

## Decision under Delegated Powers

### Officer Requesting Decision

Paul Gilding, Principal Planning Officer, Plans Policies and Place Making

### Officer Making the Decision

Geoff Parker, Chief Executive

### Recommendation

That the Council approves the application from Woodhouse Parish Council for designation of the whole of the parish, identified on the Neighbourhood Area application map, as a Neighbourhood Area. The decision is to take immediate effect.

### Reason

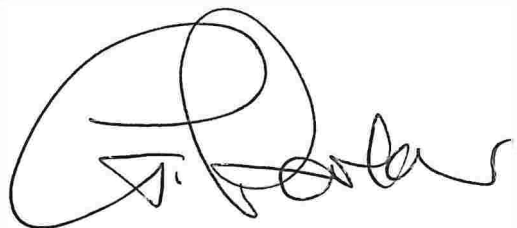
So that Woodhouse Parish Council may continue the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area covered by its Parish boundary in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

### Authority for Decision

Section 8.3 of the Council's constitution includes a delegation to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Inward Investment & Tourism Strategy, to agree and formally designate the Neighbourhood Area that would be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Order.

### Decision and Date

APPROVED

 03 MAY 2018

### Background

The Localism Act (2011) provides the legal basis for neighbourhood planning and establishes neighbourhood plans as part of the statutory development plan alongside the Council's local plan.

The first stage for a group preparing a neighbourhood plan, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), is to determine the boundary of the neighbourhood plan area and submit to the Borough Council for designation.

Under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations which came in to force on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016, the designation needs to be made as soon as possible once the local planning authority is satisfied that the application is valid and complete. The requirement for the authority to consult on the application has been removed by these Regulations where the whole of a parish is to be designated and it is not covered by another designated Neighbourhood Area.

Woodhouse Parish Council has submitted an application for the whole of the parish of Woodhouse to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area. The application was received by the local authority on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and outlines that the neighbourhood area formed by the parish boundary is considered most appropriate, reflecting the existing community and being of greatest meaning for policy making purposes. The application letter and boundary map are attached to this delegated decision.

The application is considered valid and complete, and the area is not covered by any other Neighbourhood Area. Therefore, the Borough Council must now issue a decision to designate the boundary of Woodhouse parish as a Neighbourhood Area to enable the Parish Council to continue with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of preparing Neighbourhood Plans falls largely to the parish or town council preparing it. However, Charnwood Borough Council must arrange and pay for the Examination and Referendum required as part of the proposal (as set out in Cabinet Resolution Minute 121 03/13) and meet the costs of officer time supporting the process of preparing the plan and advising on evidence and content of the plan. An amount of £20,000 per Neighbourhood Plan is currently available from DCLG which can be claimed on successful completion of an examination, once a date for the Referendum has been set.

Grants of up to £9,000 are also available to Town and Parish Councils from Locality and those facing more complex issues can apply for specific packages of technical support where needed, and may also be eligible for further funding of an extra £8,000. An independent report, "Neighbourhood Planning in Charnwood Borough", found that financial resources were not a barrier to Town and Parish Councils who wished to prepare Neighbourhood Plans in Charnwood.

## Risk Management

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
A lack of adequate staff resources to ensure appropriate support is available to help town and parish councils prepare their neighbourhood plans.	Possible	Low	Resources will be managed effectively and will be prioritised to match the demand from competing neighbourhood plans and existing workloads.  Staff resources spent on Neighbourhood Plans will be backfilled using DCLG grant money where existing activity is at risk of delay.
Changes to DCLG funding impact on the ability to finance Neighbourhood Plan regulatory processes	Likely	Medium	DCLG have committed the funding support program until 2018. Funding will be applied for where possible at the relevant stages of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation. If funding was to be removed the Borough Council would have to fund the Examination and Referendum.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Paper 1: Woodhouse Parish Council letter requesting designation as a neighbourhood area

Paper 2: Boundary map

## Paper1

10 April 2018

Richard Bennet  
Head of Planning and Regeneration  
Charnwood Borough Council  
Southfields  
Loughborough  
LE11 2TN

Dear Mr Bennett

### **Application for designation as a neighbourhood area: Woodhouse Parish**

At the parish council meeting on Monday 9 April 2018 the Council resolved to develop a neighbourhood plan for Woodhouse parish.

Under Section 61G of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* and Regulation 5 of the *Neighbourhood Planning [General] Regulations 2012*, Woodhouse Parish Council, the relevant body, formally submits an application to designate the whole of Woodhouse Parish as the neighbourhood area. A map is attached.

The Council will establish a steering group comprising members of the community, experts and parish Members, to develop a plan which conforms to the requirements of the Local Planning Authority and Her Majesty's Government.

As an area, Woodhouse parish has a long history. It represents the former hamlet of Longdale with the village settlements of Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves, all previously under the aegis of Barrow Rural District Council. It now comprises two villages surrounded by farm land and recreational open spaces. The area is much valued by local residents and businesses and is popular with tourists. It is endowed with heritage assets, from Beaumanor Hall in Woodhouse to the former recovery homes in Woodhouse Eaves and the striking environment of The Brand and its former quarries.

The Parish area is host to a network of public foot and bridle paths, regional beauty spots, mature and ancient woodland, granite-clad and slate-roofed properties quarried locally. Many are locally or nationally listed, some at Grade I\*. There are Archaeological Alert Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation, and a designated Ancient Woodland. Trees are distinctive features, protected by a number of individual and group Tree Preservation Orders and regulations applied to three Conservation Areas. Surveys have shown the presence of a range of protected species.

The Parish lies within Charnwood Forest with borders that invite both local and non-local people to enjoy walking, cycling and horse riding around Beacon Hill Country Park, Broombriggs, Swithland Wood, and The Outwoods. Some visitors pass through from other settlements to reach major roads, including the M1 motorway, resulting in attempts to keep the largely rural roads safe.

Parish communities have recognised this provenance through having developed a Parish Plan and a Village Design Statement for each village. These documents demonstrate the commitment of the community to value their place. They have also participated in three Rural Housing Needs Surveys; and recognise the need for the right homes in the right place at the right price. There are currently 1677 names on the Electoral Roll from a total population of 2,319, which includes around 300 term-time boarders at the Defence Sixth Form College.

Yours sincerely

*Ann Irving*

Dr Ann Irving

Clerk & Proper Officer  
Woodhouse Parish Council

Paper2

