

# Dinnington St John's Neighbourhood Plan

2016 – 2028

“FROM TIN TOWN TO  
GREAT TOWN”

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE  
OF OUR COMMUNITY  
DELIVERED THROUGH THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF A  
DYNAMIC  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**FINAL DRAFT REFERENDUM VERSION**

**January 2021**

## OUR VISION

“To actively improve the well-being of residents of  
Dinnington St John’s Parish through the  
implementation of the following key strategies:

Housing

Health, leisure and community facilities

Education, employment and skills

Shops and the Town Centre

Natural Environment and

Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure”

# FOREWORD

The Town Council and residents of Dinnington St John's have come together to produce this Neighbourhood Plan as a method of communicating their needs and aspirations as a community facing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. There are two main reasons why we decided to produce the Plan.

Firstly, Dinnington St John's is a historic and great parish with a tremendous sense of spirit and identity. It is likely to see significant housing and other forms of development over the coming years if the plans identified by Rotherham MBC are delivered. The community wants to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development to ensure that it best reflects the needs of the community. We firmly believe that decisions about the future development of Dinnington are best made at the local level by bodies and individuals who truly understand the local area and its needs and aspirations. Secondly, it is born out of a sense of frustration in the community with a general lack of progress and response to community needs over many recent years. Dinnington was once a vibrant and prosperous area. Since the decline of coal mining and other traditional industries, it has struggled with a legacy of deep-seated social, economic and environmental problems.

As a result of the Localism Act, we now have a possibility to articulate our wishes through an instrument that has standing in Law and must be taken into account in any planning decisions that are made affecting where and how we live.

The Plan sets out a realistic plan of action the delivery of which we anticipate that everyone will have pooled their resources and efforts in the delivery of. It aims to encourage and guide positive developments such as planned significant housing and economic development, to help address the many current and potential social, environmental and economic issues identified during the process. It is not simply a list of what we do not want to happen. It reflects the hard work of the community and has been researched using experts in several areas and discussing achievable solutions with other groups in the UK through the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

In collecting and collating all of the data and views regarding our community it became apparent that we have major problems in very many areas with no communicated single 'local plan' as to how to solve these issues. In simple terms, on most of the social and economic indicators that we see for our community we are getting worse, not better. We believe that this is an unacceptable situation for any community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. If we allow this situation to continue, we will be bequeathing to our children a local society that has the following framework:

- A decreasing life expectancy
- A worsening health situation
- At best an educational achievement picture that is static at a low base
- Less green space than we inherited
- Continued limitations regarding housing independence
- Limited employment possibilities
- Significantly fewer sports and recreational facilities than we inherited

- Dormitory town for the other centres nearby with no “heart”

It is against this picture that the Town Council, with the support of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, has produced this Plan.

We all believe that we are responsible for our own lives, but we delegate and pay for certain aspects of our existence to organisations that ought to use their expertise and economy of scale to give us an improving life. Our deliberations in preparing this plan indicate that there is a lot to be desired in this respect at the moment. We are the first community in Rotherham to produce a neighbourhood plan and, as such, a lot of the activity has been new to most people as well as Rotherham MBC. We have arrived at a realistic Plan that has the support of the community and points the way for the next 10/15 years that if followed will result in a better place to live and work and will start to rectify the worsening future picture we see in so many areas today. I am very grateful to all those who have contributed to the preparation of the Plan. I would especially like to thank my fellow town councillors, the other members of Steering Group, and the many others have contributed to its development as well as the funding body Locality.

More information about the Plan including updates and supporting documents can be found at the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.

**Cllr David Smith**

**Chairman of Dinnington St John’s Town Council and the Dinnington St John’s Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	
1.0 Introduction	6
What is the Dinnington St John's Neighbourhood Plan?	6
Why do we want a Neighbourhood Plan?	7
Planning Context	9
The process of developing the Plan	10
Where are we and what happens next?	11
2.0 Dinnington St John's – A Spatial Portrait	12
3.0 Overall Vision and Key Issues	13
4.0 Plan Policies	15
4.1 Housing	17
4.2 Health, Leisure and Community Facilities	26
4.3 Employment, Education and Skills	32
4.4 Shops and the Town Centre	36
4.5 Natural Environment	45
4.6 Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure	50
5.0 Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan	60
Figures and Appendices	
Figure 1          The Plan Area – Dinnington St John's Parish	7
Figure 2          The Green Belt	49
Figures 3-9      Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest	61
Appendix A      Important Community Facilities	65

# 1.0 Introduction

## What is the Dinnington St John's<sup>1</sup> Parish Neighbourhood Plan?

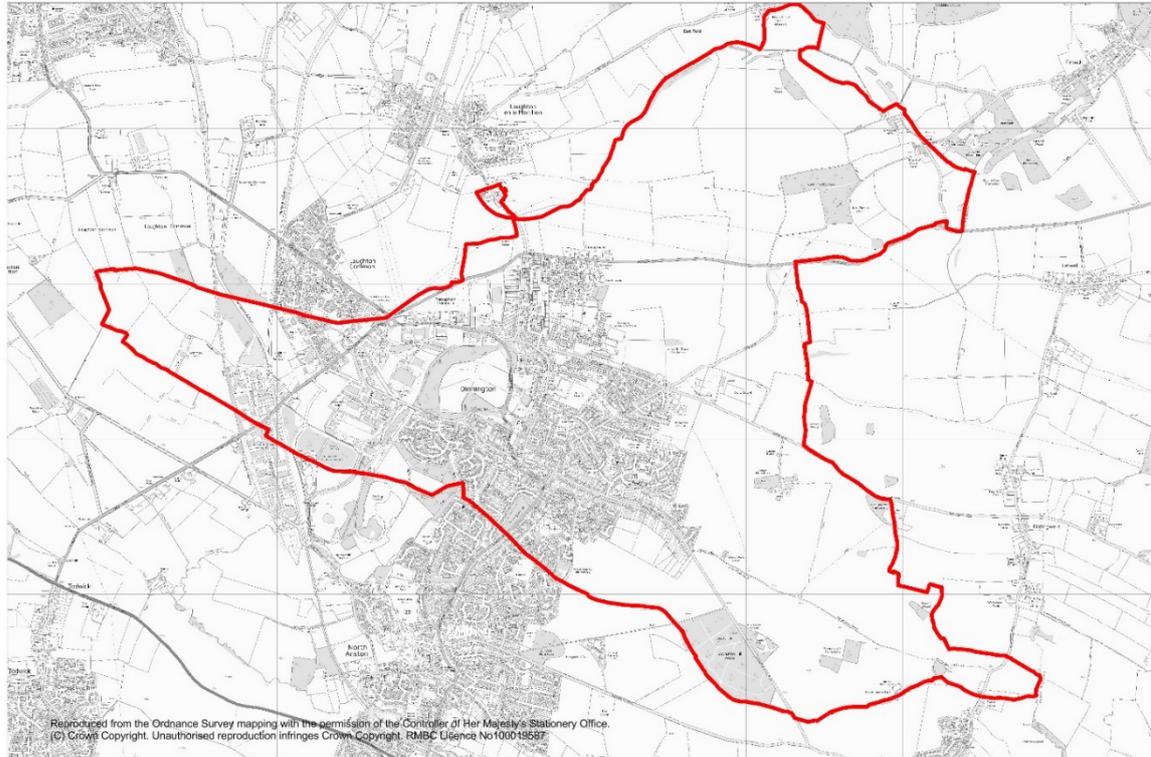
1. In very simple terms, our neighbourhood plan is:
  - A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – which will then be used to determine planning applications and other planning decision affecting that area.
  - Written by us the local community, the people who know and love the area
  - A powerful tool to ensure that we, the community, get the appropriate types of development in the right place.
2. Local people have created this neighbourhood plan, which then allows us to develop planning policies that reflect the priorities of our area and have real statutory weight.
3. A neighbourhood plan is an important document with real legal force, therefore, there are certain formal procedures that it must go through.
4. Dinnington St John's Town Council as the 'qualifying body' applied to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (Rotherham MBC) in December 2015 to prepare a neighbourhood plan for Dinnington St John's. The parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2016. However, Dinnington St John's Parish Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan') is not the Town Council's plan, It is the local community's plan and as such must be endorsed by a local referendum, which requires a 'yes' vote of 50% or more of those who vote.
5. A 'yes' vote means the Plan can then be formally 'made' by Rotherham MBC, who have to use it when making planning and other decisions that affect our parish.
6. The designated Neighbourhood Plan Area is defined by the Dinnington St John's Town Council Parish boundary, as outlined in Figure 1.
7. Covering the period from 2016 to 2028, the Plan is informed by extensive research and influenced by robust community engagement and provides a plan for the future of Dinnington and targeted action as to how this might be achieved.

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<sup>1</sup>The terms Dinnington, Dinnington St John's and Parish are all used interchangeably. They all relate to Dinnington St John's Parish unless indicated otherwise.

**Figure 1: The Plan Area – Dinnington St John’s Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA**



## Why do we want a Neighbourhood Plan?

8. A neighbourhood plan enables local communities like ours to have more control over development in their own area by preparing a framework against which planning proposals can be judged.
9. Dinnington is at a crossing point. The demise of the coal industry in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, which it traditionally looked to for jobs, prosperity and sense of identity, created major challenges for it. While there has been some regeneration in the intervening period, such as the redevelopment of the former Dinnington Colliery, major social and economic challenges remain. This is reflected in the health, skills/education and other achievements of its residents, which are consistently below the national average. Official figures show that parts of the parish are amongst the top 10% most deprived nationally; unemployment has consistently been above the national average, and the proportion of school leavers that achieve no qualification is well above the national average and has hardly changed over the last 20 years, just to name a few good examples.

10. The Parish is likely to face significant development over the coming years if the plans identified by RMBC are delivered. The Rotherham Local Plan (2013-2028)<sup>2</sup> identifies it as a broad location for housing, economic and other forms of growth.
11. We have been clear at the outset that sustainable development is not only desirable but necessary; without it, our community may not flourish and prosper.
12. However, we want to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development. We firmly believe that decisions about the future development of Dinnington are best made at the local level by bodies and individuals that truly understand the local area and its needs and aspirations.
13. Having a neighbourhood plan gives us the opportunity to identify the best ways to deliver development, directing it towards what the local community needs and wants. Sustainable development and regeneration will only occur if it takes an inclusive and coordinated approach that helps deliver the changes required, especially in health, employment, education and skills, housing, leisure and environment.
14. Further, a neighbourhood plan will bring a financial benefit to an area. Rotherham MBC has introduced a levy on future development called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Without a neighbourhood plan, the Town Council would receive 15% of any CIL collected, with a Plan it would receive 25% of the CIL collected, and this will be spent in the Parish. With many new homes proposed in Dinnington, this could be a substantial sum.
15. Dinnington needs and deserves a good plan for its future development. Not one that just focuses on meeting housing numbers, but that provides a plan of action that is shared by everyone, and that will deliver positive and lasting change benefitting the Parish as a whole.
16. Our Plan focuses on those issues that the evidence has identified as having the most pressing need for action and which can add the greatest value.
17. It is for anyone and everyone with an interest in Dinnington – residents, visitors, businesses and investors. It will be used to promote investment in the town, guide new development to the most suitable sites, conserve valuable cultural and heritage assets, maintain and enhance its character and sense of place, secure improvements of all kinds, give a continuing voice to the community, and promote a better quality of life for current and future generations.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-development/guide-local-plan/1>

## Planning Context

18. The right of communities to prepare a neighbourhood plan was established through the Localism Act 2011. The Plan once 'made' will form part of the statutory development framework for the area and will be an important consideration in the determination of planning applications.
19. There are national rules governing the preparation of neighbourhood plans. Firstly, a neighbourhood plan must have regard to national planning policies, primarily contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (Guidance).
20. Secondly, the Plan must also be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. In the case of the Rotherham borough, this is the approved Rotherham Local Plan 2013-2018. This sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies for Rotherham up to 2028. It identifies Dinnington as a principle settlement for growth for housing, economic and other forms of development. It includes a broad location for growth to the east of Dinnington for around 700 homes. It should see significant development over the coming years. The growth and prosperity of Dinnington will be a key indicator as to the success of Rotherham's Core Strategy.
21. The Rotherham Sites and Policies Document forms part of the Rotherham Local Plan following its adoption in June 2018. It identifies the development sites needed across Rotherham to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy. This is for new homes and employment development. The Rotherham Sites and Policies Document includes detailed policies to guide decisions on planning applications. Many of these policies are relevant to the development of the Plan.
22. In accordance with Government guidelines, the Plan has been developed to generally conform with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan.
23. The aim of the Plan is not to replicate existing planning policies, but to add value to them by providing local formulated policies and proposals that are specific to Dinnington and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. Where there are national and borough planning policies that reflect and meet the needs and requirements of Dinnington, they are not duplicated here.
24. The legislation also requires neighbourhood plans and indeed Local Plans to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which is '*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*' The Plan has the achievement of sustainable development at its heart. Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, meeting present and future needs for housing, work and facilities that support the well-being of the community, supporting actions that build prosperity and by ensuring that local people can shape their surroundings are all good examples of how it will do this.

25. A neighbourhood plan must be compatible with EU regulations of relevance and be compliant with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Directives until these are replaced by UK legislation after the end of the Brexit transition period.

## The process of developing the Plan

26. The Plan is a community-led plan. Its preparation has been led by the Dinnington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprised of members of the Town Council and non-councillor local residents with a broad range of skills and knowledge regarding community needs and aspirations from local and indeed international experience. The Steering Group has been supported by the Town Council, members of the community, officers from Rotherham MBC, neighbourhood planning consultants *andrewtowlertonassociates* and many others.

## Designation and Raising Awareness

27. Dinnington St John's Town Council, as the 'qualifying body', applied to Rotherham MBC in December 2015 and the Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in July 2016. The Steering Group's first formal meeting was in November 2016.

## Consultation and Evidence Gathering

28. The Working Group have carefully looked at the available local, district and national statistics and other evidence and have drawn their conclusions accordingly and appropriately. This included the evidence base produced to support the development of the emerging Local Plan as well as specialist studies and reports specifically prepared to support and justify the policies in the Plan. A Housing Need and Characteristics report and the Dinnington Town Centre Design Support document are just two good examples.



An example of community consultation undertaken as part of the preparation of the Plan

29. In addition, the Plan has been produced with strong and meaningful input from the community. This has been at the heart of its preparation. This includes meetings, drop-in events and community consultation events. The range of consultation events has ensured that all residents and stakeholders have had an opportunity to have their say.

A summary of the community consultation undertaken as well as the other supporting evidence documents can be found at the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.

### Where are we and what happens next?

30. The Plan is now at the referendum stage. Comments received from residents and stakeholders during the pre-submission consultation phases have, where appropriate, been incorporated into versions of the Plan.
31. In 2019 the Submission draft of the Plan was submitted to Rotherham MBC with all necessary supporting documents. Following a period of consultation, the Submission draft of the Plan was examined by an Independent Examiner, who checked to see that it has been prepared in the prescribed manner. In 2020, the Independent Examiner agreed that, subject to the agreed modifications, the revised Plan can be put forward to a referendum; where those on the electoral register in Dinnington St John's Parish will be invited to vote on whether they support it or not. More than 50% of those voting must approve it for the Neighbourhood Plan to become a 'Made' statutory planning document.

32. Whilst planning applications will still be determined by Rotherham MBC, the production of a neighbourhood plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect Dinnington St John's Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have far greater control over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

## **2.0 Dinnington St John's Parish – A Spatial Portrait**

33. Dinnington St John's is an attractive and popular Parish with a strong sense of identity, based on its past and shaped by major recent developments.
34. It is located towards the south edge of the administrative area of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and in the County of South Yorkshire. Conveniently located on the motorway network, it is almost equidistant from the boundaries of Sheffield and Rotherham 3 miles (5km), and about 5 miles (8 km) from Worksop.
35. Dinnington is the principal and most populous settlement in the Parish, which also includes the small satellite hamlets of Throapham and St John's.
36. According to the 2011 Census, Dinnington had a population of 12,517 (up from 11,476 in 2001). It is the most populous parish in Rotherham and serves a wide rural hinterland in the south of the Borough.
37. It has a town centre (Dinnington), which is the primary focus for retail and cultural activity for the Parish and a wider area. It also has a further education college, secondary school and primary schools as well as many other community facilities, churches, as well as significant open spaces.
38. It has a long and proud history. Excavations show Dinnington to have been inhabited since at least Neolithic times, and it has been suggested that the settlement takes its name from a local barrow, though a more traditional interpretation of 'Dinnington' would be 'Dunn's Farmstead', or 'Town of Dunn's People'.
39. Up to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Parish was made up of a number of small isolated farming settlements, the main one being Dinnington.
40. It was the sinking of the Dinnington Main Colliery in 1905 that led to the real growth of the settlement. The census of 1911 shows a twenty-fold increase in population since 1901, from 250 to 5,000.
41. Dinnington continued to expand throughout the 20th century, largely through the growth of new house building following the Second World War. As the housing estates spread, Dinnington began to merge with the neighbouring settlements of Throapham and North Anston.

42. The decline of the coal industry, which it traditionally looked to for jobs, prosperity and identity, had a devastating impact on the Parish from which it has struggled to recover from. At one point, it was reputedly the most deprived part of the country according to official statistics. The Parish has been the subject of a series of regeneration programmes and initiatives.
43. In recent years, Dinnington has seen steady economic and social growth. It is home, for example, to over one hundred local business, but these have only partially filled the employment vacuum left by the closure of the mining and other industries locally.
44. In common with other former mining and heavy industrial areas, it continues to face some social, health and economic challenges. Educational attainment, employment and ill health levels are consistently ranked below the national and borough averages, according to the 2011 Census, for example. Parts of the Parish (especially central Dinnington and areas to both sides of Lordens Hill) are amongst the top 10% deprived nationally. While overall levels of crime and anti-social behaviour are relatively low, they remain a top concern for many residents and are major issues in parts of Dinnington.
45. A summary of key Census statistics can be found at the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.

## 3.0 Overall Vision and Key Issues

### What are the key planning issues facing the Parish?

46. The Plan seeks to shape and address the development challenges and opportunities that face Dinnington. It focuses on those areas where the evidence has identified the most pressing need for action and on which the Plan can have the greatest impact.
47. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in consultation with the local community, identified the key planning issues facing Dinnington over the next fifteen years. These are:
  - sustaining a level of housing growth to meet identified housing need whilst retaining Dinnington's essential distinct character and sense of identity.
  - supporting future housing that is high quality, well designed, and that is of a size, type and tenure that helps meet changing needs, including the needs of local people.
  - ensuring that adequate health care facilities are made available with an emphasis on achieving a major improvement in the measurable health of the community.
  - promoting the use of brownfield sites for housing and industrial development.
  - conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment.

- providing an appealing, safe and healthy environment.
- ensuring that a leisure centre and swimming facilities are made available to all members of the community with adequate support for healthy living activities for all age groups.
- encouraging local education establishments and local business to progress the use of apprenticeship and skills training to develop a more skilled local workforce.
- protecting the Green Belt and other important green spaces.
- enhancing the safety and attractiveness of the Town Centre, including by addressing littering, dog fouling and pollution.
- promoting the Town Centre as the location for retail, services and facilities.
- supporting economic growth, including encouraging the use of local workers in the construction of new housing and infrastructure improvement in partnership with local businesses.

48. The need to address the health issues of the area is an underlying theme of the Plan.

49. A strong link exists between healthy communities and the planning and design of the built environment. There is an opportunity, through the Plan to assist in creating an environment locally, which supports physical activity and encourages social connection through, for example:

- connecting movement networks including convenient public transport, cycling and walking opportunities;
- providing parks and open spaces which provide safe and quality space for leisure and exercise
- providing access to multi-use community buildings, thereby reducing the need to travel and providing opportunities for social interaction;
- improving access to healthy food;
- enhancing local employment opportunities for all; and
- homes and neighbourhoods designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet local needs and as well as the changing needs of people.

50. These examples highlight the strong synergies that exist between pursuing sustainable development and health outcomes, so that in essence delivering a sustainable community is delivering a healthy community. It is underpinned by the sustainability principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Vision

51. A Vision for the Plan, based on the community's aspirations for the future provides the framework for the actions in the document. This **Vision** is:

***“To actively improve the wellbeing of residents of Dinnington St John’s Parish through the implementation of the following key strategies:  
Housing that meets the needs of the local community and changing needs  
Health, leisure and community facilities accessible to all  
Local education, employment and skills opportunities for all  
Vibrant shops and attractive Town Centre  
High quality natural environment  
High quality built environment and supporting infrastructure.”***

## 4.0 PLAN POLICIES

52. The policies seek to address the key planning issues identified and help deliver the community's vision for the Plan. The policies are grouped under six themes in support of the overall Vision.
- Housing.
  - Health, Leisure and Community Facilities.
  - Education, Employment and Skills.
  - Shops and the Town Centre.
  - Natural Environment.
  - Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure.
53. Each theme has its own chapter. Each chapter includes the relevant aims, supported by policies and justification.
54. Neighbourhood plan policies must relate to development and land use. However, this does not mean that neighbourhood plans cannot include other non-planning related policies that the community would like to achieve. It is important that the Plan makes a clear distinction between planning and non-planning policies. This Plan achieves this by referencing the former as a 'Policy' and the latter as a 'Community Action.'

55. It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a proposed development all of the policies contained in it with Local Plan and national planning policies must be considered together.

## 4.1 HOUSING

### Where are we now?:

- Dinnington is a popular place in which to live.
- It is likely to experience significant new housing.
- There is a need for more affordable housing, smaller homes and improvements in some of the existing housing stock.

### Where do we want to be?:

- Dinnington offers a choice of housing to support identified need including the needs of the local community and people as their needs change.
- It provides for a suitable and sustainable level of housing that meets identified need including local need.
- Everyone has access to good quality and affordable housing.

### Introduction

56. One of the most important aspects of the Plan is to influence the type and design of new housing development in the Parish for the next ten years plus.
57. From our research and analysis, we found several correlations between the quality and type of housing and the health and wellbeing of a community. In the case of Dinnington, these findings are very relevant in terms of future development and any upgrading of existing housing stock. With demand for affordable starter homes as well as older persons accommodation, the design and mix of housing that focusses on health and wellbeing issues must be considered at the planning and design stage of any development. Given that the community has a relatively low-income level and above the national average proportion of households claiming benefits any new housing needs to address the running costs of a home and not just the capital cost. There are many solutions available that can achieve this through energy efficiency and passive housing design.
58. Attempts to improve the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock to achieve a lower carbon footprint are welcome but sometimes have resulted in health issues caused by ventilation and condensation problems, for example. Any further upgrading also needs to be approached with due consideration to health risks and challenges and not be solely cost driven.
59. Dinnington has seen a major expansion in the private rented sector. Between 2001 and 2011 it grew by 70% to 14.8% of the housing stock according to the 2011 Census. Dinnington ward has the 5th highest proportion of private rented housing stock.

60. During the evidence gathering as part of the preparation of the Plan, it became apparent that the condition and management of homes of the sector was a major concern of many residents, with concern that many properties being of a poor standard and again not conducive to a healthy lifestyle and communities. Particular attention is drawn to the use of House of Multiple Occupation, which is an area that seems to be growing in part due to the generally limited regulated nature in Rotherham and more widely. Mention of this is made later in the Plan.
61. Dinnington is an attractive place to live in. It is accessible to Sheffield, Rotherham and other surrounding towns, has a fine natural and built environment and a fair range of services and facilities. This, combined with a relatively low market price, means that there is a healthy demand for housing from outside the area as well as demand from anticipated growth in the number of households locally.

## Housing Demand

62. In recent years, the Parish has seen a lot of housing development, and there is more in the pipeline.
63. The consultation shows that the local community understands the need for housing growth and the important role Dinnington has, and continues, to play in the economic, social and cultural success of Rotherham and the wider area.
64. The community is however concerned about the impact of development on the character of the Parish and on infrastructure, especially roads and services such as schools, medical facilities, leisure and other community facilities, many of which are already stretched. They also wish to ensure that any housing development that takes place better supports its changing needs and have a greater say over its design and the type of housing it provides.
65. Rotherham Local Plan sets out the overall housing targets for Rotherham. This has determined that there is a minimum requirement of 14,371 new homes to be built in the borough between 2013 and 2028. In addition, it sets out housing allocations to support this level of growth and how these allocations should be apportioned by different areas of Rotherham.
66. How much of this housing development the Plan should cater for is complicated by the fact that the overall housing target for Rotherham contained in the Local Plan is not disaggregated to individual settlements or parishes, including Dinnington. It does, however, identify several housing supply areas, which collectively will provide sufficient land to meet the housing requirements for Rotherham.
67. Dinnington St John's falls into the 'Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common (including Dinnington East Broad Location for Growth)' area for the purpose of housing land supply. It identifies Dinnington St John's, together with the identified surrounding settlements, as one of a number of 'Principal Settlements for Growth' that are to provide for a significant amount of housing growth. In addition, Core Strategy Policy CS1 'Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy' identifies Dinnington East as 'a broad location for growth'.

68. The Local Plan requires Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common to collectively provide for at least 1,300 homes between 2013 and 2028, including about 700 as part of the Dinnington East Broad Location for Growth. Also, that the majority of this housing growth should take place on greenfield sites formerly in the Green Belt.
69. The supporting Sites and Policies document (adopted 2018) then details the housing sites that will meet the housing requirement for Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common. In terms of Dinnington, new homes are planned to take place on the following sites:

Site	Indicative number of houses
H75 Timber Yard Off Outgang Lane	271
H76 Land Off Oldcoates Road (West)	272
H78 Land Off Athorpe Road	28
H79 Allotment Land Off East Street	15
H80 Land Off Lodge Lane / Silverdales	131
H81 Land Off Wentworth Way	243

70. These housing sites total approximately 960 homes. This equates to about 8% of Rotherham’s overall requirements.
71. These allocations in the Local Plan are not the only source of new housing building in Dinnington over the Plan period. There will be two other sources, which will be in addition to these. The first is housing sites that were granted planning permission prior to April 2013 and where construction has not yet begun or is underway.
72. The second is Windfall sites. The National Planning Policy Framework describes windfall Sites as ‘*Sites not specifically identified in the development Plan*’<sup>3</sup>. In the past, such ‘windfall’ sites have made a significant contribution to Dinnington’s housing numbers. The development of 12 homes following the conversion of the Lorden’s Hill Hotel is just one recent good example. A trend which is expected to continue. Though these sites are not identified, the relatively high land values in the Parish coupled with the level of vacant and inappropriately located land and buildings, mean that windfall sites have the potential to provide a modest source of housing and other forms of development.
73. In practice, therefore, the level of house building in Dinnington that will take place over the Plan period is likely to be far greater than the 960 indicated in the Local Plan. Indeed, the Town Council did unsuccessfully argue through the Local Plan process that a specific local allowance for such windfall developments should be made as part of the overall housing target set for the Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common area.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

74. **The Plan does not propose further allocations for housing above that which are identified in the Local Plan.** Having looked at the level of services and facilities, market conditions and housing need, there is no evidence to suggest that a higher level of housing development should take place than that already agreed. The Plan does, however, seek to ensure that housing growth helps meet local need, has adequate infrastructure (roads, schools, sport and recreation provision etc.) and generally support a cohesive, inclusive and sustainable community.

## Housing Mix

75. Providing an appropriate quantity of housing in sustainable locations is only part of the story.
76. It is also important that there is a choice of housing to ensure that people can occupy housing that is best suited to their needs. Housing delivered as part of the new developments must be of the right type to address the existing and future needs, including the needs of the Parish. This is central to a cohesive, inclusive and sustainable community.
77. This issue is of special importance to the community as there is a concern that existing housing delivery is not fully responding to the specific needs of Dinnington.
78. As part of the development of the Plan, a detailed examination of the available housing data from the 2011 Census, 2015 Strategic Market Housing Assessment Rotherham MBC and other sources has been undertaken. This document 'Housing Need and Characteristics' Supporting Evidence report can be found on the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.
79. Based on the available data and community consultation during the preparation of the Plan there is a perception that there is a need for smaller dwellings (one or two bedrooms), which will grow significantly over the Plan period. Some of this need will be created by first-time buyers trying to get onto the property ladder, but perhaps more significantly by the forecast growth in the number of households of retirement age. Further, the ageing population suggests more housing suitable for older people will be needed, including options such as bungalows and/or suitably adapted properties.
80. This suggests that housing developments need to provide more smaller dwellings, as well as well-designed specialist housing, for example, sheltered housing and other forms of assisted living to meet the needs of the growing and above average number of older and disabled people in the Parish. The findings from the consultation responses indicate considerable support for the provision of small homes to deliver housing that meets the needs of an ageing population and to provide an opportunity for the population of the Parish to secure housing which is both smaller and affordable. At a borough-wide level,

the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 17 (SHMA)<sup>4</sup> predicts that this need for small dwellings will grow significantly over the Plan period. The provision of the smaller types of dwellings may also help to address the relatively high number of properties that are under-occupied because of the household reducing in size - for example, elderly households continuing to occupy large family housing. The provision of 'Lifetime Homes' is especially supported. The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes. It encourages stability and social cohesion by making it easier to avoid unnecessary uprooting of households. Integration of such accommodation into residential areas is encouraged to promote security, diversity, inclusion and community cohesion. Further information about lifetime homes can be found at [https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Lifetime\\_homes](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Lifetime_homes).

81. Policy H1 aims to guide the type of new housing that is required and particularly supports the provision of smaller homes (one and two bedrooms) and specialist housing to redress the existing shortfall and meet future need. This general approach is consistent with national and local planning, both of which encourage planning for a mix of housing which reflects local need.

#### **POLICY H1: HOUSING MIX**

*In order to help meet the present and future housing needs, including the needs of local residents, new housing development proposals should provide a mix of housing sizes, type and tenure based on the most up to date SHMA available, supplemented by a more up to date assessment of housing need, including local housing need, if appropriate.*

*Housing for those with a disability and smaller homes for young families, young people and older people will be supported.*

*Housing for older people or those with a disability should preferentially be located within walking distance, on a safe, level route or within easy reach of public transport to the Town Centre shops and services.*

### Affordable Housing

82. Housing Affordability is a major and growing issue. There is a high disparity between average house prices (both for sale and rent) and average income. In 2015 the average house price in the Parish was £120,000, a figure which is beyond the means of many local people.
83. At the same time, the number of socially rented properties is falling fast, and at a rate of decline that is far above the national and borough averages. Between 2001 and 2011,

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/99/strategic-housing-market-assessment-shma>

the number of social rented properties in the Parish fell by 20% (-141). At 15% the proportion of social rented properties in 2011 was below the national (18%) and Rotherham (21%) averages. Further, of the 21 wards in Rotherham Dinnington has the 5th smallest proportion of council housing stock according to the 2011 Census. Consequently, many people who wish to live in the Parish, including those with a local connection, are unable to do so as they cannot find suitable accommodation either to buy or rent.

84. Consultation with residents shows strong support for the provision of affordable housing. They also consider it important that local people with identified social housing needs should be given reasonable opportunity to be housed within Dinnington.
85. The provision of affordable housing is important in supporting mixed and socially inclusive communities.
86. The Core Strategy requires that (i) sites of 15 dwellings or more or developments with a gross site area of 0.5 hectares or more should provide 25% affordable homes on site and (ii) sites of less than 15 dwellings or developments with a gross site area of less than 0.5 hectares should provide 25% affordable homes on site or a commuted sum of £10,000 per dwelling to contribute towards provision off-site. The evidence gathered does not support the Plan developing its own specific affordable housing policy as regards the proportion of newly built dwellings to be affordable but does support the Core Strategy policy and underline the importance that it should be assertively implemented within the Parish.
87. Where affordable housing is to be provided, it should be designed in a manner that makes it indistinguishable from the surrounding market and other housing.
88. Further, the Town Council itself intends to take direct action to increase the provision of affordable housing. In particular, it is progressing an affordable housing scheme for at least 25 homes on a site, in the Town Council's ownership, at East Street on the edge of the Town Centre. The Town Council have secured significant financial and other support from the Government Agency Homes England to progress this to the planning application stage. Discussions have taken place with a not-for-profit developer about building them.

## The Existing Housing Stock and Houses in Multiple Occupation

89. In addition to providing new build housing, it is important that the existing housing stock is used and managed effectively.
90. Generally, the housing stock is in good condition that meets existing and future needs. Major regeneration programmes in the 1990s saw the replacement and refurbishment of some of the Parish's poor-quality housing stock with new more modern housing, such as at the former White City.

91. There are some issues with the existing stock. As identified earlier, there are cases where the existing stock is relatively under-occupied because of the trend in households reducing in size - for example, elderly households continuing to occupy large family housing.
92. Another significant issue is associated with some private rented properties. Dinnington has seen a massive and above average expansion in its stock of private rented properties.
93. The latest reliable figures (from the 2011 Census) show that between 2001 and 2011 the number of private rented properties increased by 70% (229), being mainly semi-detached and terraced, with relatively few flats. Further, private rented accommodation is concentrated within the north-eastern part of the Parish such as in Scarsdale Street, Doe Quarry Lane and Leicester Road. In parts of Dinnington, up to 50% of the properties are privately rented. Private rented housing in Dinnington Ward outnumbers the social rented sector.
94. The vast majority of private rented properties are not an issue as they are in good condition, well managed and make an important contribution to local housing choice. However, there is a concern with some of the private rented stock. It is often in poorer condition than other forms of housing, and there have been concerns about noise and anti-social behaviour with some of the tenants. In addition, properties being deliberately left vacant is a problem.
95. The community expects the standard of the private rented sector to be an acceptable standard within our community. This is for all rented properties, including houses in multiple occupancy.
96. The negative impact the poor management and condition of some properties is having on some areas of Dinnington is well known and documented. In 2015, part of Dinnington was designated in a Selected Licensing Area aimed at addressing some of the associated issues and to drive up the standards of rented accommodation. While it is considered that this designation and associated welcome actions undertaken by Rotherham MBC and others have had some positive impact, it is considered that there is more that can be done to maintain and improve their condition. This was a major theme of the consultation with the community, Town Council and others.



Some housing detracts from the area

97. While it is recognised that a neighbourhood plan has limited powers regarding improving and maintaining the condition of the housing stock as the policies must relate to development and land use planning, it can still make an important contribution in supporting actions aimed at improving the housing stock, including the private rented sector.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION 1: IMPROVING THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK**

The community supports actions aimed at maintaining and improving the condition of the housing stock, especially of the private rented sector, for the benefit of occupiers and parishioners.

98. Special mention here should be made to the management of Houses in Multiple Occupation. A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is typically a single dwelling occupied by a number of households that share some facilities, e.g. a kitchen or bathroom. Dinnington has seen an increase in HMOs, often through the conversion of what was previously a family home for this purpose. Existing planning rules mean that generally planning permission would not be required to convert a family house or other building into an HMO, but where it is required the Plan seeks that it be done to the highest standards for the benefit of occupiers as well as the wider community.
99. Through an Article 4 direction or similar, a local planning authority (i.e. in this instance Rotherham MBC) can introduce a local amendment to the planning rules within a specified area where there is a good case to do so. This would mean that planning permission would be required to convert a family home into a House of Multiple Occupation (sometimes known as an HMO). It is considered that there is a compelling case to

introduce an Article 4 Direction at least covering the designated Selective Licensing Area, if not a wider area. The Town Council is actively pursuing with Rotherham MBC that it does just this as well as other potential planning and other interventions.

## **POLICY H2: HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

*Development proposals for the extension and change of use to a House in Multiple Occupation use (Sui Generis in the Use Class Order), will only be supported where:*

- a) it does not harm the visual character and appearance of the building, neighbourhood and street scene;*
- b) the scale and intensity of the use proposed would not have an unacceptable impact on amenity for its occupiers and neighbouring residential amenities especially in terms of noise, outlook, light, privacy, parking, vehicular and pedestrian access, disturbance;*
- c) any associated extensions or external alterations required would not have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenities through reduced levels of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy; and*
- d) adequate refuse storage facilities are provided in accordance with standards in the adopted South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide SPD, or subsequent replacement document and management arrangements for them are put into place.*

## **COMMUNITY ACTION 2: HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

*The community supports and urges the introduction of an Article 4 Direction by Rotherham MBC for all or part of the Parish that would require planning permission to convert a family home into a House of Multiple Occupation.*

## 4.2 Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

### Where are we now:

- Dinnington has some health, leisure and community facilities which serve the Parish and the wider area.
- Some of the existing facilities are dated or have fallen into disrepair.

### Where do we want to be:

- Level of ill health and disability to achieve at least the national average within the Plan horizon.
- It has a range of good quality health, leisure and community facilities that meet the needs of the community and the wider area.
- An agreed action plan with RMBC that takes the aspirations/objectives articulated in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and embeds them in the Dinnington Community as a way of life.

100. Dinnington faces major challenges in terms of Health and Wellbeing. For many decades the average life expectancy for the whole country has been increasing with an average of 79 years for men and 83 for women. In 2015, average life expectancy at birth in Dinnington Ward on average was about 2 years less for both men and women respectively than the national average according to official information published by Public Health England. The same reports goes on to state that life expectancy for both males and females in Dinnington Ward is “**significantly worse than England**”. These figures do not tell the whole picture, however, in that there are hot spots within the community that are far worse – with parts of the Parish in the top 10% most deprived nationally according to official figures. Indeed, a recent report placed parts of Dinnington in the top 10 nationally for the highest estimated neighbourhood prevalence of depression. In addition, Dinnington faces an explosion in terms of childhood obesity with the already high obesity rates, 23%, for school leavers being made worse by a further increase in rates for 4 to 6 year olds. Given that there is a direct correlation between childhood obesity and adult obesity the average life expectancy for Dinnington may **decrease** during the planning period. Given these stark facts, there needs to be an urgent intervention to help reverse this downward trend. This can only be achieved by a combination of education and facilities for regular beneficial exercise. These are well-developed solutions to the problem but require the infrastructure to achieve this. The Plan consultation process demonstrated the



willingness of the local community to respond to this type of solution and investment in terms of facilities such as a leisure centre and/or swimming pool was a recurring theme in the wishes of the community. Although the School of Swimming and Fitness in Brooklands Way provides a range of facilities, Dinnington is the most populous community in Rotherham without convenient access (especially by foot or public transport) to a major multi-use leisure and sports centre. The closest is Aston Cum Aughton Leisure Complex, which is over 6 miles away and poorly served by public transport from Dinnington especially in the evening.

101. In 2010 The Marmot review (Fair Society Healthy Lives) provided a framework for addressing health and wellbeing inequalities throughout a person's life. Rotherham has embraced this framework in its Health and Well Being Strategy 2018-25<sup>5</sup>. This being the case with the 'customer pull' from Dinnington's NHP and a 'product push' from RMBC it should be possible to effect a change in lifestyle in Dinnington within 10 years. All we need is the desire to start this process.



102. The need to retain and, wherever possible, enhance the provision of health and recreation facilities was a major theme of the consultation as was the impact that development will have on the capacity of some facilities, especially schools and medical related areas. There should be a wider range of facilities such as doctors' surgeries, especially in response to the Parish's ageing population and health and other trends which means that it will be less healthy than in previous years.

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<sup>5</sup><https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s119022/Health%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%202018%20New%20branding.pdf>

## Existing Important Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

103. Achieving a sustainable, healthy and proud Dinnington means it is important that such facilities are available locally and accessible.
104. The consultation shows that residents greatly value these community facilities and wish to see the most important ones retained and, wherever possible, enhanced.
105. This is in accordance with national and local planning policies both of which emphasise the need to ensure sufficient community facilities and services the community needs and, *'guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs'*<sup>6</sup>.



The private sports facilities at Dinnington High School that is available for hire

106. Through the preparation of the Plan, a number of key community facilities have been identified as being especially important to the community due to their location, accessibility to all sections of the community and generally the valuable role they play. These include churches, the recently refurbished Town Hall, primary and secondary schools, post office, numerous pubs, medical facilities and a theatre. It also includes a purpose-built resource centre which brings together a library, Rotherham MBC Neighbourhood Partnerships Office, community café, pre-school facility and other sporting, leisure and community uses into a single purpose, conveniently located building. The community wishes their special role to be acknowledged and recognised.

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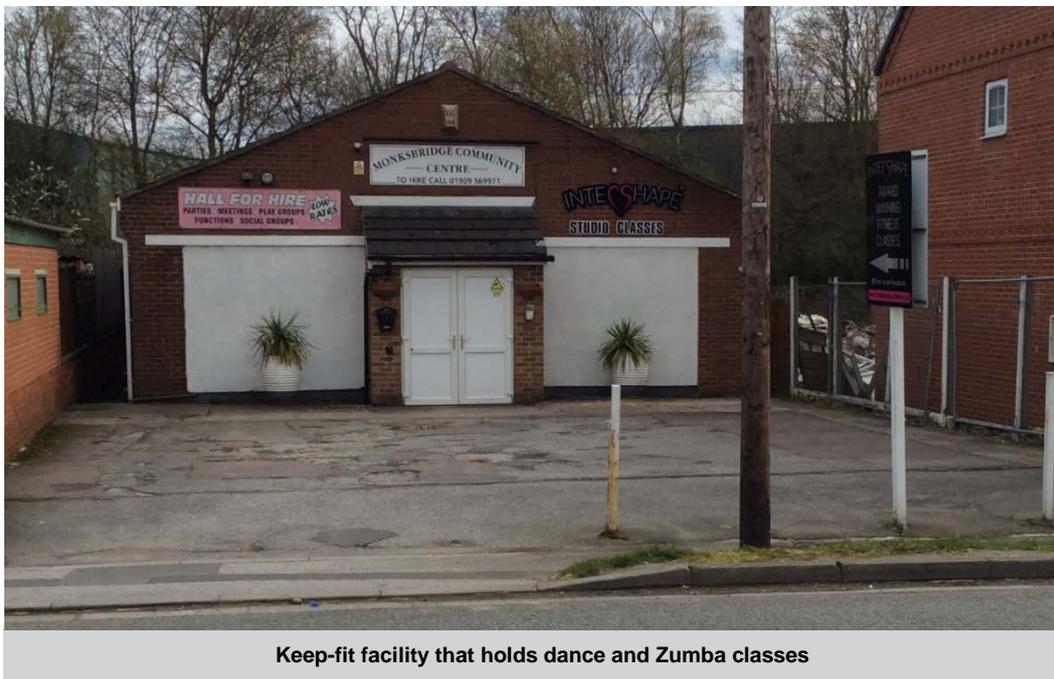
<sup>6</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740441/National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_Framework\\_web\\_accessible\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf)

107. All health, leisure and community facilities in the Parish are protected by Sites and Policy Document Policy SP62 and/or Policy SP63. This specifically identifies and protects the following community facilities:
- Dinnington Comprehensive School.
  - Rother Valley College.
  - Dinnington Community Primary School, off East Street.
  - Dinnington resource centre / library and car park.
  - St Joseph's primary school.
  - Part of Bluebell Wood Hospice allocation; and
  - St Leonard's Church.
108. Further details about these important facilities protected through the Local Plan, including their locations, can be found at the Rotherham MBC website <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-development/guide-local-plan/1>.
109. As these sites already have existing protections, the Plan does not seek to replace these. However, through the preparation of the Plan other important community facilities not specifically identified in the Local Plan and which the community wishes to see equally protected, have been identified. These are:
1. Dinnington Group Surgery, New St, S25 2EZ.
  2. Dinnington Methodist Church, Laughton Road, S25 2LR.
  3. Dinnington Resource Centre, 131 Laughton Rd, S25 2PP.
  4. Dinnington Rugby Club, Lodge Lane, S25 2PB.
  5. High Nook Community Centre, High Nook Road, S25 2PB.
  6. Lyric Theatre, 62a Laughton Rd, S25 2PS.
  7. Middleton Hall, Barleycroft Lane, S25 2AU.
  8. Monksbridge Farm Public House, Nobel Way, S25 3QB.
  9. Squirrel Public House, 194 Laughton Rd, S25 2PT.
  10. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 1 Swinston Hill Rd, S25 2RX.
  11. St. Joseph's Court Community Centre, St. Josephs Court, S25 2TL.
110. Maps showing their location can be found at Appendix A at page 65.

## New and Enhanced Health, Leisure and Community Facilities

111. In addition to retaining existing important health, leisure and community facilities, it is important that new ones are encouraged for the expected growth, and the changing needs of its population.

112. While the quality of most of the facilities is good, some are considered to be poor in terms of their physical accessibility, energy efficiency, comfort and general repair.
113. The provision of adequate and accessible health facilities is essential for a healthy and sustainable community. Dinnington plays an important role in providing health facilities over a wide area, including doctors' surgeries, chiropodists, dentists, pharmacies and related services. There are increasing pressures on these health facilities due to such factors as inward migration and an increasingly elderly population as well as the above levels of ill health. Although the provision of health services in Dinnington will, to a large extent, depend on Central Government and Local Authority policies, the Plan can play an important role in highlighting and supporting the special need for enhanced medical facilities.



**Keep-fit facility that holds dance and Zumba classes**

114. In supporting active and walkable communities, health, leisure and community facilities as well as homes, shops, schools, open spaces and sports facilities should be within easy reach of each other, creating the conditions for active travel, supporting linked trips and increasing the awareness and convenience to participate in sport and physical activity.<sup>7</sup> The Plan supports the principle of clustered local facilities within the Parish that are well located in relation to walking, cycling and public transport and road infrastructure.

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<sup>7</sup><https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/active-design-checklist-oct-2015.pdf>

## POLICY HLC 1: NEW AND ENHANCED HEALTH, LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals involving the provision of a new or enhanced community facility will be supported where it can be demonstrated to Rotherham MBC in consultation with the Town Council that it contributes to the health and wellbeing of local communities. Where possible facilities should:

- a) be co-located, and seek where applicable, to integrate services including health, education, social services, arts and leisure;
- b) support public transport use or opportunities for pedestrian/cyclist movement; enabling convenient, safe and attractive access;
- c) be of a siting, scale and design which respects the character of the surrounding area, including any historic and natural assets; and
- d) demonstrate that the local road network is capable of accommodating the additional movements.

Development proposals involving the provision of new or enhanced medical facilities or a new leisure centre to serve the Parish will be especially supported and encouraged.

### Assets of Community Value

115. The registering of Community Assets is a separate (non-planning) legal process, initiated by a town or parish council or a community group, and undertaken by Rotherham MBC. The inclusion of these sites on Rotherham MBC's Register of Assets of Community Value will provide the Town Council, or other community organisations within the Parish, with an opportunity to bid to acquire them on behalf of the local community, should the asset come up for sale on the open market.
116. Two assets in Dinnington have already been registered with Rotherham MBC. These are:
  - Birkdale Recreation Ground; and
  - New Street Office
117. Through the consultation process, the community has identified a few other community assets which are considered especially important for community life. The Town Council, therefore, intends to put them forward to Rotherham MBC for designation as an Asset of Community Value. The legislation does not permit a neighbourhood plan or the Town Council to designate them.
118. The Plan can, however, support the retention and where possible the enhancement of any assets designated by Rotherham MBC as an Asset of Community Value.

## 4.3 EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

### Where are we now?:

- Levels of economic activity are relatively high and above Rotherham and national norms.
- Levels of skills, educational attainment and entrepreneurship, while generally above or about the Rotherham average, are below the national average.
- Dinnington has benefited from the new economic, employment and other opportunities, however, major challenges remain, and there is evidence that everyone is not benefitting fully from these opportunities.

### Where do we want to be?:

- That Dinnington is the main employment centre for the Parish and the wider area.
- It offers a range of employment opportunities that ensure that Dinnington retains a young and vibrant population and creates wealth within the town.
- It has an integrated and sustainable approach to economic development which balances the need for economic growth with other key priorities and needs.

### Introduction

119. Dinnington acts as the focus for economic development for the Town and the wider hinterland. This recognised in the Local Plan, which seeks to strengthen its economic role for the Town and the surrounding area.
120. It has a rich industrial past and was for many years the focus for commercial and leisure activities in the area. Following the demise of the coal and other industries, it is trying to develop a modern and prosperous local economy that continues to provide wealth and jobs for the Parish and the wider area.
121. It is home to a wide and diverse range of hundreds of small businesses employing less than ten people. Unlike in former times, there is no longer one dominant employer.
122. These businesses are to be found across the Parish, especially in the many sites and buildings specifically earmarked for businesses. These notably include the Dinnington Business Park to the west of the Town Centre on the site of the former colliery site. This alone covers 85 acres. A large proportion of these businesses have migrated to Dinnington attracted initially by Regeneration Incentives. A consequence of this inward migration has been the increase in inward commuting of employees to sustain these businesses due in part to a relatively low skills base locally.
123. While the economy is generally sound, challenges remain. It fares poorly on many of the other key economic indicators when compared with the national average. A good example is skills and qualifications. The proportion of people in the Parish aged over 16 years with no qualifications is higher (19%) than the national average (15%), but below the borough average (21%). There is also some evidence that levels of entrepreneurship are relatively

low as are average earnings. A high (60%) and growing number of people commute out of the Parish for the work.

124. The consultation shows that there is a major concern that the Parish does not have a balanced local economy that meets the needs of everyone. A major theme was the need to ensure that as far as possible all local people benefited fully from the new economic and employment opportunities. This is seen as vital in creating a sustainable and economically prosperous community. In particular in reducing the growing number of people who commute out of Dinnington to work and responding to its ageing population.
125. The Plan seeks to do this by helping to create the conditions for all people to participate in the economy, by protecting existing local employment opportunities, improving access to training opportunities, and supporting educational developments at all levels.

### Protecting Existing Employment Sites

126. Dinnington has a core industrial area which is centred along the western edge of the Parish. In addition, there are smaller pockets of industrial activity which are to be found scattered across it.
127. There are many hundreds of different types of businesses, from new build developments to small-scale manufacturing and workshop spaces. These businesses provide significant job and other economic opportunities for the Parish and the wider area.
128. A feature of the Parish is that its historical development has meant that some residential and employment areas have developed simultaneously, and businesses are sometimes situated within or adjacent to residential areas. This includes a growing number of residents who work from home. The vast majority of such businesses can operate and prosper in residential areas without issue. There have been some concerns, such as noise, parking and traffic with a small number of sites and buildings that were not designed for, nor can be easily adapted to meet, modern business needs.
129. National and local planning policy seeks to retain existing employment sites and buildings unless there are special circumstances (such as it does not meet the needs of modern businesses) to justify its loss. A policy position this Plan supports.



**Derelict building formerly in business use**

130. The provision of employment land is considered to be more than adequate. A view shared by consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Plan. Discussions with the local business community did not identify any significant appetite for growth in the planning period that would require additional industrial space. This view is also borne out by authoritative studies and reports. A good example is the Sheffield & Rotherham Joint Employment Land Review: Final Report (2015)<sup>8</sup>. Part of the evidence informing the Local Plan, this review in para 12.11 is stated, *'At the local authority level, and in purely quantitative terms, Rotherham would therefore appear to have more land than the area is anticipated to require over the study period in order to meet projected need'*. More specifically in relation to Dinnington and the wider southern Rotherham, it added in para 12.19, *'more than two thirds (68%) of the total supply of available land in Rotherham are concentrated within the area. Given that Southern Rotherham currently accounts for just one third (33%) of the Borough's employment floorspace, however, the supply of land in the area could be considered to be somewhat high'*.
131. The number of people living in Dinnington is increasing, and the profile of its population, like the wider Rotherham, is changing. Key changes include an increasing number of children and a rapidly growing older population. Responding to changes in the way we live our lives including how we work, shop and spend our leisure time together with how we access services, are key challenges for the Plan. Many people want to live in Dinnington, but there is a limited supply of affordable homes. It is important to ensure that we help keep Dinnington's social mix and make sure that it does not become polarised between wealthy and less well-off residents. We face the challenge of providing a diverse range of housing and ensuring we provide mixed areas with sustainable communities.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/79/evidence-base-downloads>

Employment is the biggest factor affecting income inequality, and so we need to ensure we get more people into work and help them to develop their careers in the long-term. This can be supported through a range of measures, including helping people into work or training and using links with businesses. There are also significant health inequalities. The community wants to ensure that members of our community have access to good housing, jobs, skills, training and education, public transport and health and community facilities to help promote equality and inclusion to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed and nobody gets left behind. Achieving strong and resilient communities is a key challenge. Addressing these inequalities and improving Dinnington's health and wellbeing, both physical and mental, goes beyond improving access to medical facilities and includes a range of measures to improve our social and physical environment.

132. There is a major concern that not everyone in the Parish who wishes to do so is in an equal position to participate and fully benefit from the new job and economic opportunities. It has relatively higher levels of disability and unskilled workers as well as lower levels of entrepreneurship and skill levels. Just to name one good example, according to the 2011 Census, just under one third (30.3%) of the economically active population do not hold a qualification. This compares to 29.8% for Rotherham and 22.5% for England and Wales. These issues are well documented and hinder the ability of local people and businesses to access and maximise employment and business opportunities, both in Dinnington and more widely.
133. Addressing this requires action across several areas including providing not only employment, but also further education, training and apprenticeship opportunities as well as a range of housing, social, leisure and service. It is considered that Dinnington is better placed than many areas to do this.
134. Although many actions required are beyond the narrow remit of a neighbourhood plan covering as they do non-planning issues, it is considered that the Plan can make an important contribution.
135. There are many examples of good practice of how action through the planning system at the local level can do this. This could include improved access to training opportunities, including developing partnerships with local companies to foster apprenticeship schemes, supporting educational developments at all levels, the provision of start-up units and the use of developer contributions.
136. Special mention here should be made to transport links. Many of the main employment areas are poorly connected by foot, cycle or by public transport to the Town centre and residential areas, and only conveniently accessible by car. The links with the Dinnington Business Park was cited on several occasions during the consultation. Residents highlighted that there are limited convenient direct pedestrian links between it and the Town Centre and the nearby residential areas and that it felt unsafe to walk to and from it especially in the evening and at night. Not only does this deter pedestrian movement but hinders the ability of some local people to access local employment opportunities.

137. It should also be noted that when we refer to new economic and employment opportunities this means in its widest sense encompassing all sectors of the economy including the construction sector. There are many good examples of how the planning system has secured training and local employment, including the use of local labour and contractors through developer agreements as part of a major development proposal.
138. The Plan does not introduce a specific policy on education and employment skills here as this would duplicate the policies contained in the Local Plan (especially, Policy CS9) and elsewhere in this document (especially Policy BED2).
139. It does, however, actively support and encourage actions and development proposals which will create employment and business opportunities and generally help create the conditions for all people to participate in the economy.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION 3: EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS**

The community will actively support and encourage actions and development proposals which will create employment and business opportunities and generally help create the conditions for all people to participate in the economy. This especially includes, where appropriate:

- the promotion of local employment and training opportunities such as through local labour agreements, including as part of a Section 106 agreement or similar;
- setting up or improving initiatives to develop skills and employment opportunities for local people, including the provision of small and starter units for new businesses;
- the provision of employment units of varying sizes to meet the needs of a wide range of employers and;
- the provision and enhancement of cycle, walking and public transport links to the main housing areas and the Town Centre.

## **4.4 Shops and the Town Centre**

### **Where are we now?:**

- The Parish generally has a good provision of shops.
- Dinnington Town Centre continues to act as the heart of the Parish, but its attractiveness could be improved.
- There is concern about the spread of hot food takeaways.

### Where do we want to be?:

- Dinnington Town Centre and shopping areas are popular, vibrant and viable.
- Dinnington Town Centre is the main shopping destination for residents of the Parish and the wider area.
- There is a suitable and sustainable provision of hot food takeaways.

## Introduction

140. The Parish generally has a good provision of shops that meet many of the day-to-day requirements of local people. The consultation shows that they are important to residents and they wish to see action taken to support their viability and vitality.

## Dinnington Town Centre

141. This shopping provision is focused in Dinnington Town Centre. It is a fairly compact, traditional, town centre that straddles both sides of Laughton Road. It continues to act as the focus for the local community, civic and shopping activity albeit more modestly than historically. It provides a decent range of shops as well as other uses that complement and enhance its role, such as the Lyric Theatre and Dinnington Resource Centre. There are popular Tesco and Aldi supermarkets and nearby transport interchange on the western edge of the Town Centre; these are beneficial but may have skewed the footfall away from its traditional core. There is a good amount of public and private surface car parks in and around it. Some residential properties are also to be found within it.
142. It is well used and continues to perform adequately, but it faces challenges. Its importance as the main shopping area for the Parish and the wider area has declined and now performs a more local function. It has seen a gradual decline in 'traditional forms' of shops such as those offering fresh food and clothing, a decline which has only been partly offset by an increase in other forms of shops, such as restaurants and hot food takeaways. It also faces competition from other nearby shopping centres such as Worksop, Meadowhall, Sheffield and Crystal Peaks as well as other forms of shopping, particularly online.
143. The need to enhance its role and attractiveness were identified as a top improvement priority for residents and businesses through the consultation.
144. The consultation especially highlighted the poor appearance of some of the buildings and spaces which detracted from its character and charm; the need for improved shopping facilities (it does not have many that would be expected for a town of its size to have, for example, a bank, the last one closed recently); the growth of hot food takeaways and vehicular and pedestrian access. Some people consider that more could be done to improve safety and crime prevention. In addition, they wish to see all development proposals (including outside of the Town Centre) contribute to maintaining its character and attractiveness wherever possible.



Dinnington Town Centre

145. Policy CS12 (Managing Change in Rotherham's Retail and Service Centres) of the Rotherham Core Strategy: Local Plan identifies Dinnington as one of three Town Centres in Rotherham. It seeks to ensure that retail, leisure, service and other main town centre uses will be directed to it if it is of a scale compatible with the centre and will not undermine its vitality and viability. In addition, the Core Strategy specifically supports development proposals that will, *'Improve the range of retail and service provision, reduce vacancies and improve townscape and landscaping in Dinnington Town Centre'*. The Core Strategy and the accompanying Local Plan and Rotherham Sites and Policies document then sets out detailed policies to ensure the delivery. The Local Plan Sites and Policies Document also defines a boundary for Dinnington Town Centre as well as Primary Shopping Frontages and Secondary Shopping Frontages and identifies these as the priority locations for new and existing shopping facilities. This Plan supports policies that maintain and enhance the role and attractiveness of Dinnington Town Centre.

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION 4: MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE ROLE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

The community supports proposals that maintain and enhance the attractiveness, vitality and viability of Dinnington Town Centre as the primary local location for retail, leisure, community and other uses appropriate to a town centre.

146. As an integral part of the development of the Plan, specialist planners and urban designers from the consultants AECOM were commissioned to create viable urban design proposals and concepts for the Town Centre. They have identified the best opportunities so that the Town Centre's built environment can be improved as development takes place. A copy of this report can be found at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.

147. A summary of key proposals was:

- *‘Widen narrow foot way to improve walking conditions and pedestrian flow;*
- *Extend one-way traffic to New Street to extend on street parking;*
- *Implement restrictions on parking times to encourage passing trade;*
- *Resurface paving with high-quality materials to emphasise Laughton Road’s function as the towns’ central retail and gathering space;*
- *Provide planting with raised edges or adjoining seating to prevent vehicle overrun and trees;*
- *De-clutter the Constable Lane gateway at the pedestrian walkway beside the Lyric Theatre to improve legibility and increase footfall to Laughton Road;*
- *Provide interpretation / signage / gateway feature at the bus station end of the Constable Lane pedestrian walkway to enhance gateway function and raise local distinctiveness with reference to Dinnington’s mining heritage;*
- *Provide public art or mural on blank wall to the Lyric Theatre, replacing a blank wall with something of local cultural relevance;*
- *Enhance the blank wall on the Lyric Theatre with replacement of roller shutters to create more active space;*
- *Open up or enhance the existing gateway feature on Laughton Road to widen constricted access and improve visual and spatial connection between Laughton Road and Constable Lane;*
- *Opportunity to enhance underutilised public space at Laughton Road and create clutter free pocket public space with high quality materials; and*
- *Opportunity for increased high quality seating and provision of planting and trees to edge of space to prevent vehicle entry into the space and promote Laughton Road as a gathering space’.*

148. Consultation with the community (including traders and landlords in the Town Centre) has confirmed that the proposals provide a sound basis to improve the Town Centre. This will be used to work with developers, Rotherham MBC, Town Council and other relevant organisations to realise improvements. It is recognised that this is a long term plan. Some of the interventions can be introduced quickly and with little resource requirements, for example, the Shop Front Design Policy (see Policy STC2); others such as extending the one-way traffic to New Street to extend on-street parking may take more time and resources to bring to fruition. The intention is to focus initially on a small number of priority interventions in order to concentrate resources and investment rather than risk spreading available resources too thinly. The Town Council will work with Rotherham MBC and other partners to identify these priority interventions and any associated costs. The Town Council has identified and confirmed that enhancing the Town Centre is a priority for their share of any CIL receipts (see Policy BED3).

## **POLICY STC 1: ENHANCING THE CHARACTER, ATTRACTIVENESS, SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they contribute to enhancing the character, attractiveness, safety and accessibility of Dinnington Town Centre, especially by:

- a) ensuring that it is of an appropriate scale, is well designed and is of a mass, layout and materials that respond positively to the character of the Town Centre, and where appropriate:
- b) improving the public realm; and
- c) improving the Town Centre environment and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and car users.

They should have regard to and respond positively to the general principles as outlined in the Dinnington Town Centre Design Support document (2018) and summarised above.

149. The Dinnington Town Centre Design Support document (2018) specifically highlighted and detailed the role of well-designed shop fronts in improving the appearance of the Town Centre. It made a number of suggestions on how this shop front design could be enhanced.
150. This Guide included specific and tailored shop front design guidance for retail and other uses in the Town Centre wishing to install or replace a shop front. The guidance is intended to accompany and build upon the existing Rotherham Interim Planning Statement Shop Front Design Guidance (2006) or any subsequent replacement document<sup>9</sup>. Proposals will also be required to conform with the provisions of Sites and Policy Document Policy SP59 (Shop Front Design).
151. Generally, the Town Centre has good quality shop fronts, but some have been eroded by poor and unsympathetic alterations.
152. Where any proposal would require a new shopfront, these will be encouraged to be of good design and enhance the character of the Town Centre. Particular attention should be given to retaining and reinstating traditional shop frontages; security grilles; lighting; and retention of any heritage features, such as nameplates, decorative stonework etc.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-development/planning-guidance/1>



Some shop fronts detract from the experience of the Town Centre

## POLICY STC 2: SHOP FRONT DESIGN IN DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE

Development proposals to alter, replace or introduce shop fronts will be required to be of high quality, contributing to an overall improvement in terms of urban design and architecture, by:

- a) being visually attractive;
- b) enhancing streets and spaces through quality design and architecture;
- c) promoting visual links between the interior of the shop and the street;
- d) being suitable in terms of crime prevention, community safety and security;
- e) having regard to the general principles and objectives as outlined in Section 5 Shop Front Guidance of the Dinnington Town Centre Design Support document (2018); and
- f) having regard to the Rotherham Interim Planning Statement Shopfront Design Guidance (2006) or any subsequent replacement document.

## Shops Outside Dinnington Town Centre

153. Outside of Dinnington Town Centre, there are several shops to be found scattered across the Parish. Some are to be found in purpose-built parades such as off Station Road and Laughton Road; others are stand alone.
154. All are important for meeting the day-to-day needs of the communities they serve, especially for the above average number of people in the Parish without access to a car and with mobility issues.
155. The consultation shows residents would also like to see these maintained and enhanced, especially as there is concern about the number of local shops that have been lost to non-shopping uses as well as hot food takeaway in recent years.
156. This is also in accordance with national and local planning policy which aim to retain and promote neighbourhood shops that meet a local need.

### **POLICY STC 3: SHOPS OUTSIDE DINNINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, neighbourhood shops outside of the defined Dinnington Town Centre will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated to Rotherham MBC in consultation with the Town Council that:

- a) in the case of a significant adverse impact, the benefits of the development outweigh the impact and that opportunities to mitigate the impact have been considered; or
- b) in the case of a loss of use, it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer viable, and the site has been actively and appropriately marketed in accordance with the requirements set out in Policy SP62 (Safeguarding Community Facilities) in the adopted Rotherham Sites and Policies Document, or any subsequent replacement policy.

The development of local shopping facilities to serve the day-to-day needs of their immediate community will be supported subject to satisfying the sequential and, where appropriate, the impact test requirements set out in NPPF and Policy CS12, and satisfying other planning policy requirements including transport, environmental and amenity considerations.

## Hot Food Takeaways

157. National Planning Policy advocates a planning role in enabling a healthier environment by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices.

158. Hot food takeaways (Use Class A5) include shop types such as chip shops, kebab shops, Indian and other takeaways, but not sandwich bars and restaurants and cafes as well as restaurants with takeaway facilities.
159. A proliferation of hot food takeaways and other outlets selling fast food can harm the vitality and viability of local centres and undermine attempts to promote the consumption of healthy food, particularly in areas close to schools.
160. In recent years, there has been a big increase in the number of hot food takeaways in Dinnington, in the Town Centre and more widely. A survey of the Town Centre undertaken by local residents showed that of the 107 commercial premises on the High Street 32 are fast food type outlets, and there are at least 14 food outlets within 500m of schools.
161. Whilst it is recognised that hot food takeaways can contribute to the mix of shopping uses and can provide a popular service to local communities as well as providing employment opportunities, the view of many people is that the Parish now is saturated with hot food takeaways, many of which are near schools.
162. Hot food takeaways are detracting from the retail offer in the Parish. They are displacing other shops to the detriment of the Town Centre and residents. Clustering of hot food takeaways can lead to dead frontages during daytime hours.
163. The consultation also shows the community is concerned about some of the negative aspects sometimes associated with these uses, including noise and disturbance, antisocial behaviour and increased litter, especially if several of these uses are clustered together, or are in primarily residential areas.
164. They are also linked to the growing levels of obesity in the Parish and more widely. Rotherham has one of the highest levels of people with poor health and being overweight. This is evidenced in a series of authoritative reports and studies, just to name two good examples:
- The results of Sport England's Active People Survey (2013-2015), showed that 76% of adults in Rotherham are over-weight or obese. A rate that is well above the national average (65%) and the highest of the 300 plus local authority areas in England. The level in Dinnington is understood to be above the Rotherham average.
  - Another good example is the latest National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data produced at small area level for 2014/15 to 2016/17 combined (3 years). This shows that obesity at Reception Year (aged 4-5 years) in Dinnington ward was 12.6% (Rotherham 10.5%, England, 9.4%) and at Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) was 20.7% (Rotherham 21.9%, England, 10.6%).

165. This is one of the greatest health challenges facing Dinnington and the wider area. There is a clear link between increased body fat (obesity) and the risk of medical conditions, including Type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart and liver disease. As the 2011 Rotherham's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment<sup>10</sup> states, *'weight management, smoking cessation services designed to increase healthy life expectancy have the potential to substantially reduce demand on services in later life. Evidence suggests that early preventative initiatives have a lasting impact on community service users.'*
166. Diet is a key determinant both of general health and obesity levels. Hot food takeaways are a source of cheap, energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods. Research indicates that once a child or adolescent develops obesity, they are more likely to remain obese through adulthood, have poor health and reduced life expectancy. The proliferation of hot food takeaway food shops in the Parish is, therefore, a cause for concern.
167. The Planning system can make an important contribution here as paragraph 004 of the Government's Planning Practice Guide on Healthy and Safe Communities<sup>11</sup> states, *'Planning can influence the built environment to improve health and reduce obesity and excess weight in local communities. Local planning authorities can have a role by supporting opportunities for communities to access a wide range of healthier food production and consumption choices. Planning policies and supplementary planning documents can, where justified, seek to limit the proliferation of particular uses where evidence demonstrates this is appropriate (and where such uses require planning permission)'. Adding, 'Planning policies and proposals may need to have particular regard to the following issues::*
- *proximity to locations where children and young people congregate such as schools, community centres and playgrounds*
  - *evidence indicating high levels of obesity, deprivation and general poor health in specific locations*
  - *over-concentration and clustering of certain use classes within a specified area*
  - *odours and noise impact*
  - *traffic impact*
  - *refuse and litter.'*
168. The Local Plan contains a policy (SP 22) on Hot Food Takeaways. This seeks to restrict them to the defined town, district and local centres (but outside of Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages) and limit their number and concentration within these areas.
169. The Plan provides further detail and context to accompany this more general borough-wide planning policy. It also reflects that their spread and some of the associated issues are more of a challenge in the Parish than Rotherham and the UK. Other similar approved neighbourhood plans, such as Edlington in Doncaster, have successfully introduced such a policy.

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<sup>10</sup><https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/local-information-statistics/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna/1>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

170. Some of the key aspects of the policy are that it will not permit hot food takeaways within 800 metres of a primary school, secondary school and college. It is considered that 800 metres is an appropriate distance - research and studies (The Takeaway Toolkit<sup>12</sup> developed by the Greater London Authority, for example) indicate that pupils and students may view any figure below 800 metres as an acceptable walking distance to access a takeaway. Further, it is considered necessary to include primary as well as secondary schools, as while primary school age children are not allowed out of school at lunchtime and are usually accompanied to and from school, there were concerns about the use of takeaways by them and their parents on the way home from school.
171. This approach is supported by health and welfare partners, and Rotherham MBC who are preparing a Supplementary Planning Document to address this issue across the whole Borough.

#### **POLICY STC 4: HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS**

Hot food takeaways (including A3 restaurants with takeaway facilities) will not be permitted where they are within 800 metres walking distance of a primary school, secondary school or college (measured from any pedestrian access to the school or college), except where they are within Dinnington Town Centre as defined in the Rotherham Local Plan and satisfy the provisions of Policy SP22 Hot Food Takeaways in the Rotherham Sites and Policies Document or any subsequent replacement policy.

## **4.5 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Where are we now?:**

- Dinnington generally has a good and accessible natural environment.
- Much of the countryside surrounding the town is protected from development by its designation as Green Belt.
- There are many important green spaces within the Parish.

### **Where do we want to be?:**

- That Dinnington has a good and high-quality natural environment.
- That the Green Belt status of much of the Parish is retained.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/takeawaystoolkit.pdf>

- That important local green spaces, which are not in the Green Belt are protected, and wherever possible enhanced, as an enabler to improving the health and wellbeing of the community.

## Introduction

172. The landscape of the Parish is largely rural and typified by gently rolling countryside that surrounds and provides an important context and setting for Dinnington.
173. Within Dinnington town itself, whilst it has seen development especially during the 20th century, it retains large areas of green spaces.
174. Access to open space has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Living close to areas of green space, parks, woodland and other open space can improve physical and mental health regardless of social background.
175. This landscape and green spaces are highly valued by residents for a wide range of reasons, including visual amenity, informal and formal recreational value, tranquillity, promoting health and wellbeing and supporting the richness of wildlife that can be found in the Parish. Their protection and enhancement are top priorities for the Plan. **Once a green space, is lost it is lost forever**, was a major theme of the consultation. Many of the residents of Dinnington have ancestors that were instrumental in the changes to access to green spaces and the natural environment and, therefore, there is an especially very strong desire to ensure that any loss of the natural environment is strongly resisted.

## Green Belt

176. Much of the countryside surrounding Dinnington is designated as Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary is tightly drawn around the built-up parts of Dinnington.
177. Agriculture is highly productive in the area, and the Green Belt incorporates some land of high agricultural value classified as Grade 2 (very good). Green Belt is a national designation one of the main purposes of which is to protect the land around towns and cities from urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Within the Green Belt, there are strict planning controls over the type of development which can take place within it and are only allowed in very special circumstances; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
178. National and local Planning policy is clear in its support for the Green Belt, emphasising its essential characteristics of openness and permanence. It also states that inappropriate development (such as the construction of new buildings), which is harmful to the role and function of the Green Belt, should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
179. National rules governing the preparation of neighbourhood plans mean that under present rules it cannot have a detailed policy on the Green Belt. Only a Local Plan can set the detailed Green Belt boundaries and associated policies. Proposals for development in

the Green Belt will be considered on the basis of adopted Rotherham Sites and Policies Document (SP2 – SP 10) and Rotherham MBC’s Green Belt Supplementary Planning Guidance, which is currently being updated and will be replaced with a Supplementary Planning Document.

180. A Plan, however, can reflect and articulate the strong community support for the continued role and function of the Green Belt in the local area. This is a top priority for the Local community. It has been an effective planning tool that is essential to retain the distinct character of Dinnington and help focus development in more sustainable locations, while providing opportunities for recreation and leisure close to where people live, and contains many important assets including sites of nature conservation value.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION 5: GREEN BELT**

The community supports the continued designation of the open countryside outside of the built-up part of Dinnington as Green Belt.

### Local Green Spaces

181. Outside of the Green Belt, there are numerous other green spaces that are to be found in the built-up parts of the Parish. These include play areas, playing pitches, communal spaces within housing areas, cemeteries, churchyards, allotments, woodlands and semi-natural green spaces and woodlands.
182. It is important to protect and where possible, enhance this network of multi-functional open space to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play plus as a habitat for wildlife and productive landscape such as allotments.
183. The protection of important local green spaces was a top priority for the community and is also an objective of Rotherham’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and other important plans and strategies. In addition, the consultation showed that residents considered that the maintenance, quality and safety of some of the existing spaces could and should be enhanced.
184. It is, therefore, important that future development does not lead to further loss of green space and where possible enhances local provision. Community consultation and research undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified several green spaces outside of the Green Belt that are of importance to the community for their recreational, amenity, wildlife or historical value.
185. As these sites are already protected through policies in the Rotherham Local Plan the Plan does not seek to duplicate these.

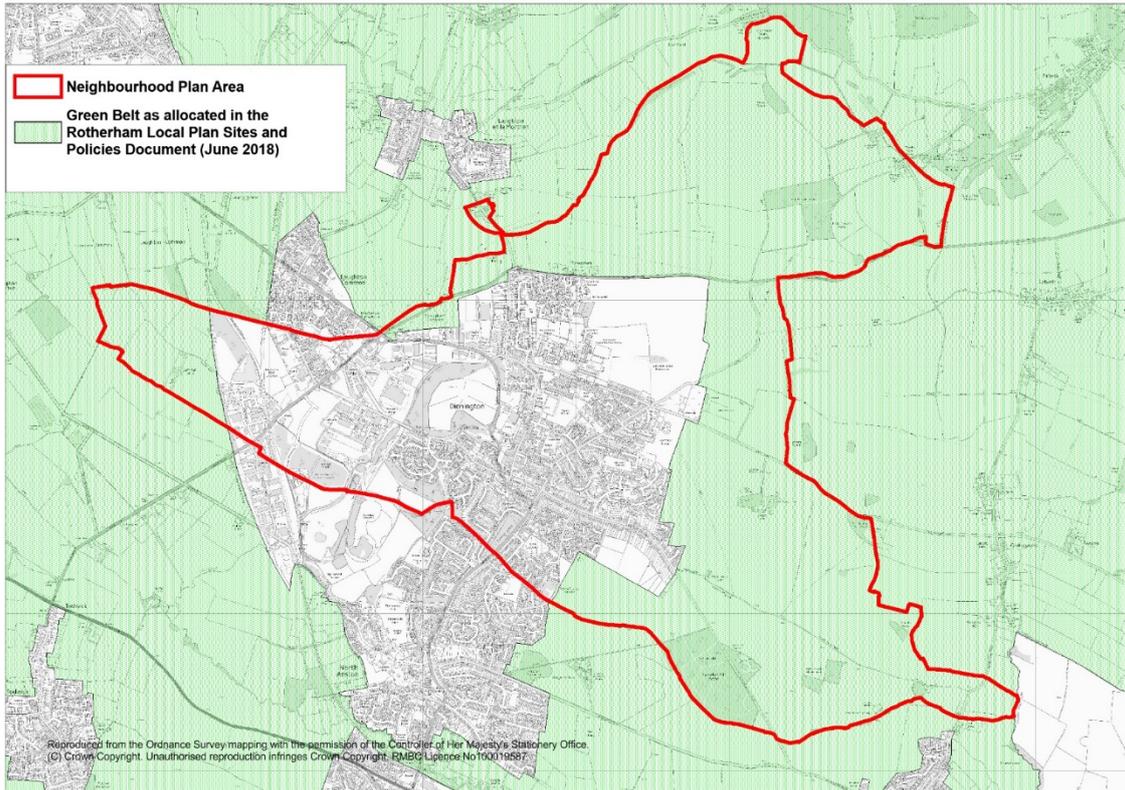
## Biodiversity

186. The Parish is noted for the large swathes of open countryside and green spaces that surround and intersperse Dinnington and the other settlements. They contain significant areas of woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands and mature gardens as well as ponds and watercourses, for example. These provide a natural habitat for wildlife and wildflowers. They also create natural corridors/networks for wildlife movements.
187. Some of the wide and diverse range of species to be found in the Parish include rare and declining species such as the Grey Partridge, Lapwing and Redshank as well as several types of bats. Of the larger animals, foxes, rabbits, badgers, hedgehogs and deer all can be found.
188. While there are no sites that have been identified as of national biodiversity interest (Anston Stone Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest is nearby, however), many parts have been identified as being of local ecology importance as reflected in their designation as Local Wildlife Sites.
189. Local Wildlife Sites are areas that hold important, distinctive and/or threatened species or habitats. They provide refuges for wildlife and wildflowers. Dinnington has six designated Local Wildlife Sites: These are listed below:
- Swinston Hill Woods.
  - Dinnington Colliery Tip.
  - Dinnington Open Public Space.
  - Little Moor.
  - Dinnington Marsh.
  - Long and Little Thwaite
190. A map showing these can be found at the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.
191. In addition to these designated Local Wildlife Sites, there are other habitat types and features that have been identified as nationally important habitats, notably:
- Deciduous Woodland.
  - Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland.
  - Good quality semi-improved grassland.
192. Consultation shows that this biodiversity (and the wildlife and wildflowers it supports) are highly valued by the community. They wish to see it protected and, where possible, enhanced. Recent years have seen several actions which have improved biodiversity. These include the regeneration of the former Dinnington Colliery tip, tree planting and the planting of wildflower seed along field margins. This is something that the Plan supports and wishes to see more of. In accordance with national planning guidance, it wishes to

see a move away from a general trend from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for the future.

193. New developments large and small should consider how they can contribute to enhancing biodiversity. Good examples include the use of native species for ornamental planting and areas of open space and varying mowing regimes within areas of amenity grassland.

**Figure 2: Green Belt**



## POLICY NE 1: BIODIVERSITY

Development proposals which conserve, enhance and incorporate biodiversity in and around them (including networks) will be supported, particularly where they conserve, and where possible, enhance significant habitat types, local wildlife sites and features of the Parish.

## 4.6 Built Environment, Design and Infrastructure

### Where are we now?:

- Increasing pressure on existing infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of the community as a result of development.
- Increased awareness of the impact of development on the character of Dinnington.
- The community attaches high priority to achieving designs and layout of development which are sympathetic to the needs and character of Dinnington.

### Where do we want to be?:

- All new development includes suitable infrastructure to address its needs and any new impact it may have on the wider community.
- Development that integrates into and supports the Parish and contributes to meeting its existing and future needs.
- Dinnington retains its strong sense of identity and history.

### Introduction

194. This section looks at the built environment and design. It includes policies which seek to conserve important heritage assets as well as how new development can be designed and provide suitable infrastructure to cater for both the existing immediate and future needs of Dinnington.

### Nationally and Locally Important Heritage Assets

195. Dinnington has a long history. Despite its 20th century identity as a colliery village, there is evidence to suggest settlement here since Saxon times and possibly earlier. The settlement was certainly recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. This is a source of pride in the local community and makes an important contribution to its distinct character and identity.
196. Perhaps the most obvious demonstration of its history is the many interesting houses and other buildings and structures to be found. This includes stately homes, terraced housing built to house the workers who moved into the area on the sinking of the Dinnington Colliery at the turn of the century, typical Inter-War, the 1960s and 1970s semi and detached housing developments as well as new housing estates of modern design including some flats. Many of these buildings have been officially recognised (see below) as being of national historic or architectural interest.

197. There are 16 heritage assets listed in the South Yorkshire's Historic Environment Record<sup>13</sup>, which is a database that holds information on known archaeological sites, finds, landscapes, buildings and other aspects of the historic environment. These include the site of the former pithead baths, post-medieval ridge and furrow and the site of the Roman Coin hoard, reflecting Dinnington's rich industrial and social past.
198. Many of the surviving historic buildings are to be found clustered in the older parts of the Parish. Some of Dinnington's buildings are recognised as being of national importance.
199. A Listed Building is one that has been placed on the Government's list of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are 9 Listed Buildings (in 2017) within the Parish that have been identified as being of national significance and importance in view of their special architectural and historic interest. Notable examples include the Church of St John's which dates from the late 12th century, and Dinnington Hall, a large former stately home, which dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The condition of these Listed Buildings is generally good, with none identified as Heritage at Risk<sup>14</sup> by Historic England.
200. Designation of these buildings as a Listed Building gives them special statutory protection beyond that which can be provided through a neighbourhood plan. It is important, however, that the Plan highlights the community's appreciation of them and the important role and contribution they make to the distinctive identity and history of the Parish.

**Table 1 Listed Buildings (2017)**

4, Laughton Road	Laughton Road	Grade II
Church of St John	St John's Road	Grade I
Dinnington Hall	Falcon Way	Grade II*,
Gate Piers and Attached Wall to Front of Throapham House	Oldcoates Road	Grade II
Hall Farmhouse and Attached Farm Buildings Under Same Roof	14 Laughton Road	Grade II
Limelands	Church Lane	Grade II
Number 1 and Attached Wall Enclosing Courtyard (Premises of Hall Court Veterinary Group)	Laughton Road	Grade II
Remains of Cross	Plinth opposite St Leonards Church	Grade II
Throapham House	Oldcoates Road	Grade II

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/herdetail.aspx?crit=&ctid=92&id=4734>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/findings/>

## Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest

201. Throughout the Parish, there are buildings and structures that, while not of sufficient special historic or architectural interest to warrant designation as Listed Buildings, the community holds dear and which make a valuable contribution to a local sense of history, place and identity.
202. National and local planning policy enables a neighbourhood plan to offer them some level of protection by identifying them as buildings and structures of local heritage interest.
203. While their identification as buildings and structures of local heritage interest will not significantly change any of the planning controls affecting alteration or demolition, many buildings have permitted development rights which allow some minor building operations, and in some cases, demolition to be carried out without recourse to planning or other permissions. Where a planning application is needed, then its identification as a Building and Structure of Local Heritage Interest will be a “material consideration,” i.e. the assets local heritage significance will be taken into account when making a decision on the development proposals.
204. Through the Plan process, several buildings and structures of local architectural and historic importance were identified. These include buildings and structures associated with the Parish's industrial heritage (especially mining related) and history. These have been investigated further to see if they meet recognised criteria<sup>15</sup> developed by Historic England sufficiently to warrant formal designation as a Building and Structures of Local Heritage Interest. National planning policy requires that an asset must have a significant heritage interest for it to be identified as such. Those identified below are considered to meet the criteria, and the Plan supports their formal identification. The supporting evidence document Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest provides more about the individual identified buildings and sites and the justification for their designation. This can be found on the Town Council website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/dinnington-neighbourhood-plan-12951/documents/>.
205. It is understood that Rotherham MBC intends, in due course, to produce a schedule of Locally Listed Buildings. This will involve the identification of sites across Rotherham and there is potential that additional assets within Dinnington but not identified within the Plan, could be included on this list.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/local-designations/>

## **POLICY BED 1: DINNINGTON CHARACTER BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES OF LOCAL HERITAGE INTEREST**

The Plan identifies the buildings and structures listed below (and shown on figures 3 to 9) as Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest.

1. Dinnington Colliery Pit Wheel (Coronation Park).
2. Gurnhill Trough (Coronation Park).
3. Cenotaph (Coronation Park).
4. Old Library (Laughton Road).
5. Front of the Old Brewery (Laughton Road).
6. Handsworth Woodhouse Co-op Buildings (Laughton Road).
7. Old Dentists (Lidgett Lane).
8. Croft Cottage (Barleycroft Lane).
9. Middleton Institute (Barleycroft Lane).
10. Silverdales Social Club (Lordens Hill).
11. Carlisle Terrace (Last of "The Barracks").
12. Remains of the Old Blacksmiths (Laughton Road).
13. The Old Plant Workshop (Bottom of Church Lane).
14. St Leonards Church (Anglican) (including Font, Lectern and Dinnington Miners Banner).
15. St Josephs Church (Catholic).
16. The Old Rectory.
17. The Older Rectory (Laughton Road).

Development proposals will be supported which conserve or enhance the heritage significance and setting of a Character Buildings or Structure.

Development proposals will be required to take into account the character, context and setting of these locally important assets, including important views towards and from them.

Development proposals will be required to be designed appropriately, taking account of local styles, materials, detail and heritage value.

Development proposals that may impact upon any Dinnington Character Building or Structure shall be accompanied by a heritage statement which

considers the impact of the specific development proposed with regard to the character, context and setting of the assets on or in the vicinity of the site.

## Dinnington Conservation Area

206. Much of Dinnington's historic past is to be found on the southern edge of Dinnington Town Centre off New Road and Laughton Road. This is the historic core of the Parish, and where many of its important heritage assets are located.
207. This historic core of Dinnington is protected by its designation as a Conservation Area. A conservation area is an area of special interest, the character of which should be preserved or improved for local benefit. Rotherham MBC has produced a Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area, which sets out the special characteristics of the Conservation Area, and how this can be safeguarded and enhanced.

## Design Principles and Infrastructure for New Development

208. The Plan seeks to guide development that will create environments that encourage healthy lifestyles and make a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the area.
209. Ensuring good design is important to Dinnington, as reflected in the findings of the consultation.
210. A major theme of the consultation was that the additional infrastructure needs arising as a result of a proposed new development must be addressed at the earliest opportunity. That Dinnington is becoming the location for large-scale development and that the infrastructure, whether that be roads, schools, medical facilities, drainage or any of the range of needs new development can bring, are not being addressed and maintained in a timely, long-term or integrated manner was a recurring theme. It is imperative that development provides suitable infrastructure to cater for both immediate and further needs. Further that adequate arrangements are in place for their future maintenance, especially as this has been an issue in the past.
211. Another major theme of the consultation was that development, especially new housing, should have regard to the existing built scale and layout and be designed so that it physically and visually integrates and connects into Dinnington. There is concern that some of the major development that has taken place has been piecemeal and inward looking. The inward-looking nature of some of these developments have resulted in weak links to the wider Parish, and an insular and fragmented feel to them. The Dinnington Business Park (the biggest development in Dinnington in recent years) has very limited safe and convenient pedestrian access to the Town Centre and nearby residential areas. Another good example is the single largest public open space in the Parish (the former Dinnington colliery spoil tip) which has now been landscaped, but is separated from the

Town Centre and residential areas by busy roads. Development must be integrated into and respond positively to the needs and character of the Parish.

212. Special mention here should be made to new and enhanced pedestrian and cycling links and networks. Not only do they help foster an integrated and sustainable community, but there are also wider benefits. Cycling or walking, has wide ranging long-term health benefits. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability – such as heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes in Dinnington and more widely – are associated with physical inactivity. It is a stark fact that many people do not engage in enough physical activity to benefit their health. Even small increases in activity would have health benefits, with the largest gains coming from inactive individuals. The simplicity of walking and cycling, associated with little cost, makes it physically and economically accessible and thus one of the best and most effective ways to improve health.
213. There is also a strong wish that the design of proposals should more closely reflect the changing need and characteristics of Dinnington, especially its ageing population and relatively high levels of disability. It should also enhance Dinnington’s distinct sense of history and identity.
214. Further, that development proposals should feature designs that minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. While levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across the Parish are generally relatively low, there are areas where they are very high. Addressing crime and anti-social behaviour is a top improvement priority of the community. It is considered that ‘designing out crime’ can make an important contribution here. For example, developments that are designed to maximise natural surveillance by making them visible from public spaces and the number of people or vehicles that pass by them.



**A typical tailback at peak travel times as workers are leaving the Industrial Estates on Todwick Road, of about half to one km to the roundabout on the A57 at Todwick, on their way home From Dinnington**

215. In addition, and as articulated in the employment section, it is imperative that the benefits from the growth of Dinnington are shared by all. It has some of the most deprived communities as well as some less deprived. We wish to ensure that all members of the community have good access to housing, education, health, jobs and transport. The scale of development underway or planned for Dinnington provides a significant opportunity to do so. The Plan will support and facilitate sustainable growth that delivers development appropriate to its location and harnesses this growth to deliver clear benefits to Dinnington, as articulated in the Education, Employment and Skills section.
216. To ensure this, development proposals will be assessed against the criteria in Policy BED2. This also provides further detail and focus to accompany existing national and borough-wide planning policy.
217. Developers will be asked to demonstrate through their Design and Access Statements (or more detailed masterplans if they are required or prepared), where required, how they have taken the criteria into account.

## **POLICY BED 2: DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. The design and master planning of development proposals should support the creation and maintenance of inclusive and healthy communities.

Development proposals, where appropriate, will be expected to:

- a) maximise opportunities to integrate development physically and functionally into the Parish through, for example, creating new connections and improving existing ones, and which allow for easy and direct movement to and from the Town Centre and wider built-up part of Dinnington for all ages;
- b) provide attractive, direct and integrated networks of walking and cycling routes;
- c) provide attractive, safe, secure and accessible buildings and spaces that ‘design out crime and anti-social behaviour’ and are easy to get around for all, particularly for older people and those with disabilities;
- d) maximise opportunities to enhance the role of Dinnington Town Centre as the main shopping and service centre in the local area;
- e) design new buildings and the spaces they create to help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability, and accessibility of Dinnington;
- f) provide suitable infrastructure and services, including SUDs, and address any impact it may have on local infrastructure and facilities, especially roads, health, policing and schools;

- g) incorporate adequate measures for the future maintenance of open spaces, SUDs, hard and soft landscaping and other public spaces and facilities;
- h) explore and maximise employment, education, training and business opportunities within the Parish; and
- i) conserve and enhance locally distinctive character having regard to scale, siting, layout, density, massing, height, landscape, appearance, material, details and access.

2. Additional infrastructure needs arising as a result of planning consent should as far as possible be addressed through planning conditions, where required. Approvals will be conditioned so that, where necessary, infrastructure required as part of the planning approval is delivered at the earliest practicable stage of development, including at appropriate times in the phasing of the development.

## Development Contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy

218. Good access to local services is a key element of a sustainable and healthy neighbourhood and additional services will be required to support new development. Not doing so will place pressure on existing services.
219. New infrastructure to support planned growth, including growth in Dinnington Parish, will be funded through a combination of planning obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy receipts, and other mechanisms negotiated by Rotherham MBC. An assessment of existing infrastructure capacity and future requirements is provided in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Appendix A of the Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy (Adopted 2014).
220. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new levy that is being raised on certain forms of new development, including housing. It will require developers to make a payment to Rotherham MBC based on the size and type of development that is proposed. The proceeds of the Levy will then be used to provide the infrastructure necessary to support growth across Rotherham.
221. A proportion of these CIL receipts will automatically be devolved to the local area (in parished areas the concerned town or parish council) for allocation to neighbourhood priorities. This proportion is set at 25% in areas where there is a neighbourhood plan in force. It is additional to any site-specific planning obligation, such as a Section 106 agreement.

222. The amount to be charged through CIL is set out in Charging Schedule adopted by Rotherham MBC in December 2017<sup>16</sup>. It is expressed as pounds sterling (£) per square meter (sq.m), on the gross internal floorspace of net additional liable development. For residential uses, the CIL charge rates vary across the borough, for Dinnington it is £30 per sq.m.
223. The Town Council has identified a number of local priorities for investment through developer contributions. Although the order of the list is not intended to imply any priority, it does show the types of projects/infrastructure which the Town Council will prioritise for the spending of their share of CIL receipts, in accordance with the tests as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). It should be noted that the CIL Regulations enable greater discretion on the types of projects that a town and parish councils can support through their share of any CIL receipts than the local planning authority.
224. The Town Council will seek to work in partnership with Rotherham MBC and other bodies, as appropriate, to secure their funding (either in whole or in part) through the use of planning obligations, CIL receipts and other sources in support of their delivery.
- New sports/leisure centre.
  - Enhancement and maintenance of Town Centre, in line with the Town Centre Masterplan and Design Guide.
  - More affordable housing especially for rent.
  - Improved community and medical facilities, including doctor's surgeries.
  - Enhanced green and other spaces.
225. More information about CIL can be found at Rotherham MBC website at <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-development/community-infrastructure-levy/1>.

### **POLICY BED 3: DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS**

Where appropriate contributions from new development towards infrastructure projects will be sought through planning obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy receipts and similar sources and where it is in accordance with the tests as set out relevant national and local planning policies.

The local community has identified a number of local priorities for spendings its share of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts, which are identified above, and will be kept under review.

Developers are encouraged to engage with the Town Council prior to the preparation of any planning application to confirm what these local priorities are,

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/planning-development/community-infrastructure-levy/1>

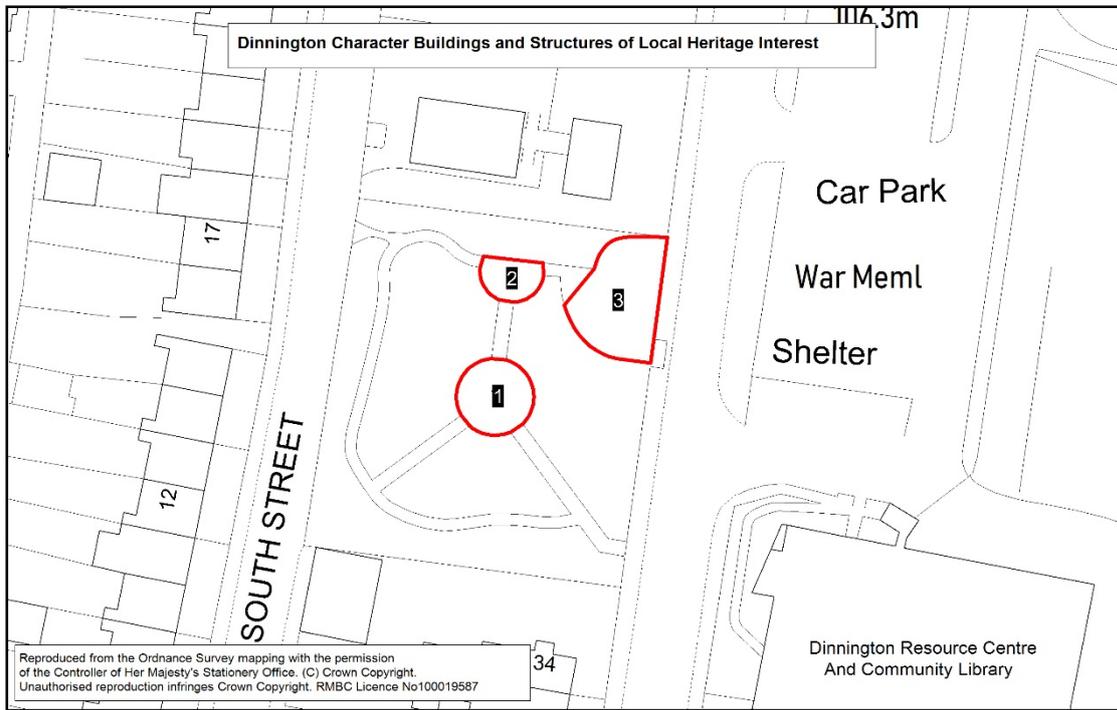
to ensure that where appropriate and viable, the facilities proposed to complement any development proposals reflect these aspirations.

## 5.0 Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan

226. The impact the Plan policies have on influencing the shape and direction of development during the plan period will be monitored by the Town Council.
227. The Town Council will publish an Annual Monitoring report. This will assess the impact of the Plan and the policies it contains, including against agreed 'success measures'. These 'success measures' are under development. The final ones will reflect and articulate the key social and economic indicators which the Plan seeks to address and which the community especially wishes to see improve.
228. The suite of possible measures is set out below. Some measures can be monitored through statistical data such as life expectancy, others through more qualitative data such as satisfaction with the Town Centre. The aim is to measure performance against both the national and borough averages. It is recognised that this may not be possible for every success measure. For some, the equivalent national and borough data is not available.
- Life expectancy.
  - Performance against key health indicators.
  - Educational Attainment.
  - Employment and unemployment levels.
  - Type of new homes built especially smaller and affordable homes.
  - Satisfaction levels with the Town Centre.
  - Number of hot food takeaways.
  - Provision of medical, leisure and community facilities.
  - Satisfaction with sporting and leisure facilities.
  - Amount of Local Green Space.
  - Level of understanding with regard to the Neighbourhood Plan.
229. The findings of the monitoring will be shared with Rotherham MBC and other partners and published on the Town Council website. If it is apparent that any policy in this Plan has unintended consequences or is ineffective, it will be reviewed.
230. The Plan will be reviewed periodically. The Town Council proposes to formally review the Plan on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of the Local Plan, if this cycle is different.

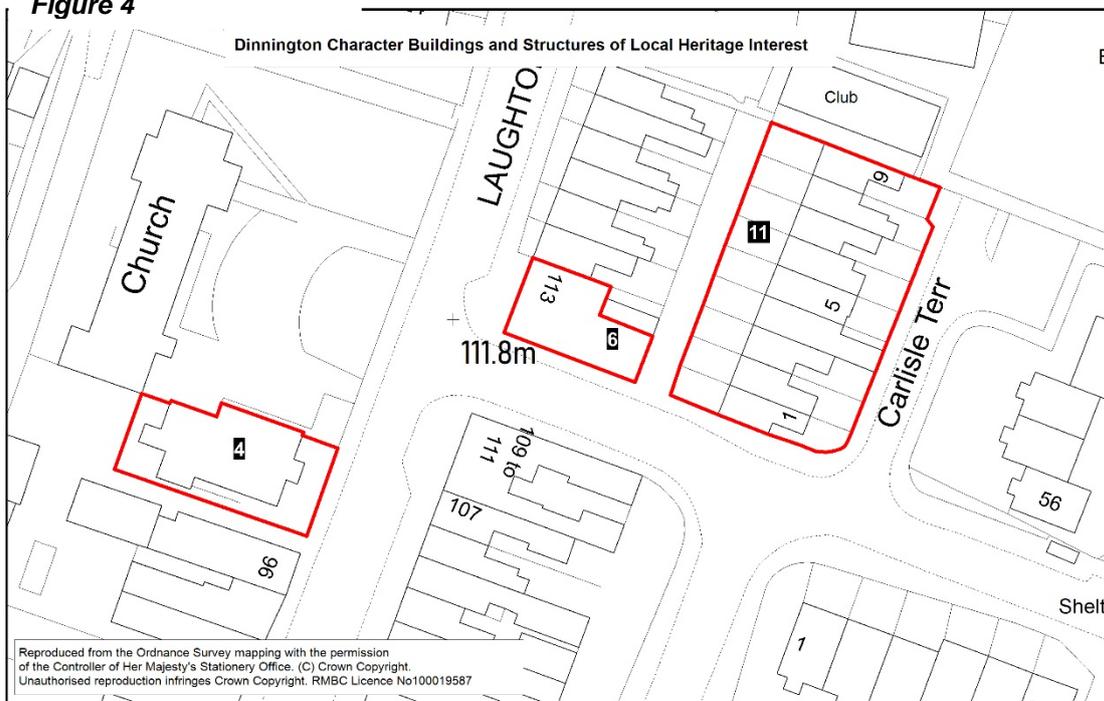
**Figures 3 – 9: Dinnington Character Buildings and Structures of Local Heritage Interest**

**Figure 3**



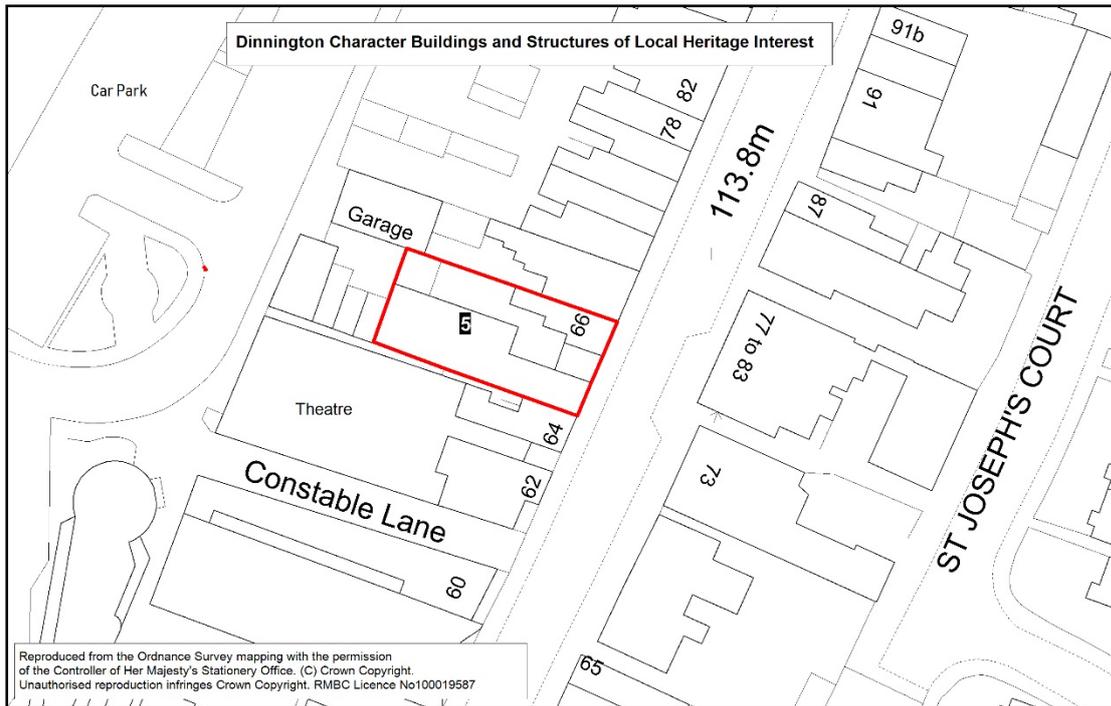
- 1. Dinnington Colliery Pit Wheel**      **2. Gurnhill Trough**      **3. Cenotaph**

**Figure 4**



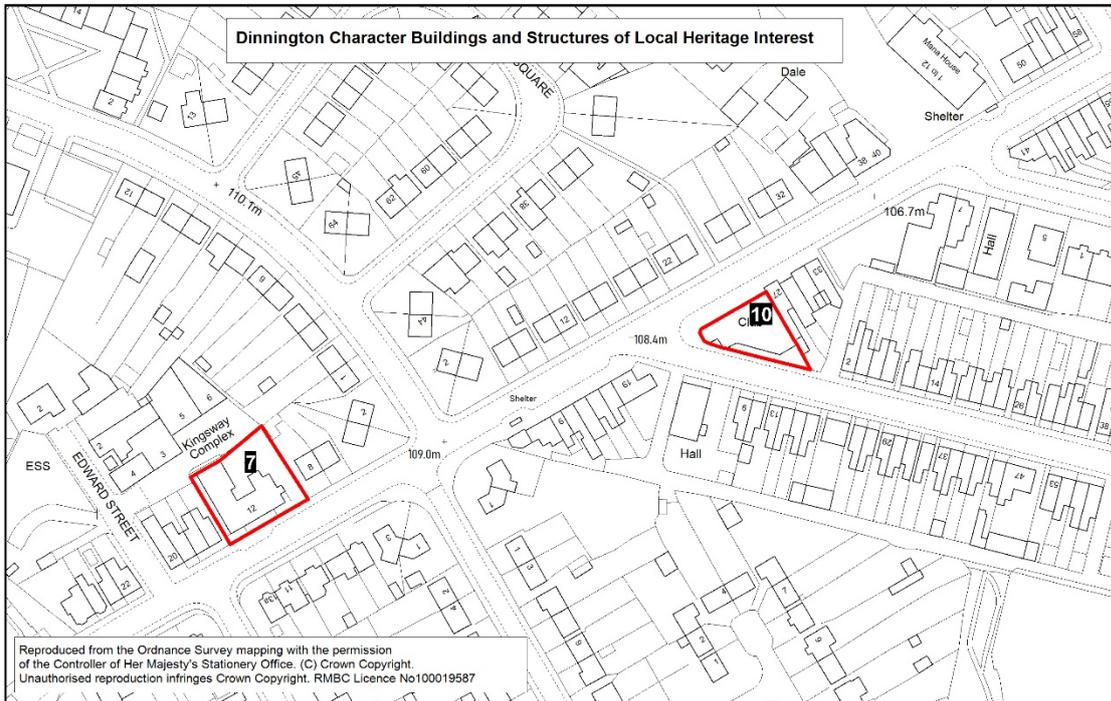
- 4. Old Library**      **6. Handsworth Woodhouse Co op Buildings**      **11. Carlisle Terrace (Last of the Barracks)**

**Figure 5**



**5. Front of the Old Brewery**

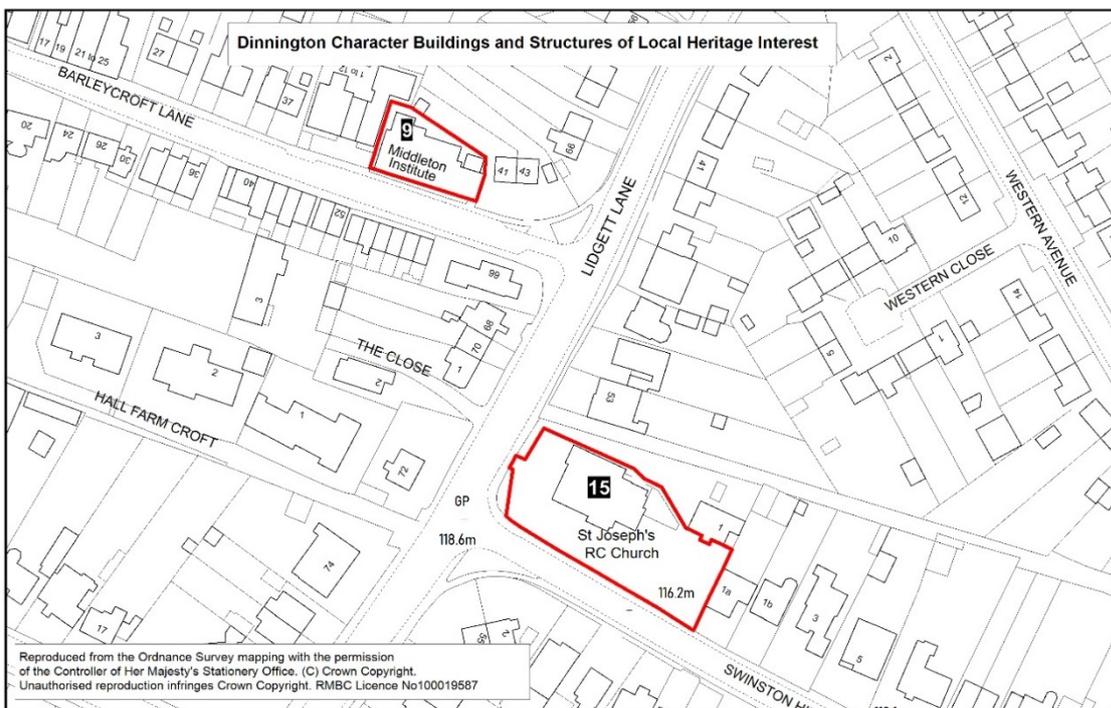
**Figure 6**



**7. The Old Dentist**

**10. Silverdales Social Club**

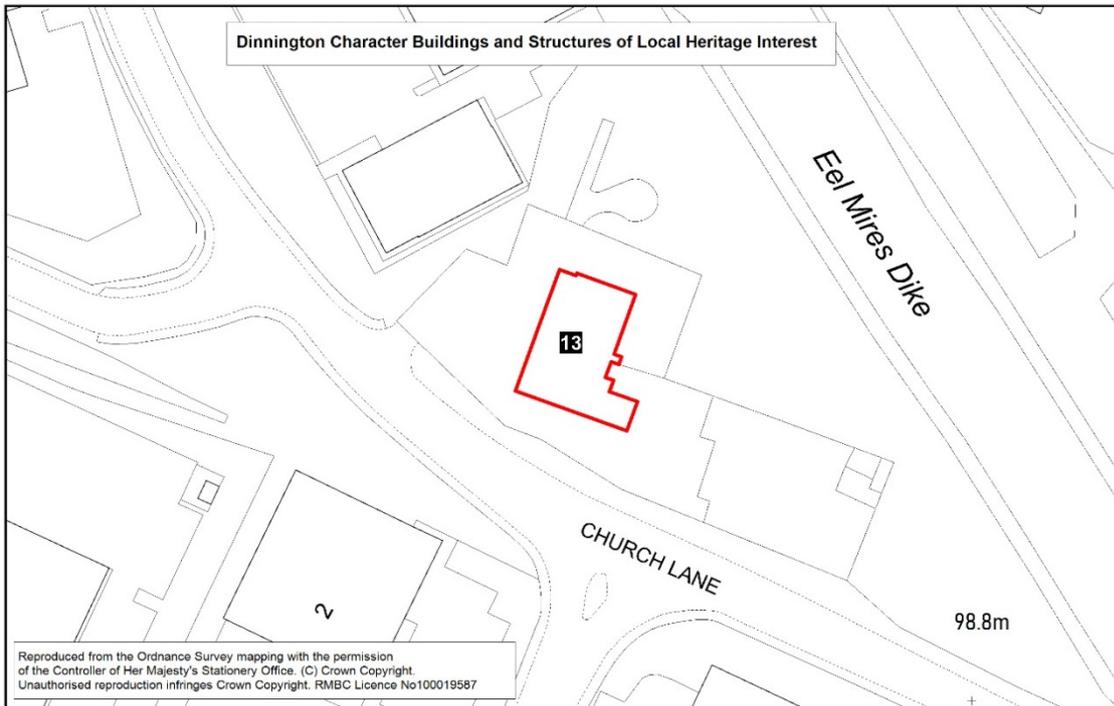
**Figure 7**



**9. Middleton Institute**

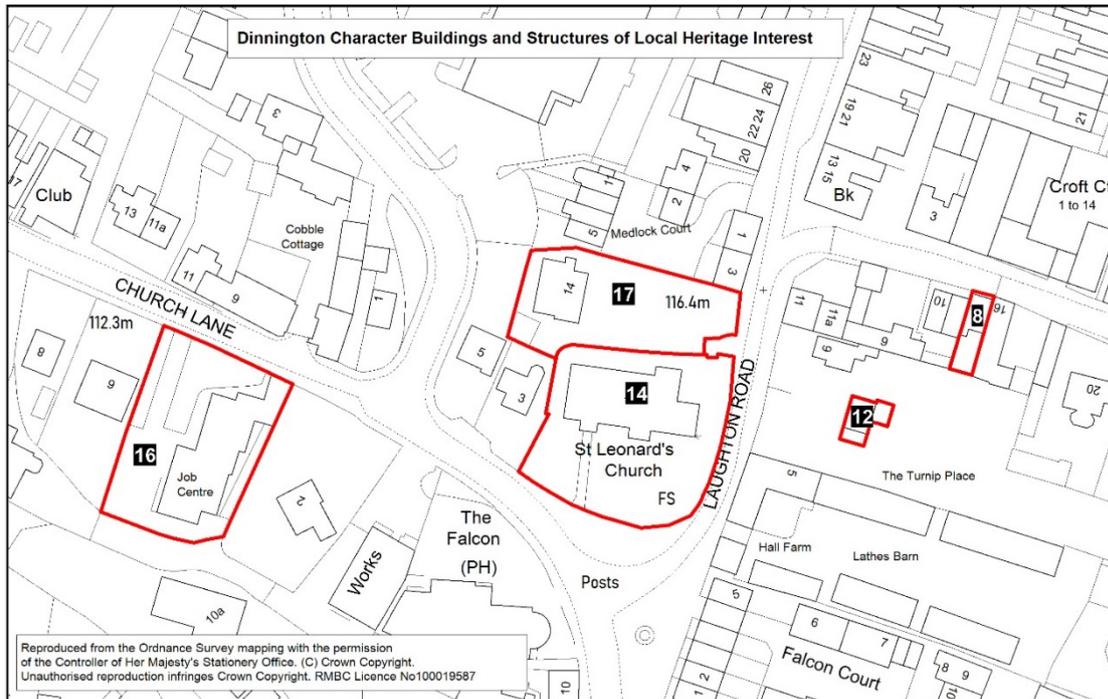
**15. St Joseph's Church**

**Figure 8**



**13. The Old Plant Workshop**

**Figure 9**



**8. Croft Cottage**

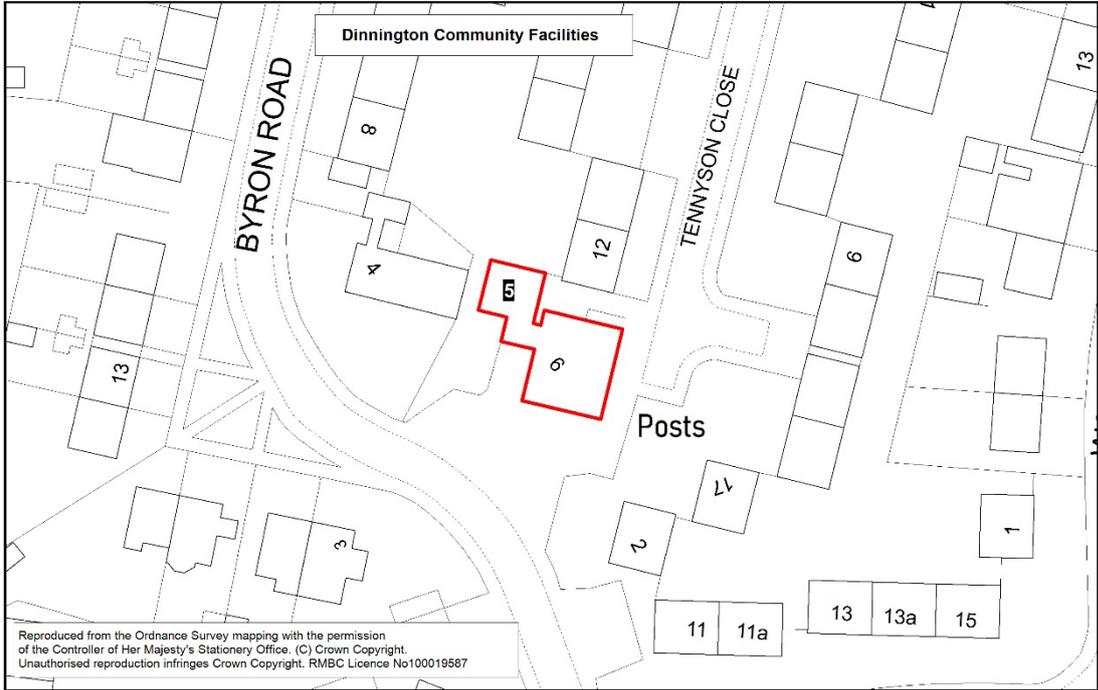
**12. Remains of the Old Blacksmiths**

**14. St Leonards Church**

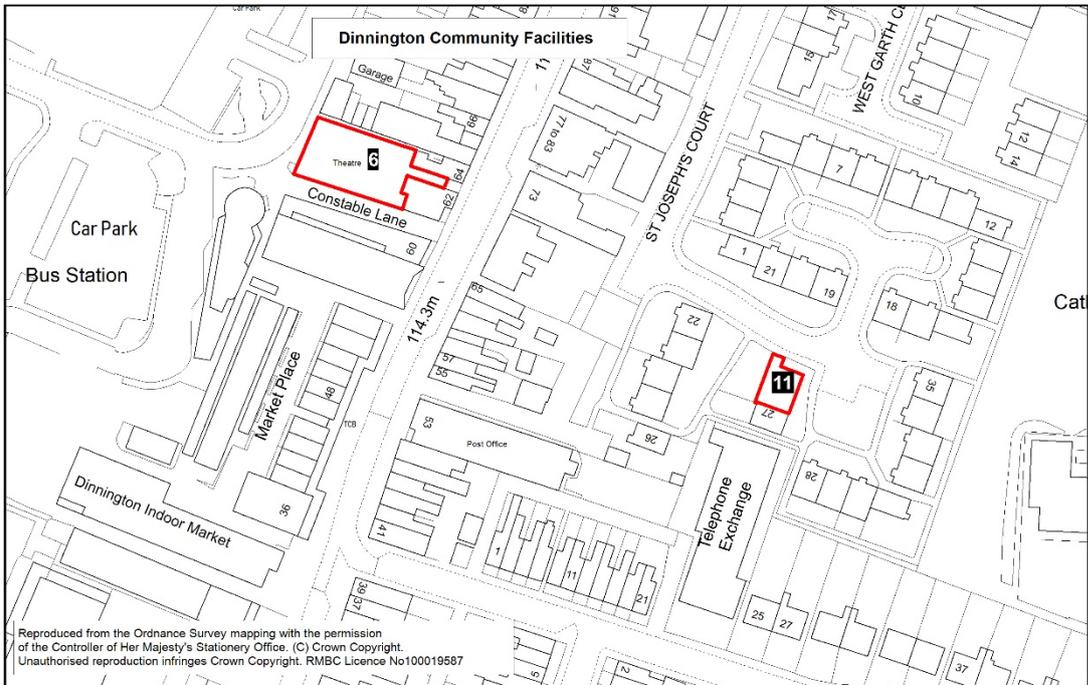
**16. The Old Rectory**

**17. The Older Rectory**



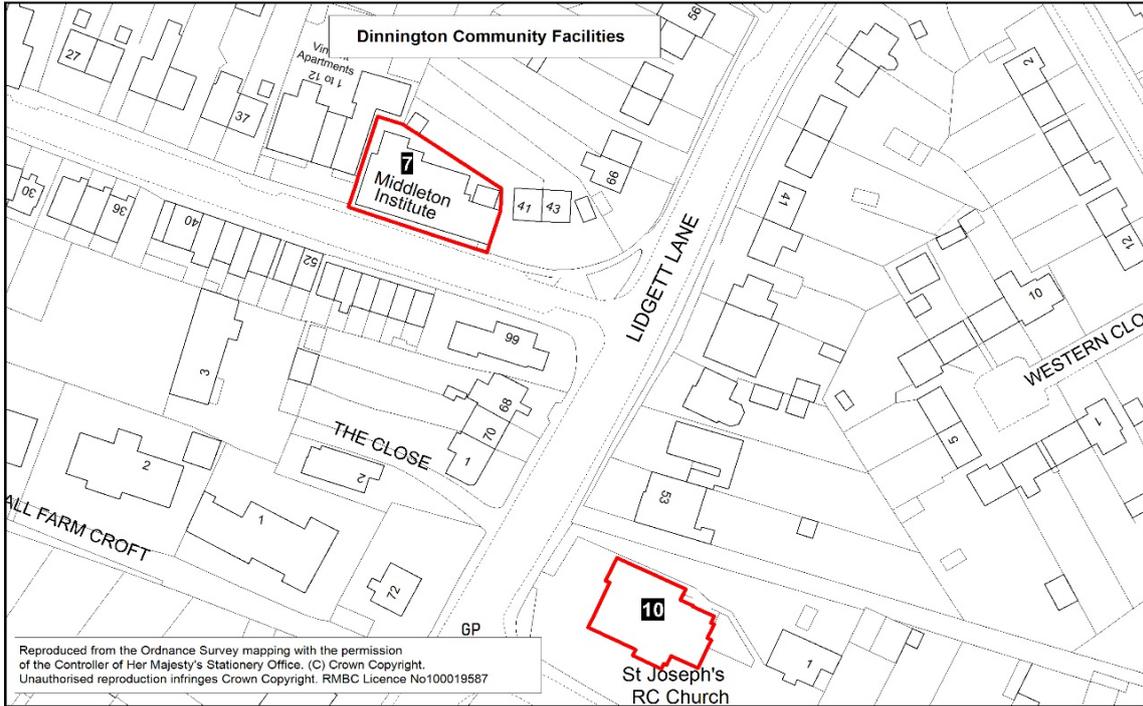


5. High Nook Community Centre



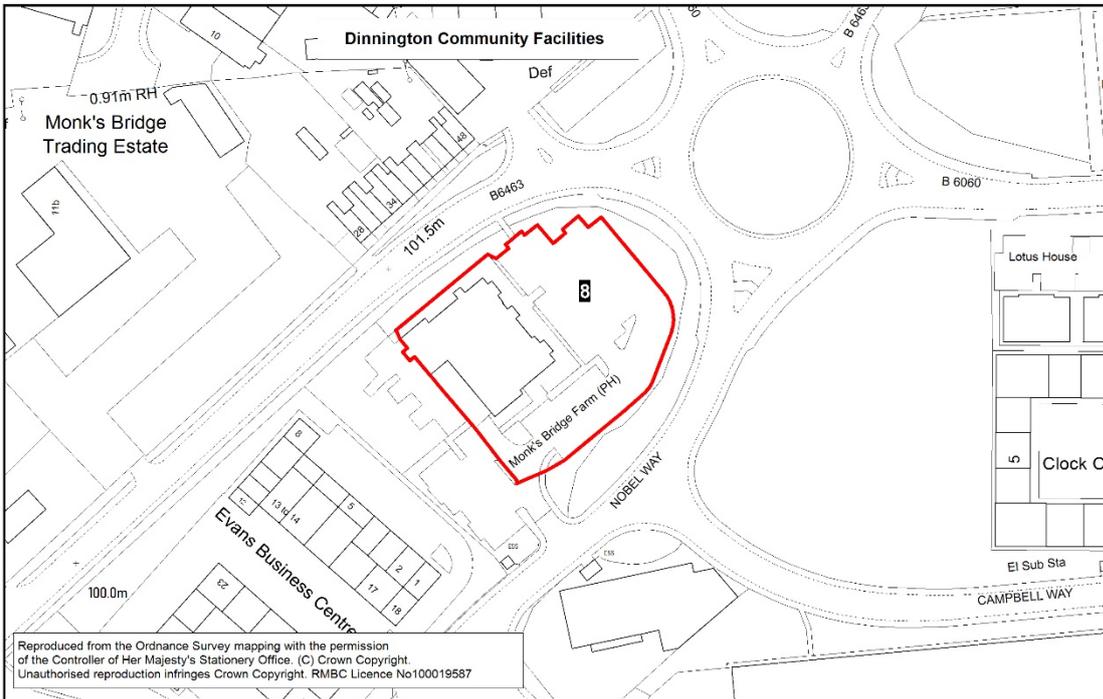
6. Lyric Theatre

11. St Joseph's Court Community Centre

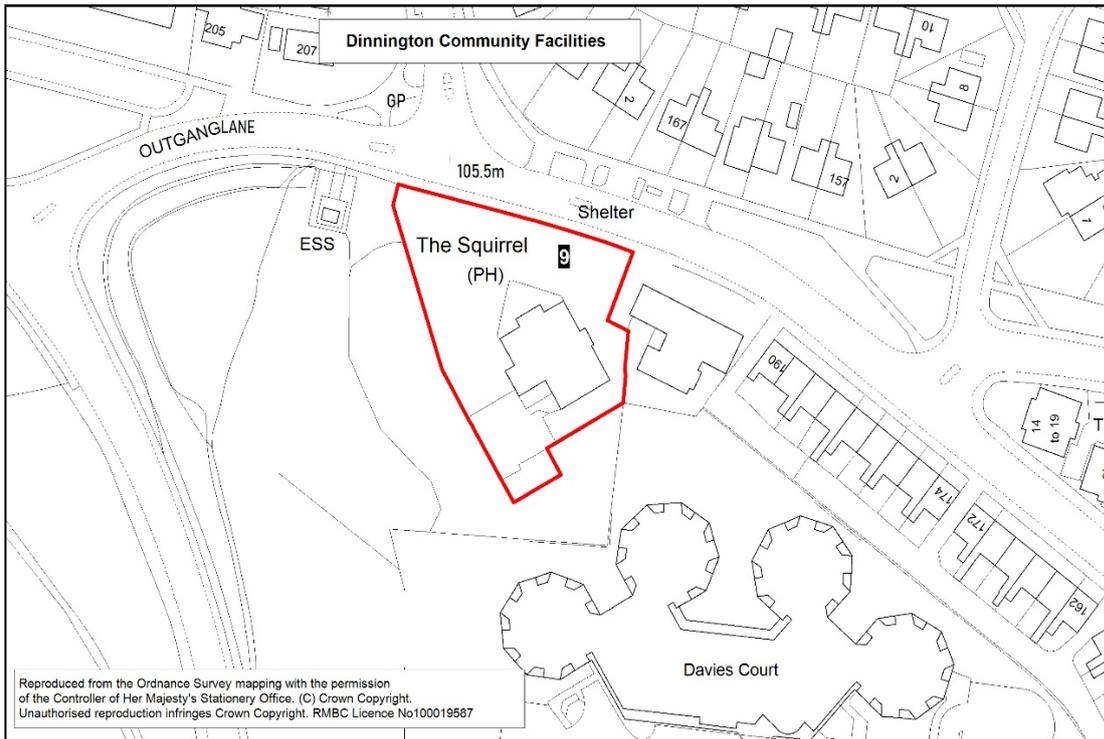


7. Middleton Hall

10. St Joseph's Catholic Church



8. Monksbridge Farm Public House



9. Squirrel Public House