

Public Benefits and Material Considerations

5.14 Having addressed potential impacts and policy compliance, it is important to highlight the public benefits of the proposal, which are material considerations to weigh in favor of granting permission in principle:

- **Housing Delivery:** The development would add 9 dwellings to the Borough's housing supply, contributing to meeting the current significant shortfall.
- **Community Open Space and Recreation:** The dedication of a 0.91 ha parcel as public open space is a significant benefit. The Hinckley & Bosworth Open Space and Recreation Study (2016) demonstrates a clear deficiency in formal and informal recreation facilities in Carlton, particularly for young people and amenity space. The proposed community open space therefore delivers a direct response to that documented shortfall, providing the type of multifunctional recreation area and informal open space specifically sought in the Parish Council's consultation response. The long-term delivery and retention of the open space can be secured through an appropriate legal agreement or planning obligation at the Technical Details Consent stage, ensuring it remains available for community use in perpetuity
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** As detailed above, the project will deliver at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This might include creating wildflower meadows, new hedge and tree planting, bird nesting features, bat boxes, and possibly a pond or wet habitat. The environmental benefit of reversing biodiversity loss is a key government policy, and this scheme would contribute to that goal. The net gain can be quantified through a Biodiversity Metric calculation at TDC stage, but qualitatively, one can expect a currently monoculture field to become a mosaic of richer habitats.
- **Economic Uplift:** Although a development of 9 homes is modest, it will still generate economic activity. During construction, local builders and tradespeople are likely to be employed, and materials sourced, providing a short-term economic boost. After occupation, the new households will increase local spending – some portion of their expenditure on goods and services will occur in nearby centers (Market Bosworth shops, pubs, services), supporting those businesses. New residents also mean increased demand that can help sustain rural public transport or justify improved broadband infrastructure, etc. In the longer term, the addition of working-age residents could bolster the local labor force for employers. While these economic benefits are not huge in isolation, they are *not negligible* and under the NPPF's economic objective they are a positive factor. Furthermore, the development will generate additional Council Tax revenue for the Borough and potentially Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or other developer contributions (if applicable), which can be used to fund local services.

- **Sustainability and Climate Considerations:** Modern construction allows for much more energy-efficient homes than the older stock in the village. The new dwellings will be built to the latest building regulations standards for insulation and energy efficiency, possibly incorporating solar panels or heat pumps as standard. While small, these contributions align with climate change mitigation goals. They demonstrate that sustainable development can be achieved even in a rural context by leveraging new technology and design.
- **Conformity with National Growth Strategy:** By approving this PIP, the Council would be demonstrating a positive response to national initiatives to streamline housing delivery on small sites. The Government has promoted Permission in Principle expressly to bring forward more small/medium sites that are often overlooked but collectively make an important contribution. The NPPF paragraph 73(c) specifically encourages use of PIP to help bring small sites forward. Granting permission in principle here would be in the spirit of that guidance, showing the Council's commitment to proactive, proportionate decision-making to support appropriate growth. It could set a helpful example that small sustainable developments in rural villages will be considered on their merits, which in turn could encourage landowners and developers to invest in other suitable sites, aiding housing supply borough-wide.

5.15 The above benefits are significant for a scheme of this size. In planning terms, they represent the social, economic, and environmental gains that define sustainable development (per NPPF para 8). These benefits must be balanced against the harms or downsides identified earlier (policy conflict, change to countryside character, car dependency). It is the applicant's firm submission that the benefits outweigh the harms, and certainly no adverse impact has been shown to reach a level that "significantly and demonstrably" outweighs the benefits, as required to refuse under NPPF 11(d). We now turn to the overall conclusion and planning balance.

6.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

6.1 Summary of Compliance: In conclusion, the proposal for 9 dwellings and community open space at Land West of Barton Road, Carlton is considered to be sustainable development in principle, and therefore deserving of Permission in Principle consent. The key determinants at this stage – location, land use, and amount – have been demonstrated to be acceptable:

- **Location:** The site is immediately adjacent to an existing rural settlement, not isolated in the countryside. It benefits from proximity to community facilities in Carlton (pub, church, open space) and the services of Market Bosworth just 1 mile away. While future residents will rely on private vehicles to some extent, this is typical for rural living and is mitigated by the short travel distances and the availability of alternatives like walking and cycling. The location will help maintain the vitality of the local community in line with national policy. There are no locational constraints such as green belt or floodplain designations. As such, the site is a suitable location for a limited housing development.
- **Land Use:** The proposed housing use (up to 9 dwellings) is appropriate given the surrounding land uses. The inclusion of a substantial community open space is a compatible and highly

beneficial land use in this context, providing recreation and ecological value. There is no conflict with surrounding land uses – the area is residential and agricultural, and housing with open space fits neatly with that pattern. The land use is housing-led, consistent with the PIP regulations, and the open space component aligns with policy objectives for green infrastructure. No alternative use of this site would yield such community benefits; retaining it in agriculture yields little public value given its small size and peripheral location, whereas using it for housing and open space has clear public gains.

- **Amount of Development:** The quantum of up to 9 dwellings is modest and proportionate to the village scale. It strikes a balance between viability/deliverability and minimal impact. The amount has been carefully considered so as not to overwhelm local infrastructure or character. Sufficient land is available to accommodate 9 units with appropriate spacing, gardens, and parking, in compliance with relevant standards.

6.2 Policy Balance: The proposal does represent a departure from certain Development Plan policies (namely the strict containment of housing within settlement boundaries as per Core Strategy Policy 13 and SADMP Policy DM4). However, those policies are out-of-date in the context of current national policy and housing needs. The NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11(d)) is engaged and becomes the guiding decision framework. This means approving the application unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In this case, no such level of harm has been identified.

The Council's housing supply shortfall represents a significant and persistent under-delivery, such that restrictive countryside policies (CS13, DM4) no longer serve their intended purpose of managing sustainable growth — they now act as a brake on much-needed housing delivery. In this context, national policy directs that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should carry substantial weight

6.5 Conditions and Technical Stage: It is worth noting that any residual concerns the Council may have can likely be addressed through either conditions on the PIP or at the Technical Details stage. For instance, if there is concern about the extent of landscaping or the management of the open space, the Council could attach an informative or condition to the PIP decision indicating that a comprehensive landscaping scheme and open space management plan should accompany the TDC application – the applicant is agreeable to this. Similarly, if specific surveys (e.g. ecology) or assessments (e.g. contamination, heritage if any) are desired, those can be required prior to or alongside TDC. This ensures that granting PIP now does not mean giving up control over the important details – the Council retains full control to shape the final scheme to be policy-compliant and sensitive. The Technical Details Consent process is the appropriate stage to resolve matters like detailed design (ensuring DM10 is met), highway specifications (DM17/18), drainage design (DM7), biodiversity offset specifics (DM6), and so on. It is envisaged that the open space provision would be secured and managed through a Section 106 agreement or other suitable legal mechanism to guarantee its delivery and community benefit. By deferring to that stage, the Council can focus now on the high-level principle, which as argued, is sound.

6.6 Conclusion: The proposed development constitutes a sustainable development in line with national planning objectives. It offers a well-considered growth opportunity for Carlton that will bring social, economic, and environmental enhancements. The departure from certain local policies is justified by the outdated nature of those policies and the strong compliance with the NPPF's aims. No insurmountable constraints exist that would prevent the site from being developed

appropriately. On balance, the public benefits – including needed housing and community infrastructure – carry significant weight and there are no adverse impacts that significantly outweigh those benefits.

The Barwell appeal decision reinforces that, even in Hinckley & Bosworth, the Inspectorate will permit development on greenfield edge sites when the housing shortfall is acute and the benefits demonstrable. That appeal confirms that countryside constraints do not automatically override the presumption in favour when the tally of benefits is compelling.

Therefore, the strong housing need context, combined with on-site public open space provision and sustainable village edge location, justify granting this PiP. The adverse impacts identified are not of a magnitude to significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits under NPPF 11(d).