

**Newark and Sherwood District Council Allocations & Development
Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)**

Additional Statement made by Helen Cattle 29/11/12

Wellow Main Open Areas (Map 29) / Soundness Criterion: Justified

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement amplifies original representations made in respect of the Main Open Areas designation within Wellow. It provides further explanation about why the designation in its current form is considered to fail the soundness test and puts forward a recommendation for modifications (involving the inclusion of additional areas of land) with the aim of ensuring that the most appropriate strategy for Main Open Areas designation within Wellow is included within the DPD.

2. Comment on Current Designation and Recommended Modifications

- 2.1 The areas of land currently included within the Main Open Areas designation are considered to play an important role in defining the form and structure of the settlement, are accessible/viewable by the public and their inclusion within the Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD is therefore felt to be justified.
- 2.2 It is noted that the areas included have been carried forward from previous Local Plan designations. However, as recognised by the Local Planning Authority within the Newark and Sherwood Main Open Area Review July 2011, the preparation of the Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD provides an opportunity to modify the designations where there is a case for doing so.
- 2.3 The above Review refers to two designations within Wellow. The first is Wel-01 Maypole Green, which is appraised as forming an important part of the character of the village, noted to be Registered Common Land and judged to be worthy of retention. The second area, Wel-02 Wellow Green, Cricket Pitch and Wellow Dam, is similarly appraised and, whilst protected by Core Strategy Policy SP8, is also considered to merit continued designation.
- 2.4 The basis of this representation is that in addition to areas referred to in the above Review, there are other parcels of land within Wellow that have characteristics which merit their inclusion within the Main Open Areas designation. Like the two areas outlined in paragraph 2.3, these additional parcels also comprise Registered Common Land, are accessible/viewable by the public and play an important role in defining the settlement's form and structure.
- 2.5 A plan showing other areas of Registered Common land within Wellow was included with the original objection representation. In particular, the original representation expressly referred to two areas of Registered Common Land that border onto the historic Gorge Dyke, a watercourse that can be traced around the village and is itself a definitive feature of the Conservation Area, stating that these areas should be included within the Main Open Areas designation.

- 2.6 One of these areas lies at the southern end of a well used footpath known as North Dark Lane that runs alongside Gorge Dyke; the other is situated at the northern end. The areas of land are shown in Figures 1 and 2 respectively.

Figure 1: Land to the South of North Dark Lane – Looking North-West from Eakring Road



Figure 2: Land to North of North Dark Lane – Looking South from Newark Road



- 2.7 Both of these areas of land are considered to merit inclusion within the Main Open Areas designation because they form an important component of the setting of the Gorge Dyke, are an integral part of the historic footpath that runs alongside the Dyke and comprise corresponding elements of valuable open space created by the broadening out of the footpath at the northern and southern ends of North Dark Lane where it joins Newark Road and Eakring

Road respectively. The footpath follows the watercourse beyond both of these roads. From Eakring Road it continues as South Dark Lane and heads towards the eastern section of the historic Dyke that is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and to the north it joins the designated Main Open Area incorporating Wellow Green and Dam. The route of the footpath and the Dyke have formed and preserved a strong definitive edge to the core of the village for centuries and evidence of the well established footpath is recorded on Sanderson's Map of 1835.

- 2.8 It is recognised that over time impermanent surfacing materials have periodically been applied to some parts of both areas and that this has to a limited extent reduced the contribution that the spaces make to the visual amenity of the locality and the character and appearance of the Wellow Conservation Area. However, the effect of this is not considered to be so significant as to undermine the case for including the land within the Main Open Areas designation because overall it is their open and undeveloped characteristics, and their function in delineating a clear edge to the core of the village and in turn the form and structure of the village that provide the main justification for recommending their inclusion rather than their current surface condition. Furthermore, with limited intervention and insubstantial cost, it would be straightforward to significantly enhance the appearance of these areas by protecting and renovating elements of turf within them whilst maintaining existing rights of way in line with other examples of this within the existing Wellow Main Open Areas designation. In doing so, this would also help to join up the different elements of green space within the village, enhancing its overall character and providing additional benefits in terms of biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- 2.9 In assessing the weight to be attributed to the current appearance of land in determining suitability for applying Main Open Area designation, it is also interesting to consider the appearance of part of the current designation that is already judged to warrant inclusion, something that this submission does not seek to dispute. The area referred to is a stretch of land known as Billet Lane that lies to the north of Newark Road upon which an informal surface has been applied and that also is not Registered Common Land. The area referred to is shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Billet Lane – Land within Main Open Area - Looking North from Newark Road



- 2.10 Although it is judged that both areas (to the north and south of North Dark Lane) warrant inclusion within the Main Open Areas designation for the reasons cited above, the case for including land to the south of North Dark Lane is considered to be further reinforced by the fact that it is readily viewed from within the core of the village from Eakring Road, and also from well used public rights of way that lead across it to adjoining open countryside to the west of the village.
- 2.11 Turning back to the original objection representation, it was suggested that other areas of Registered Common Land within Wellow (shown on the plan that accompanied the original submission) should be appraised for potential inclusion in the Main Open Areas designation. Whilst these other areas do have amenity value and are publicly viewable, they lie beyond the main core of the settlement and the case for their inclusion within the Main Open Areas designation is therefore judged less compelling.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 In conclusion, it is considered necessary to extend the designation of Main Open Areas in Wellow to include the two areas of Registered Common Land bordering Gorge Dyke to ensure that the designation within the DPD represents the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives.