

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ACCESSES;
MAIN STREET, STYRRUP

The application site is located south of and has a frontage onto Main Street adjacent and opposite the existing extent of the built up area of the village as shown in the aerial photograph. The site amounts to approximately 0.5 of a hectare in area and has a rear boundary that follows an existing field boundary. Styrrup is presently composed of both linear frontage development along Main Street as well as limited “in-depth” development that extends behind the frontage with the exception of the Pagan Drive estate which is a more modern housing estate not reflective of the original historic form of the village. The site is presently unused former agricultural land divorced from the remainder of the owners agricultural holding and therefore unviable to farm in isolation.

In the original Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan the settlement of Styrrup was identified as a Small Rural Settlement within which the Council would support the delivery of sustainable development to meet the needs of Bassetlaw’s rural area over the plan period to 2037. This included an increase in the number of dwellings by 20% which in the case of Styrrup would mean an increase of 26 new dwellings. This limitation on the increase in the number of dwellings reflected the well established planning principle that any new development should respect the identity and distinctiveness of a settlement having regard for its size, scale, form and character. In order to identify settlements that accommodate new housing whilst satisfying these requirements the Council’s Spatial Strategy 2019 assessed 103 settlements in Rural Bassetlaw. Settlements that could not satisfy these requirements either because they were too small or too dispersed were not identified as being able to accommodate any new housing and were classified as being in the countryside. Styrrup was identified as a settlement that is capable of accommodating new housing in accordance with the agreed principles.

In order to protect rural settlements from excessive development that would not be proportionate to the size and scale of existing settlements and as a result would be harmful to local identity and distinctiveness the Draft Local Plan proposed that the amount of new housing should be limited to 20% of the existing number of dwellings. It was acknowledged that there would be the opportunity for local communities to increase this percentage of growth through the inclusion of ‘exceptions housing’. This would provide flexibility to allow local communities to choose how they plan for growth, with options to determine the most appropriate location and type of housing in accordance with the overall spatial strategy. The emphasis was clearly on the need to make provision for the future controlled growth of rural settlements.

Subsequently Policy ST2 of the Publication Version of the Local Plan continued to confirm the designation of Styrrup as a Small Rural Settlement within which it reduced the original 20% increase in the number of new dwellings to 5%. This amounts to 15 new dwellings in the case of

Styrrup. This revision was carried over into Policy ST2 of the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan which has now been supported by the Government's Inspector as a result of which Policies ST1 and ST2 state as follows:-

“Large Rural settlements and Small Rural Settlements as defined in the settlement hierarchy in ST1, will experience residential growth over the plan period to support their role and function through the following minimum housing requirements for each individual settlement. Housing growth will be in the form of completed sites, sites with planning permission, site allocations in the Local Plan, site allocations in made neighbourhood plans or unallocated sites which meet the criteria in Part 2 below:

Eligible Small Rural settlement: 5% Growth as minimum number of dwellings:

Styrrup 15

Part 2:

Proposals for residential development within a development boundary of a Large or Small Rural settlement or in those cases where there is no development boundary within the existing built form of a settlement will be supported where it meets all of the following criteria:

- c) it's location, size, scale and form does not cause significant harm to the existing built character in that part of the settlement;*
- d) it does not cause significant harm to the openness and distinctiveness of the surrounding countryside, where appropriate;*
- e) it maintains the physical separation between settlements, where appropriate;*
- f) it prioritises the re-use of previously developed land or underused land where possible;*
- g) it positively responds to the design principles as defined in Policy ST35 and any relevant studies and/or design codes informing a made neighbourhood plan;*
- h) it provides well designed safe and convenient access for all including where appropriate connections and improvements to existing infrastructure to promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport.*

New Section after Part 2:

Residential Development in the Countryside

Proposals for residential development outside of a development boundary of a settlement or in those cases where there is no development boundary outside the existing built form of a settlement will be supported where it is consistent with Part 2 (a-f) above and where they:

- a) are supported within a made neighbourhood plan (including a review); or*
- b) provide for the replacement of an existing dwelling; in this case the replacement dwelling should be of a similar size and scale to the original dwelling and be located on the footprint of the original dwelling unless an alternative position within the existing residential curtilage would have no adverse impact on the wider setting; or*
- c) provide for the conversion of a permanent redundant or disused non residential building that is structurally capable of conversion and that any extension or alteration would not adversely affect the form, scale, massing or proportion of the building and would enhance the immediate setting; or*

d) *are consistent with other policies in this Plan;*

It is submitted that in view of the acknowledged benefits of supporting limited (5%) growth of the number of dwellings within Small Rural settlements, including Styrrup, the proposed development satisfies all of the criteria in the revised Policy ST2 and represents a unique opportunity to contribute toward delivering the number of dwellings identified in Part 2 of the policy. The application site can be said to be within the existing built form of the settlement having regard for the existing built development to the north and east of the application site and particularly in view of the recent planning permission granted for the erection of a new dwelling immediately to the west of the application site - see later. The rear boundary of the proposed development is entirely consistent with that of the existing development to the east (Styrrup Court) and will not involve any further encroachment into open countryside.

A Pre-application enquiry was submitted in 2022 and the following responses were received:-

Visual Amenity:-

“The principle of reflecting the traditional agricultural character of vernacular buildings, with red brick and red clay pantile roof in any new development is welcomed. The proposed layout would appear suburban and out of character with the existing character in this part of the village. A less intensive development and the move towards more linear plots perpendicular to the road may be a better approach. In an agricultural setting a less regimented and more organic “farmhouse plus barns with associated cottages arrangement can often help assimilate development into its surroundings”.

Highways Matters:-

“Although the Highway Authority do not have an objection in principle as the proposal is for more than 5 dwellings the development will require a street design to adoptable standard. This would have a negative impact in terms of the effect on the visual amenity and rural character as well as the reference to a 2m wide footpath along Main Street in terms of the overall balance when considering any planning application”.

Ecology/Trees:-

The retention of and enhancement of the existing hedge is welcomed. This should be incorporated into any landscaping and biodiversity enhancements proposed in line with NPPF Paragraph 180”.

Flood Risk:-

“.....The site lies in Flood Zone 1 Area as designated by the Environment Agency which is land at least risk of flooding from local rivers and this is where development is directed in the NPPF to minimise the risk of flooding.

...A scheme for disposal of foul and surface water should be included as part of any application”.

Heritage Matters:-

“Conservation Officer is concerned about the proposed layout appearing overly suburban and out of character with its historic setting and at odds with the historic layout of the village. In addition highways request for adoptable standard roads and footpath along Main Street would add to the

detrimental impact on the historic rural character of the area. Any planning application should be accompanied by documentation to identify the significant heritage assets affected in line with NPPF paragraph'.

Other Matters:-

“The Council is currently preparing a new Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan. The latest draft is the Publication Version of August 2021 and Addendum January 2022. This identifies Styrrup as a Small Rural Settlement in Policy ST1 where it is identified that a maximum proposed growth of 15 dwellings will be provided for between 2020 -2037 in Policy ST2. Latest monitoring information identifies Styrrup as already having 5 dwellings committed and therefore net remaining growth is currently for an additional 10 dwellings to meet the figure in the draft plan. The Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan is currently at a stage where only very limited weight can be given to it in the determination of planning applications.”

In summary/conclusion the Pre-Application response stated as follows:-

“The consideration of an application for this proposal would be assessed against NPPF paragraph 11d) where permission should be granted unless the application of policies that protect assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development or any adverse impact would outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole. The benefits of the development would include the provision of new dwellings, however it is not considered that the proposed development of this site would relate to the existing settlement character given the proposed form and layout. The need for an adoptable access into the site and creation of footpaths along Main Street as requested by the Highway Authority would add to the detrimental impact on the rural village character. A less intensive and regimented layout should be considered to reflect the rural village character. I am of the view that the proposal shown on drawing No. 110/20/1A would be unlikely to be recommended for approval due to the layout and associated requirements to serve the development being out of character with the more organic forms of development typical of Styrrup”.

At no point was any objection in principle raised to the development of the application site and therefore further discussions were undertaken with the Councils Conservation Officer in order to address the concerns expressed at the time of the Pre-Application Enquiry which have now been incorporated into the submitted plans.

Historically the majority of the population of Styrrup would have been employed in agriculture and this is reflected in the form, scale and design of existing buildings and dwellings in the village. It is intended that this will be reflected in the layout and design of the proposed development following further discussions with the Conservation Officer. Historically ‘backland structures’ would traditionally have been barns associated with farmhouses to the front. The proposed development can therefore be divided into three components. First of all there will be two enclosed “fold yards” or courtyards with individual ‘private drive’ accesses from Main Street thereby avoiding the need

for adopted roads which the conservation officer had concerns about in the original scheme. One private courtyard will serve five dwellings whilst the second will serve four dwellings. Secondly there will be a total of five dwellings along the frontage of Main Street. Two of which will be in the form of different farmhouse designs, two will be in the form of a pair of semi-detached 'farmworkers' style cottages and the final property will be in the form of a dovecote. Thirdly to the rear there will be a total of four dwellings, two of which will be in the form of stables, one in the form of a threshing barn and the fourth in the form of a granary. Single storey 'outbuildings' for parking will be provided to serve two of the rear dwellings and all of the frontage dwellings.

All of the proposed dwellings will be two storey with the exception of the dovecote design that will be a combination of single and two storey. The scale and mass of the buildings is important and will reflect traditional building techniques and constraints including for example limited span roofs and brickwork detailing. Excessive spans and shallow pitched roofs are generally not to be found in traditional structures normally found in rural settlements. Elevations will be simple incorporating windows with a vertical emphasis and brick heads and cills with chimneys where appropriate for example. Materials will be red brick and pantiled roofs which are historically typical of the village.

The existing hedge along the Main Street frontage will be retained with the exception of where it needs to be removed to facilitate construction of the two accesses. Both this hedge and the one along the rear boundary will be enhanced as necessary with further indigenous planting in accordance with details to be agreed. This will generate both visual and bio-diversity benefits along with additional planting that will be undertaken throughout the development.

The proposed development is now consistent with results of the Pre-Application Enquiry and the principle is also supported by the recent granting of planning permission in 2022 for a new dwelling to the south west of the application site. A previous application had been refused and the refusal upheld on appeal. In approving the new application it was concluded that:-

"Whilst the Council can demonstrate a strong housing land supply it is considered that strategic policies such as that contained in the Council's Core Strategy carry limited weight due to the lack of site allocations and being in excess of 5 years old so therefore the weight to be apportioned to the Core Strategy policies is limited in decision making.

As the core Strategy is deemed to be out of date having regards to the contents of Paragraph 33 of the NPPF Paragraph 11 of the NPPF makes it clear that the scheme should be considered under the tilted balance test where planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF when taken as a whole.

The benefits of the development would include the provision of a new dwelling in a rural location to help towards meeting local need and also help sustain the rural economy. In addition having assessed the proposal it is considered that such development would have no adverse impact on highway safety, residential amenity, landscape character, drainage or heritage assets.

Having regards to benefits outlined above and the scale and form of the development it is considered that these outweigh any identified harm and as such the proposal would constitute sustainable development as defined in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF and accordingly the scheme must be granted planning permission.”

It is submitted that the fundamental principles that underpinned this decision are equally if not more so applicable to the proposed development.

Regarding more detailed matters a preliminary ecological appraisal has been carried out which has not identified any ecological constraints that would influence the development of the site. As far as heritage issues are concerned there are no assets that would be adversely impacted by the proposed development. The only non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the application site are Poplars Farm located on the north side of Main Street and Fairview Cottage located on the south side of Main Street approximately 40m or so south west of the application site. What was previously open land between Fairview Cottage and the application site now has planning permission (see above) for the erection of a new dwelling.