

**HOUGHTON ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL**  
CLERK TO THE COUNCIL: MR. S. DERRY  
66 Balmoral Road Mountsorrel Loughborough Leicestershire LE12 7EN

21<sup>st</sup> May 2015

Stephen Pointer  
Strategic Planning and Housing Manager  
Harborough District Council  
The Symington Building  
Adam and Eve Street  
Market Harborough  
Leicestershire  
LE16 7AG

Dear Mr. Pointer,

**Designation of a Neighbourhood Planning area for Houghton on the Hill**

On behalf of Houghton Parish Council I write to apply for designation of a Neighbourhood Planning area for the community of Houghton on the Hill. In accordance with the requirements for designation I describe below the area chosen and a description of the qualifying body that will develop the plan.

**The Neighbourhood area**

The boundary of Houghton parish is not a suitable one for neighbourhood planning since it lies directly along the northwest limit of building of the existing village. We have held a series of discussions with officers of your department, including yourself, and with Hungarton Parish Council which is the other parish involved. Following the Annual Parish Council meetings of Hungarton on 13 May and Houghton on the 14 May, both parish councils have confirmed their agreement with the neighbourhood planning area boundary derived in discussion between the two councils and HDC. I attach to this letter a copy of your letter describing this area, and the map of the area produced by you. The rationale for this area is explained clearly in your letter. Since the area includes part of Hungarton Parish, there is a necessity, but also a ready willingness, for the two Parish Councils to work together in continuous consultation. To this end Houghton Parish Council is drafting a Memorandum of Understanding which is currently in the process of circulation for discussion to both Hungarton PC and HDC.

**The Qualifying Body**

Houghton Parish Council is the qualifying body to lead the development of this neighbourhood plan. We have established a Neighbourhood Planning Working Party (NPWP) to carry out the activities of producing the plan, which will necessarily

involve data collation, consultation with the area residents and other stakeholders, drafting and eventually submission of the draft plan document. The working party consists of all the currently serving 5 members of Houghton Parish Council, and an additional 15 volunteers from the community who have a range of professional backgrounds and community involvements. The NPWP has already held a series of meetings and has established its own website which holds details of its Constitution and Terms of Reference, the names of all the members, minutes of meetings, and associated information for access by the village community. The NPWP has also held its first consultation exercise with presentations and community activities at the Houghton Annual Parish Meeting on 30 April. As part of this exercise the meeting was addressed by Helen Chadwick of your department, who is the contact person at HDC for the NPWP. The NPWP website can be viewed at:

<http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/houghtononthehill/parish-plan.html>

The NPWG reports to each Houghton Parish Council meeting, and these reports are minuted with the Parish Council meeting minutes on the its website at:

<http://www.houghtononthehillpc.org.uk/>

The above fulfils the required description of the area involved and the qualifying body. It is important to consider one additional issue. At its meeting on 13 May Hungarton Parish Council agreed that it wished to open discussion with HDC about transferring the land area of Hungarton parish which lies within the Houghton NP area, to become part of Houghton parish. Houghton Parish Council is not opposed to this, but expects that this would be a lengthy administrative process which would need to be considered carefully and in detail to determine all possible implications for each parish. In this situation we view the changing of the parish boundary as a separate project to be progressed independently of the Neighbourhood Plan.

If you have any further queries concerning this application, we will respond to them as quickly as we can. We look forward to collaborating and working with your department through the various stages to the successful adoption of our neighbourhood plan.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Derry  
Clerk to Houghton on the Hill Parish Council