

Meeting	<b>LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>
Time/Day/Date	6.30 pm on Wednesday, 12 November 2014
Location	Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would like to remind members that when they are considering whether the following items are exempt information under the relevant paragraph under part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 they must have regard to the public interest test. This means that members must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available to the public.

## AGENDA

Item	Pages
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
To receive and note any apologies for absence.	
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring disclosable interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is pecuniary or non-pecuniary.	
<b>3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2014	<b>3 - 10</b>
<b>4. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	
Terms of Reference attached.	<b>11 - 12</b>
<b>5. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b>	
Report of the Director of Services	<b>13 - 22</b>



**6. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Report of the Director of Services

**23 - 28**

**7. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Report of the Director of Services

**29 - 78**

Circulation:

Councillor R D Bayliss  
Councillor J Bridges (Chairman)  
Councillor D De Lacy  
Councillor C Large  
Councillor J Legrys  
Councillor T J Pendleton (Observer)  
Councillor V Richichi  
Councillor S Sheahan

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2014

Present: Councillor J Bridges (Chairman)

Councillors D De Lacy, C Large, J Legrys, V Richichi and S Sheahan

In Attendance: Councillors R Johnson and T Neilson

Officers: Mr M Sharp (Consultant), Mr S Bambrick, Mrs M Meredith, Mr I Nelson and Mr S Stanion

## **29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

## **30. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor J Legrys declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5 – Town Centres – Review of Boundaries, as a volunteer at Hermitage FM which was located within Coalville town centre.

## **31. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillor D De Lacy asked if there was any progress or setbacks to report on the agreement of the SHMA figures and the housing land supply.

The Director of Services advised that in respect of the SHMA figures, a memorandum of understanding was undergoing agreement across Leicestershire; there would be a report to Cabinet in October and to a meeting of Council in November. He added that ours was the last Council to agree, therefore subject to that, there would be an agreement in respect of the housing requirements across the Housing Market Area. He advised that as reported at the last Planning Committee, the Council was currently achieving a 6.2 year housing land supply provision.

The Consultant commented that these processes all took so long that the position was bound to change. He referred to comments made by a planning inspector that local authorities should not ignore the housing implications of economic development aspirations. He added that the differences between economic aspirations and housing needs were at odds in some authorities. He advised that the housing need issues would need to be considered and compared against the aspirations. He added that it would be a matter for local authorities to convince an inspector how robust the housing need figures were in light of reality and aspirations. He stated that as far as the Local Plan was concerned, he felt that there was time to undertake this work and officers were talking to others in the area to see if this issue would affect the robustness of the housing land supply.

Councillor J Bridges stated that he understood officers were looking into this however he felt that further discussion was required with Members. He expressed concern regarding aspirations and felt the situation should be monitored.

Councillor J Legrys concurred with Councillor J Bridges' comments and felt there were a number of issues that Members needed to keep on top of. He referred to the Packington Mill and Charnwood inquiries. He stated that he had taken the personal view that the SHMA was only as good as inspectors were prepared to sign it off. He requested a written briefing to all Members to explain the situation.

Councillor V Richichi sought clarification whether more weight would be given to economic aspiration or housing need. He commented that this was a chicken and egg situation in his opinion.

The Consultant commented that the aim of planning was to balance the demand for one against the other. He added that SHMAs were built up from demographic projections and some economic assumptions, however inspectors were now saying that if you have high economic aspirations, you need to have enough housing to satisfy this. He commented that it was a question of balancing aspirations and reality, and the aspirations needed to be carefully considered to ensure that housing was not oversupplied.

Councillor V Richichi agreed with those comments and felt that houses should be built to encourage people to come to the area.

Councillor D De Lacy sought clarification on why the Parish Councils were not being consulted on the limits to development, and why this was being treated differently to the town centre boundaries. He felt that the limits to development issue was equally as important.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that as part of the report on the limits to development, consultation was suggested. He stated that his recollection was that Members had wanted to delay the consultation until after the workshops had taken place. He referred to the last resolution which agreed that a report be brought back to the Advisory Committee to agree the next steps. He stated that his advice was that the consultation should still take place.

Councillor D De Lacy commented that he welcomed this.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor S Sheahan and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **32. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Terms of Reference be noted.

### **33. TOWN CENTRES - REVIEW OF BOUNDARIES**

The Director of Services presented the report to Members. He advised that the current town centre boundaries were set out in the existing Local Plan and had not been reviewed for over 20 years and were clearly in need of review. He explained that in a number of cases, there were uses which would no longer be regarded as town centre use, and in most cases the suggested town centre boundary was significantly smaller than the existing boundary. He sought comments from the Advisory Committee on the report and each of the settlement boundaries suggested by officers. He advised that it was proposed to undertake an informal consultation with the Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor J Legrys asked that Ward Members be included in the consultation. He commented that there may be other organisations that could be included in the consultation and felt that this should be considered.

Councillor D De Lacy asked if the results of the consultation would be reported back to the Advisory Committee.

The Director of Services advised that the results could be reported back if desired, subject to the timings.

Members agreed that they would want the results of the consultation to be reported back to the Advisory Committee in the first instance.

Councillor S Sheahan pointed out one property in Measham which had been marked as residential, which was currently being fitted out for a shop unit. He sought clarification on whether function or form was the primary consideration. He commented that it was very difficult to say where the town centre began and ended. He also sought clarification on the significance and implications of defining the town centre.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that in defining the town centre boundary, this would be the area where officers would seek to direct retail and town centre type uses to initially. He added that this was a way of trying to maintain town centres as the main concentration of retail and other town centre uses.

Councillor S Sheahan commented that it seemed officers were trying to stop the decline of town centre areas, and it was a hard judgement.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that this was the case; the boundaries had shrunk in many cases and it was about maintaining a concentration. He commented that the fringe areas were transitional zones and this was a matter of judgement.

Councillor J Bridges commented that he was sure the Parish Councils may express different views when the matter was out for consultation.

Councillor C Large commented that it would have been useful to have had sight of the policies that would be applied to the town centre boundaries. She asked for example if a shop that was just outside the boundary would have any restriction on how they could erect signage.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that in that particular circumstance there would be no restriction, as this would relate to an already established use. He advised that the policies would impact upon new applications for a change of use.

Councillor J Legrys commented that town centres such as Ashby de la Zouch would be more critical. He asked what the position would be if a premises was just outside of the town centre boundary and applied for a change of use. He expressed concerns as a lot of properties in Coalville in particular were changing from residential to retail use. He asked what would happen in this circumstance.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the policy would require a sequential approach and as such the applicant would be asked to demonstrate whether there were any premises within the town centre which would accommodate the business, whether these were appropriate. He advised that the evidence provided by the applicant would be taken into consideration in the officer's recommendation, and proximity to the boundary would also be a factor. He added that applications would be determined on a case by case basis.

Councillor J Legrys referred to the existing shops along James Street and commented that he had received a complaint from the owner of one of the shops that he was unable to be a member of the Coalville Town Team as he was not classed as being within the town centre. He asked if those shops would be converted to residential use once they became vacant.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that already established uses would not be affected. He referred to the current ongoing DCLG consultation outlined in the report which, if agreed, would significantly reduce the Council's ability to resist applications for a change of use.

In response to a question from Councillor J Legrys, the Planning Policy Team Manager confirmed that a change of use to a fast food establishment would still require planning permission and such applications outside of the boundary could be refused subject to the wording of the policy.

Councillor J Legrys referred to the Ford garage site and noted that this had been included within the town centre. He stated that he was pleased that this had been included considering the forthcoming planning application. He expressed disappointment that the market hall had not been included because this was located in the primary shopping area. He commented that this would lead to criticism. He asked if there was any flexibility in light of that application being approved and implemented.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that bearing in mind a further report would be brought to the Advisory Committee following the consultation, any changes in the interim could be picked up at that point. In respect of the market, he stated that this was a different type of retail use as it was a more concentrated use, and only open for part of the week. He commented that it could be included in the consultation, or left out to see what comments were received.

Councillor J Legrys commented that the Belvoir Centre was declining and was likely to lose more units. He added that to the west of Memorial Square, there was a large retail unit which probably had a greater footfall than the town centre itself, which had not been included. He added that he would be lobbying for Snibston Museum to be included in the town centre and sought clarification on why this had not been included.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that it had not been included for the simple fact that it did not relate that well to the town centre and was not what would be classed as town centre use.

Councillor J Legrys expressed disappointment that Snibston Museum had not been included in the town centre, particularly with the regular running of the railway from the museum to the town centre to increase footfall. He agreed that town centres needed to shrink but residential properties also needed to be put into town centre to increase footfall. He asked if research had been properly done in respect of the actual current situation within town centres.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the research had considered a concentration of uses, however there was no footfall data available. He clarified that it was the use which had defined the town centre area. He added that the Asda site did not fit in with the definition of a Primary Shopping Area when looking at the surrounding area.

Councillor J Legrys commented that the Council's drive to deliver a rival market policy indicated that there was a push to having the market not at the market hall. He added that he felt the Walmart site had a higher footfall than what had been hatched in red on the plan.

Councillor S Sheahan commented that if the town centre boundaries were being tightened and people were being directed to look there initially, there was a risk that this could create an upward pressure in rent levels within the town centre and perversely make the fringes more attractive. He asked if changing the town centre boundary would affect the conservation area. He also commented that officers had considered the town centre boundary on the basis of the daytime economy; however insofar as the night time economy in Measham, the centre of gravity would shift.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that there would be no impact upon the conservation area, as this was covered by different legislation and was for a different purpose. In respect of the night time economy he advised that this had been considered in areas such as Ashby de la Zouch and Coalville; however the daytime economy was when most retail use took place. He added that the risk was that the area could be diluted to the detriment of the retail use. In respect of the upward pressure on rents within the town centre, he felt that this would not be significant enough to make people move out of the town centre.

Councillor D De Lacy commented that Snibston had not been graded at all on the map and there was a restaurant and a gift shop on the site. He added that it was within 300m of the town centre boundary and asked why it had been left out altogether.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that this was because the shop and cafe were ancillary to the main use of the museum.

Councillor D De Lacy asked why the museum had not been included since it was classed as leisure use.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the museum was not within the existing town centre boundary.

The Director of Services asked Members to clarify for what purpose they were seeking to include Snibston museum within the town centre. He clarified that it was not located within the existing town centre boundary and the purpose of this exercise was to look at focussing on the core of the town centre.

Councillor D De Lacy stated that he had raised this issue in terms of achieving a consistent approach as some areas had been graded and not others. He commented that if there was a large supermarket just outside the boundary, surely this would not be excluded just because it was not within the existing town centre boundary.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that there were other uses in the wider area, such as retail parks, which had not been included. He added that to survey all areas in great detail would raise resource issues.

Councillor C Large commented that a lot of development had been approved in Castle Donington and so it was likely that more business use would be forthcoming. She expressed concerns about how restrictive this policy would be. She added that by concentrating the town centre so tightly, this could cause parking issues for people visiting shops.

The Planning Policy Team Manager commented that there were obviously a number of uses that were not retail uses. He added that for any applications falling outside the town centre boundary, a sequential approach would be taken, and if the application was not considered to be detrimental to the town centre it would be approved.

Councillor J Legrys stated that in his opinion, Snibston museum should be included in the town centre. He commented that they had been trying to achieve far less silo working

between the museum and the town team. He added that there was a political will to include Snibston museum within the town centre. He expressed disappointment that the town centre had not been hatched red over an existing area of retail footfall and he would be lobbying for this and Snibston museum to be included. In respect of the retail parks, he commented that these were an 'out of town' retail experience. He commented that the night time economy in Coalville was partly within and partly outside of the boundary. He made the point that a large proportion of Members believed that it should be included.

The Director of Services recognised that there may be a desire to include Snibston museum in the town centre, however his advice was that doing so would increase the alternative development options for that site.

Councillor J Bridges echoed those comments and felt that an alternative might need to be considered.

Councillor S Sheahan commented that it depended whether you considered the town centre in terms of form or function. He added that there was a difference between entity and identity, and Coalville needed to redefine itself; part of which was recognising that Snibston museum was an integral part of what Coalville has to offer. He stated that the physical separation needed to be put aside, and greater consideration be given to what Coalville is, was and hopes to be.

Councillor J Bridges stated that he took on board the comments but stood by the advice of officers. He reiterated the need to be cautious.

Councillor C Large asked if there was any guidance that the Council would need to demonstrate had been followed in drawing up the town centre boundaries.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that there was general guidance on the approach; however it was very much a matter for individual authorities to define the boundaries as they saw fit. He added that the key was having evidence to support the decisions made.

The Consultant advised that the approach taken was consistent with what was happening around the country in terms of boundaries shrinking.

Councillor D De Lacy suggested that the issues be further debated following the consultation process. He sought clarification on how the consultation with the Parish Councils and other organisations would be undertaken.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that this would be done by email if possible, and by letter if not. He explained that a copy of the plans and the settlement limits would be sent to relevant organisations.

Councillor D De Lacy asked if time would be allowed for meetings of the Parish Councils to take place. The Planning Policy Team Manager acknowledged that this was an issue, and the wider timescale needed to be considered, however time would be allowed for this where possible.

Councillor C Large commented that there were more Ward Members in her area who would want to ensure they also received copies of the plans and settlement limits.

Councillor J Bridges commented that in the past, officers had been prepared to go and talk to Parish Councils and he hoped this would be the case in respect of this consultation.

It was moved by Councillor C Large, seconded by Councillor J Legrys and



RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY THAT:

The Advisory Committee;

- a) Notes the need to review the existing town centre boundaries;
- b) Notes that the appropriate Parish and Town Councils and the Coalville and Ashby town teams will be consulted on the proposed boundaries (as may be amended in the light of the comments of the Advisory Committee).

The Chairman invited Members to highlight any items they would like the Advisory Committee to consider in future.

Councillor J Legrys requested that Members be kept updated on the situation in respect of the SHMA and felt that all Members should be informed as soon as there was likely to be any change.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.30 pm

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## **LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Purpose of the Local Plan Advisory Committee**

To enable cross-party discussion, guidance and support for the development of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.

### **Role of the Local Plan Advisory Committee**

- To consider and comment on documents that relate to the North West Leicestershire Local Plan including (but not restricted to) policy options, draft policies and evidence prepared to support the Plan.
- To make recommendations as required to Council in respect of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.
- To monitor progress on the preparation of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.
- To provide updates to other Members who do not sit on the Local Plan Advisory Committee.
- To consider and comment on responses to plans being prepared by other local planning authorities as part of the Duty to Cooperate.

### **Membership of the Local Plan Advisory Committee**

- The Advisory Committee comprises four Members of the ruling group and three Members from the opposition group.
- The Council's Substitution Scheme will apply.
- The Advisory Committee will select a Chair at its first meeting of each civic year.
- Other members may be invited to attend and participate in meetings of the Advisory Committee in a non-voting capacity at the discretion of the Chair.
- The Advisory Committee meetings must have at least 3 members to be quorate.

### **Operation of the Local Plan Advisory Committee**

- Council Procedure Rule 4 will apply to the Local Plan Advisory Committee
- The Advisory Committee will meet at least once every two months, but will meet more frequently where necessary to enable continued progress on the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.
- The Advisory Committee will have no direct decision-making powers but will consider documents and information relating to the Local Plan and make recommendations to Council. Any such report will include specific comments and issues raised by the minority group.
- The Advisory Committee will be supported by the Director of Service and officers in the Planning Policy Team.
- Meetings will be organised, administered and minuted by Democratic Services with agendas and minutes being made available on the Council's website.
- The Portfolio Holder may attend as an observer.

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**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2014**

Title of report	<b>DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b>
Contacts	<p>Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 <a href="mailto:trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Director of Services 01530 454555 <a href="mailto:steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Planning Policy Team Manager 01530 454677 <a href="mailto:ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p>
Purpose of report	To outline for members the suggested approach in respect of the Development Strategy for the Local Plan
Council Priorities	<p>These are taken from the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	None.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	At this time there is uncertainty regarding the amount of new development which will need to be provided for as part of the Local Plan and so it is suggested that to allow for this a flexibility allowance be applied. In this way the potential for the plan to be found unsound should be minimised
Equalities Impact Assessment	None
Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	Not applicable

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Consultees	Local Plan Project Board
Background papers	National Planning Policy Framework which can be found at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building">www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</a>  Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment which can be found at <a href="http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/shma_5_year_housing_land_supply">www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/shma_5_year_housing_land_supply</a>
Recommendations	<b>THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:</b> <b>(I) NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTION TO HAVE A FLEXIBILITY ALLOWANCE;</b> <b>(II) NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY; AND</b> <b>(III) NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALLOCATING SITES</b>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A key issue for the new Local Plan to address is that of what the development strategy ought to be. Any development strategy will comprise of a number of elements:
- A settlement hierarchy which defines the different levels and roles of settlements across the district in order to guide the location of new development, whether this is determined as part of the local plan or in determining a planning application;
  - Allocation of amounts of development to different settlements and;
  - Allocation of specific sites for development
- 1.2 All local plans have to be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) to demonstrate what account has been taken of sustainability issues in preparing the plan and to show what the likely impacts of the plan will be in sustainability terms. The SA/SEA identifies a number of objectives covering a wide range of economic, environmental and social issues against which the sustainability credentials of the local Plan can be assessed. As part of the SA/SEA process it is necessary to consider all reasonable alternative options when preparing policies and strategies.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to:

- Consider what options there might be for the settlement hierarchy;
- Identify the suggested settlement hierarchy and possible scale of housing growth and
- Establish some key principles to help guide considerations in respect of the allocation of sites

1.4 Before looking at the possible options it is necessary to consider what scale of development should be planned for.

## **2.0 SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT**

2.1 In respect of housing, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides the starting point and the key piece of evidence in respect of future housing needs. Members will recall that this has suggested a requirement figure for the district of 350 dwellings each year for the period 2011 to 2031, a total of 7,000 new homes. This is what has also been agreed as part of the Memorandum of Understanding which has been agreed with all of the Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities.

2.2 Notwithstanding the Memorandum of Understanding, it is considered that at this time it would be prudent to apply a flexibility allowance to the SHMA figures. A flexibility allowance is suggested to allow for the possible non-delivery of sites which are currently in the pipeline and which may come to light as part of ongoing evidence gathering.

2.3 In considering what a suitable flexibility allowance might be, it is suggested that this should as a minimum be 20% of the overall SHMA requirement of 7,000 dwellings. The figure of 20% reflects the NPPF which requires a 20% additional provision where a local authority has a track record of persistent under-delivery. However, the SHMA considered a number of scenarios with the highest figure for the district being 478 dwellings each year. This is 37% higher than the figure preferred by the SHMA.

2.4 On balance it is suggested that the most prudent approach would be to assume a flexibility allowance of 30%, slightly below the maximum level of housing suggested in the SHMA; i.e. 2,100 dwellings or a total of 9,100.

2.5 It should be noted that such a flexibility allowance is for planning and testing purposes at this stage only to enable officers to make progress in drafting the Local Plan and there will be an opportunity at a later date to decide the actual provision to go into the plan in the light of the information at that time.

2.6 Such information will include the provisions of other strategies. As is noted in the SHMA, the SHMA figures “*provide a ‘policy off’ assessment of housing need. In translating this into housing targets in development plans, the commissioning local authorities will need to consider whether there is a case for adjusting the level of housing provision to align with their evidence regarding local economic growth potential and to address where relevant any unmet needs from adjoining authorities*”.

2.7 Furthermore, paragraph 158, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that local planning authorities should ensure that their assessments of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals.

- 2.8 In terms of economic growth potential, Members will be aware that the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) has produced a Strategic Economic Plan which was principally prepared as a bidding document for funding from government. It is understood that this may be subject to a review which will potentially provide different economic projections. In addition, the Council is currently consulting on a Local Growth Plan.
- 2.9 It has become apparent from recent reports in the planning press that whilst documents such as the Strategic Economic Plan were primarily intended to assist with bidding for government funding, Planning Inspector's are attaching some weight to their statements about future economic growth when considering what is the appropriate level of housing that should be provided for as part of Local Plans.
- 2.10 in view of the above figures for the Local Plan may, therefore, need to be adjusted to reflect any changes in the Strategic Economic Plan or Local Growth Plan.
- 2.11 When a requirement for employment land has been established it is considered that it would also be prudent to build in a flexibility allowance to the employment land requirement as well.
- 2.12 It should be noted that the issue of housing and employment numbers should not be approached with such a degree of exactitude as to be unreasonable (i.e. not one dwelling more than the requirement), instead there will be a need to be flexible to ensure proper planning (for example, when allocating sites that any boundaries are logical rather than being determined arbitrarily to provide the exact numbers required).

### **3.0 SETTLEMENT HIERACHY**

- 3.1 As noted above as part of the SA/SEA process it is necessary to consider all reasonable alternative policy options. This does not mean all options, but only those which can be considered to be reasonable.
- 3.2 The following sections consider what these options might be and starts with some context from the now withdrawn Core Strategy.

#### What did the Core Strategy propose?

- 3.3 In the now withdrawn Core Strategy the following settlement hierarchy was proposed (Policy CS7):
- Coalville Urban Area – where most new housing and employment would be located;
  - Rural Centres: Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham – where most of the remaining housing and employment would be located;
  - Sustainable Villages (defined as those which had access to five of eight essential services) – where small scale housing and employment development would be allowed ;



- Rural Villages – where development would be restricted to that to meet a local need and
- Countryside

3.4 The Core Strategy was prepared having regard to the provisions of the then Regional Plan which included a requirement for “most” new development to be directed to the Coalville area. As the Regional Plan has now been revoked there is no longer a need to do this.

What are the options?

3.5 In considering reasonable alternatives it is also necessary to have regard to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) when considering the most appropriate policy approach to take in a local plan. Amongst the 12 principles set out in the NPPF is that planning should:

- *“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”.*
- *“actively manage patterns of growth to make the make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable”.*

3.6 The following settlements have the best range of services and facilities and/or serve a hinterland which suggests that these settlements should be to towards the top of any settlement hierarchy (in alphabetical order);

- Ashby de la Zouch;
- Castle Donington;
- Coalville urban area
- Ibstock;
- Kegworth and
- Measham

3.7 In terms of the remaining settlements, there are differences in respect of the level of services and facilities available within different settlements. For example, some may have a primary school but no shop; some may have employment but no public transport. It is considered that having regard to the provisions of the NPPF as outlined above, it remains appropriate and reasonable to distinguish between settlements in terms of their sustainability credentials. Further work will need to be undertaken to agree this, but for the purposes of this report the terminology used in the Core Strategy (i.e. sustainable villages, rural villages etc) will be used.

3.8 Notwithstanding the fact that the Regional Plan with its significant emphasis upon directing development to the Coalville area (identified as a Sub Regional Centre) has been revoked, it remains the case that the Coalville Urban Area (including Hugglescote, Thringstone and Whitwick) is the largest settlement within the district (population as at 2011 Census was

estimated to be 36,800) and that it has the most comprehensive range of services and facilities.

- 3.9 It is considered, therefore, that any settlement hierarchy should recognise this and accordingly should designate the Coalville Urban Area as the Principal Town to which 'the largest amount of development' should be directed. Note that this is not the same as the former Regional Plan which referred to 'most' development (implying at least 50% of all development). The exact amount of development would need to be determined once the overall settlement hierarchy is agreed.
- 3.10 Beneath the Principal Town there could be Rural Centres (as in the Core Strategy) or Main Towns and then Rural Centres. The approach in the Core Strategy of having just Rural Centres reflected the then Regional Plan which did not distinguish between settlements outside of the Sub Regional Centres such as Coalville. Some consultation responses to the Core Strategy had suggested that either Ashby and/or Castle Donington should be recognised as being different to the other Rural Centres due their size and/or range of services and facilities available.
- 3.11 There is merit in considering such options as part of the Local Plan. Ashby is significantly larger in population terms (12,380 as at the 2011 Census) than any of the other settlements outside of the Coalville Urban Area and also has an extensive range of services and facilities. One option, therefore, could be to identify Ashby as a Main Town on its own.
- 3.12 Whilst Castle Donington does not have as large a population as Ashby (6,350 as at the 2011 Census), it does have a good range of services and facilities (with the possible exception of secondary education which currently only goes to age 14) but, as with Ashby, it provides a significant number of employment opportunities within and close to it. However, there are also some significant infrastructure issues, such as highways, which need to be addressed. Therefore, it too could be identified as a Main Town alongside (rather than instead of) Ashby although it has to be recognised that there is no scope for additional development beyond what the Council has already resolved to approve.
- 3.13 None of the other larger settlements are so populous or have such an extensive range of services and facilities that they could be considered as Main Towns.
- 3.14 Beneath Main Towns and/or Rural Centres there could then be sustainable villages and rural villages.
- 3.15 Whatever hierarchy is chosen, the potential for growth would be greater in a settlement which is in a higher order settlement than a settlement beneath it, although the scale of any growth may differ from another settlement in the same category.
- 3.16 It is also appropriate to have regard to the scale and distribution of new housing which has already been permitted or resolved to be approved, as any development strategy will need to be deliverable. Table 1 below sets out these figures. It should be noted that the completions cover the period to 31 March 2014, whilst those for permissions and resolutions are up to 30 September 2014. It should be noted that the resolution for the development of 450 dwellings at Measham Waterside is not included in the figures due the uncertainty associated with the delivery of the site as a result of HS2.

**Table 1 – housing provision**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Completions 2011-14</b>	<b>Planning permissions</b>	<b>Resolution to grant planning permission</b>	<b>Total</b>
Coalville	249	1,320	922	2,491
Ashby	112	823	145	1,080
Castle Donington	153	147	895	1,195
Ibstock	181	369	142	692
Kegworth	131	183	181	495
Measham	52	85	20	157
Rest of District	152	525	218	945
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>3,452</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>7,055</b>

3.17 Having regard to the above factors the following two options are presented for further consideration at this time.

<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>
Coalville (Principal Town)	Coalville (Principal Town)
Ashby/Castle Donington/Ibstock/Kegworth/Measham (Rural Centres)	Ashby/Castle Donington (Main Towns)
Sustainable Villages	Ibstock/Kegworth/Measham (Rural Centres)
Rural Villages	Sustainable Villages
	Rural Villages

3.18 A further option which officers have considered is that of a new Settlement. However, it is not clear that there would be sufficient development required to justify a new settlement. In addition, this option is not being promoted by any landowner/developer and so at this time deliverability of such an option within the plan period is considered to be unlikely. Thus this option is not considered to be a reasonable option and is not taken any further forward.

Consideration of Options

3.19 Each of these options is considered below. It should be noted that this consideration is based on a planning judgement and that all the options would also need to be considered assessed against the SA/SEA.

Option A

3.20 This option represents a continuation of that proposed as part of the withdrawn Core Strategy. It recognises the fact that Coalville is the largest settlement in the district with the greatest range of services and facilities. It also recognises that the Rural Centres do perform a different role to other settlements across the district. However, it can be argued that it fails to adequately reflect the role and function that some of the other larger settlements outside of Coalville play in meeting the needs of local communities whilst also

over emphasising Coalville's role and function. The housing provision figures in Table 1 illustrate this.

### Option B

- 3.21 This option recognises the important role played by Coalville, but also recognises that Ashby and Castle Donington are different to the other larger settlements outside Coalville in terms of population size (Ashby has the second highest population after the Coalville Urban Area whilst Castle Donington is the third largest in population terms) and the range of services and facilities available. For example, the retail capacity study demonstrates that Ashby has a strong town centre with a hinterland that covers a large part of the south-west of the district whilst Castle Donington provides significant employment within and close by which draws people from a wide area that goes beyond the district.
- 3.22 As with option A this option recognises that the Rural Centres perform a different role to other settlements.
- 3.23 Of the two options, it is considered that option B more accurately reflects reality than option A, for example as illustrated in respect of the current distribution of housing as set out in Table 1 and so it is suggested that this should be, subject to the outcome of any assessment as part of the SA/SEA, the settlement hierarchy in the Local Plan.

### What might the settlement hierarchy look like in terms of scale of growth?

- 3.24 Having regard to section 2 of this report where it was concluded that a 20% flexibility allowance should be made and working on the basis of option B, table 2 below sets out (for illustrative purposes) possible housing growth ranges for each of the settlement categories. The minimum figure is the rounded total in Table 1 whilst the maximum figure allows for the additional 20% referred to above and has had regard to the distribution of existing planning permissions and resolutions (as set out in Table 1) and the potential scope for development having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 3.25 It will be noted that no range is presented for Castle Donington because, as already noted, there is no scope for additional development beyond what the Council has already resolved to approve.
- 3.26 It should be stressed that at this time these figures, particularly the maximum figures have no status and that Members are not being asked to agree these figures which are for testing and planning purposes only.

**Table 2 – possible distribution of housing**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Coalville	2,500	3,200
Ashby	1,100	1,350
Castle Donington	1,200	1,200
Ibstock	700	800
Kegworth	500	650
Measham	150	600
Rest of District	950	1,300
Total	7,100	9,100

#### **4.0 ALLOCATION OF SITES – GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

4.1 In considering the identification of the most appropriate allocations it will be necessary to have regard to a range of factors, including:

- What existing commitments there are and how these are distributed;
- Deliverability;
- In respect of housing land, the ability to contribute towards maintaining a 5-year supply of housing land;
- How allocations might contribute towards other possible plan objectives;
- Normal planning considerations including visual impact, highways etc;

4.2 All potential allocations will need also to be subject to SA/SEA as referred to earlier in this report.

4.3 It would also be appropriate to consider the allocation of a site (or sites) which numerically are more than required but which would then a) allow some flexibility to bring forward a development in the event that build rates elsewhere do not meet expectations and b) allow for proper long-term planning of infrastructure rather than incremental provision.

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**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2014**

Title of report	<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>
Contacts	<p>Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 <a href="mailto:trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Director of Services 01530 454555 <a href="mailto:steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Planning Policy Team Manager 01530 454677 <a href="mailto:ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p>
Purpose of report	To advise members of the intention to include a policy in the Local Plan in respect of affordable housing and to outline what matters such a policy might include.
Council Priorities	<p>These are taken from the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	None
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	The National Planning Policy Framework requires that the full objectively assessed need for affordable and market housing be met. A policy in respect of affordable housing is required to ensure that the Council is complying with this requirement.
Equalities Impact Assessment	None
Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	Not applicable

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Consultees	Local Plan Project Board
Background papers	National Planning Policy Framework which can be found at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building">www.gov.uk/government/publications?topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</a>  Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment which can be found at <a href="http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/shma_5_year_housing_land_supply">www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/shma_5_year_housing_land_supply</a>
Recommendations	<b>THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES:</b>  <b>(I) THE NEED TO INCLUDE A POLICY IN THE LOCAL PLAN IN RESPECT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING; AND</b> <b>(II) NOTES AND COMMENTS ON THE POSSIBLE CONTENTS OF SUCH A POLICY AS OUTLINED IN THE REPORT</b>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) NPPF requires that we meet “the *full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework...*”.
- 1.2 It also requires that where a need for affordable housing has been identified then policies should be set to meet this need on-site “*unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified*”. Policies for affordable housing “*should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time*”.
- 1.3 Therefore, a key issue for the new Local Plan to address is that of the provision of affordable housing.
- 1.4 As with all of the policies in the Local Plan, it will be necessary for any policies in respect of affordable housing to be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) to demonstrate what account has been taken of sustainability issues in preparing the plan and to show what the likely impacts of the plan will be in sustainability terms. The SA/SEA identifies a number of objectives covering a wide range of economic, environmental and social issues against which the sustainability credentials of the local Plan can be assessed. As part of the SA/SEA process it is



necessary to consider all reasonable alternative options when preparing policies and strategies.

- 1.5 In addition to SA/SEA, the Local Plan needs to be subject to viability testing in order to ensure that the various policies and proposals, particularly those which place a cost upon a development (such as affordable housing), would not make development unviable. Such testing can only take place when all of the policies for the Local Plan have been drafted.
- 1.6 It will be necessary to develop and test, against both the SA/SEA and viability, matters such as the targets and thresholds for affordable housing. However, identifying any specific figures at this time would not be appropriate in view of the lack of certainty and therefore, this report does not set out any specific details but sets out a framework for possible policies.
- 1.7 It should be appreciated that whilst the planning system has an important role to play in securing the provision of affordable housing, primarily as part of general housing development, it is just one means of doing so. The Council can assist with the provision of affordable housing through a variety of roles. For example, making sites available to housing associations for them to develop specifically for affordable housing; providing financial support to help realise developments as well as the potential for the Council itself to build new affordable housing.

## **2.0 WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING?**

- 2.1 Any policy needs to be based on robust evidence. In respect of affordable housing this was covered as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This follows the requirement in the NPPF to “*Address the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes*”.
- 2.2 The SHMA identified that in North West Leicestershire the estimated level of annual need for affordable housing for the period 2011-2031 was 212 dwellings. To put this in context, the highest overall housing requirement suggested in the SHMA up to 2031 was 350 dwellings each year. The affordable housing need equates to about 60% of the overall housing need, although it should be noted that based on the advice of G L Hearn (the SHMA authors) the affordable housing figure is not a subset of the overall requirement figure.
- 2.3 In assessing the need for affordable housing the SHMA identifies that need can either be newly arising (from those households who will form over the period being assessed or from existing households falling into housing need) as well as existing households already in need. The largest amount of need is generated from newly arising households.
- 2.4 In considering affordability the SHMA had regard to information about income levels and how these compared to house prices and rents. Amongst its findings in respect of North West Leicestershire were:
  - Median house prices were about £140,000;
  - Median monthly private rental was about £520;

- Ratio of income to house prices was between 5.67 (median house prices) and 6.27 (lower quartile house prices);
- Indicative income level to required afford lower quartile purchase price was £34,300 and lower quartile rent £19,000;
- Mean income was £32,464 and ;
- Median income £24,692

2.5 The key point to note is that both the mean and median income levels were below that required to be able to purchase a property, although they were above the level required to rent.

2.6 To provide some form of context as to who may be in need of affordable housing, based on information obtained from the NHS careers website, a fully qualified nurse could be expected to earn up to about £28,000, whilst those with some form of specialism or responsibility for others could earn up to about £34,500. For a newly qualified teacher the Department for Education reports that salaries would be in the range of about £22, 500 up to £32,200 whilst the starting salary for a police constable is reported as being about £23,300 to £26,000.

### **3.0 WHAT MIGHT A POLICY ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCLUDE?**

3.1 As noted already it is not proposed to include any specific details at this stage, but instead to provide a framework for future policy development and an indication of possible policy approaches.

Any policy on affordable housing will need to include details in respect of:

- Targets and thresholds
- Split between different tenure types;
- Dwellings sizes required and
- Preference for nature of provision

#### **Targets and thresholds**

3.2 For clarification, a target would be the amount of affordable housing sought on individual sites (for example 20% of all development on a particular site) whilst the threshold would establish the number of dwellings above which affordable housing would be sought. These could be either the same across the district or varied. The advantages and disadvantages to these approaches are considered below.

#### Same target and threshold across the district

##### Advantages

- Simple to understand, fixed policy position district-wide;
- Reduced negotiations on individual schemes;
- Potential for developers to build in viability into their costing as there would be a fixed policy position

#### Disadvantages

- Dependant on the target, locations where there is the potential for larger housing developments would also be a larger proportion of affordable housing - this could result in an uneven distribution of affordable housing across the district;
- Dependant on the threshold there could be a reliance on exceptions sites being developed for affordable housing in the more rural areas;
- Lacks flexibility

#### Varied targets and thresholds across the district

#### Advantages

- Would be the same kind of policy structure as there is currently;
- Would allow for affordable housing to be delivered more evenly – i.e. threshold could be tailored to allow more affordable housing where there are smaller development sites;
- Could take more account of viability – targets and thresholds could reflect land values across the district;
- Provides more flexibility in terms of how it is applied

#### Disadvantages

- Likely to increase the time taken for negotiations on individual proposals;
- Could result in developers seeking lower provision as this is considered acceptable elsewhere.

3.3 On balance it is considered that having varied targets and thresholds would be the most appropriate approach as it provides greater flexibility and would more accurately reflect the different circumstances which exist across the district from a housing market perspective.

3.4 In terms of a target, based on the information from the SHMA this could be up to 60%. However, such a level of provision would raise significant issues in respect of both viability and deliverability. Therefore, any target will be significantly less than 60%.

3.5 In terms of thresholds, the NPPF does not provide any guidance on this, but the Government has announced that it will consult on proposals to limit the threshold of developments above which affordable housing (and other infrastructure) can be sought to developments of 10 or more dwellings only. If this proposal is confirmed then the options available to the Council will be restricted accordingly. This matter will be kept under review in developing policies.

#### **Split between tenure types**

3.6 The SHMA identifies that in North West Leicestershire 70% of those households who cannot afford market housing can only afford social rent or below; 11.9% can afford between social rent and 80% market rent and 18.1% can afford 80% market rent.

3.7 The SHMA suggests that this information should be used alongside any local evidence to determine an appropriate tenure split. This matter is currently being looked in to.

3.8 It will also be necessary to consider what possible role the Council may have to play in directly providing new housing itself, rather than relying upon the private sector or the register providers.

#### **Dwellings sizes required**

3.9 The SHMA provides guidance in respect of the possible mix of affordable housing that will be needed.

- 1 bed – 30-35%
- 2 bed – 35-40%
- 3 bed – 20-25%
- 4+ bed – 5-10%

3.10 It goes on to suggest that this evidence should be used alongside any local evidence to determine an appropriate mix of dwellings sizes.

3.11 This matter is currently being looked in to alongside work in respect of tenure as referred to above.

#### **Preference for nature of provision**

3.12 As noted the NPPF advises that provision for affordable housing should normally be made on-site unless off-site can be justified. In the absence of any evidence to suggest otherwise it is considered that this should be the approach taken in any policy on affordable housing in the Local Plan.

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL****LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2014**

Title of report	<b>STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b>
Contacts	<p>Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 <a href="mailto:trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Director of Services 01530 454555 <a href="mailto:steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Planning Policy Team Manager 01530 454677 <a href="mailto:ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk">ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</a></p>
Purpose of report	To outline for members the responses to the recent consultation in respect of a new Statement of Community Involvement.
Council Priorities	<p>These are taken from the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The production of a new Statement of Community Involvement will be met from within existing staff and financial resources.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A failure to engage effectively and constructively in the preparation of the Local Plan and in determining planning applications could leave the Council vulnerable to challenge. Having an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement will help to minimise this risk.
Equalities Impact Assessment	The Statement of Community Involvement will need to be subject to an equalities impact assessment.
Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	Not applicable.

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	Consultation responses, copies of which are held by the Planning Policy Team in room 102.
Recommendations	<p><b>THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES:</b></p> <p><b>(I) THE RESPONSE TO THE RECENT CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT; AND</b></p> <p><b>(II) THAT A NEW STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED BY CABINET AT ITS MEETING ON 9 DECEMBER 2014</b></p>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members will recall that at the 29 April 2014 meeting of the Advisory committee a report was considered in respect of the need to prepare a new Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- 1.2 The purpose of the SCI is to set out how the Council will involve the local community, businesses, key organisations and others in preparing its Local Plans, other important planning documents and in processing planning applications.
- 1.3 The Advisory Committee agreed that:
- a) The Council prepare a new Statement of Community Involvement; and
  - b) A further report on the possible content of the new Statement of Community Involvement be brought to a meeting of this Advisory Committee
- 1.4 A further report to the Advisory Committee of 3 June 2014 noted that it was proposed to undertake a consultation in respect of the new Local plan and the SCI in the summer of 2014.

## 2.0 CONSULTATION ON STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 2.1 Consultation on the Local Plan and the SCI was undertaken between 20 June and 19 September 2014.

- 2.2 As part of the consultation key stakeholders were notified of the Council's intention to prepare a new SCI and views were sought on a range of matters. In addition, a short consultation document (Appendix B) was placed on the Council's website and the consultation was promoted as widely as possible. Leaflets and posters were distributed via the Community Focus Team and in local libraries. In addition, the consultation was widely promoted on the NWL DC website and through social media.
- 2.3 Officers also attended three events to promote the Local Plan and the SCI, these were:
- Heart of the Forest Festival (Measham- Leisure Centre grounds) 21 June 2014
  - Picnic in the Park (Coalville- Coalville Park) 29 June 2014
  - Music in the Park (Castle Donington- Spital Park) Sunday 6 July 2014
- 2.4 A key aspect of the consultation in respect of the SCI was to try and gain a better understanding of how individuals wanted to engage in the planning process, both in terms of the Local Plan but also the determination of planning applications. The consultation document referred to above set out 12 specific questions, which were aimed at different sections of the community including residents, businesses and town and parish councils.
- 2.5 A total of 9 responses were received in respect of the SCI part of the consultation:
- 4 Parish Councils,
  - 3 agencies and bodies and
  - 2 members of the public.
- 2.6 A summary of the responses to each of the 12 questions set out in the consultation document is attached at Appendix A to this report.

### **3.0 NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's constitution a new SCI will need to be approved by the Council's Cabinet. It is proposed that this will be done at the Cabinet meeting of 9 December 2014.
- 3.2 A revised SCI has not yet been drafted, but attached at Appendix C of this report is the existing SCI. The actual structure and layout of the document will be changed as considered necessary. In addition, the other changes that will be considered include:
- Updates to take account of changes in legislation, regulations and national policies (for example, by referring to Local Plans rather than Local Development Frameworks, revocation of the Regional Plan, reference to Neighbourhood Plans) as well as any local policy changes (for example Council priorities);
  - Reference to how social media will be utilised to enhance consultation and engagement particularly now that the Council no longer publishes the Vision magazine as a means of communication with local communities. Since the existing SCI was adopted there have been significant developments in the field of social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter etc) which provides a different way of communicating and engaging with people. The SCI will need to be consistent with the corporate approach on this matter. Where documents will be made available having regard to

the suggestions made in response to the recent consultation. The current SCI only refers to making documents available at the Council offices and other suitable places. It is considered that it would be helpful to be more specific about the type of places where documents will be available; and

- How the Council will engage in respect of consultation on planning applications, including the use of online consultation which was not available at the time the SCI was adopted and the use of e-consultation with Parish and Town Councils.

3.3 Once the SCI is adopted it will provide the framework which will be used for undertaking all future consultations on planning matters



## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

### LOCAL PLAN GENERAL

1. Are you aware of any organisations which may represent a specific interest that should be consulted?
  - 3 responses suggesting The Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds, Ashby Branch Labour Party and Parish Councils

### RESIDENTS

2. Where else could we make hard copies of documents available?
  - 3 responses suggesting a number of locations including Ashby Town Council offices, Tesco Supermarket Ashby, Leisure Centres, Parish Council Offices and Post Offices
3. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others or amendments
  - 3 responses suggesting informative articles in local newspapers, more road shows (for example outside Tesco's in Measham), a clear list of all meetings and information about ward member details should be available on website (easily accessible and not waded through lots of pages on the internet) and in paper form.
4. How would you like to be involved in plan making?
  - 2 responses received which identified taking part in Neighbourhood Plan development, responding to consultations, attending public meetings and through the Parish Council
5. What methods of engagements do you think work best?
  - 2 responses received, one replying that not sure so suggest all methods are used and one which favoured Face to Face meetings

### TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS

6. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement?. Please suggest others or amendments
  - 2 responses agreed which suggested that the Parish Liaison meetings be increased to 4 times a year with specific meetings around the Local Plan added if required, all email correspondence to be acknowledged and responded to, a list of meetings and Ward Member details should be easily accessible on the website and

Parish Clerks to be advised of Local Plan Advisory Meetings and a copy of agenda and minutes provided.

7. How would you/your organisation like to be involved in plan making?

- 2 responses received which identified taking more notice of Parish/Town Councils when decisions are made, Parish Council's being fully engaged at all levels and through all stages and all information to be sent to Parish Council and in turn will endeavour to attend all meetings, and respond to all relevant parts of the consultation process.

8. What methods of engaging do you think work best?

- 2 responses received which favoured face to face meetings and direct and regular updates from meetings held at the District Council for example, LPAC, removing reliance of updates from ward members or having to trawl website to find information.

## **BUSINESSES**

9. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?

- 2 responses received one of which supported the suggested approaches and the other stating that it was good to see meetings taking place in the business sector.

10. How would you /your organisation like to be involved in plan making?

- 1 response received which suggested by inviting businesses to meetings

11. What methods of engagement do you think work best?

- 1 response received suggesting fact to face meetings

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

12. Are the consultation methods [suggested] appropriate? Please suggest other ways in which you could be notified of planning applications

- 3 responses received which suggested that whilst the methods were appropriate they could be improved, inform individuals automatically by email of all new planning applications in an area, use parish councils more as the people who live in the community and listen more appropriately to their views when voiced and site notices to be more visible to residents. There was also a comment on the current Pilot scheme for e-consultation with Parish Councils, and paperless planning applications, which it was suggested was not working and makes commenting on the planning applications very difficult. It would suggest that the original consultation methods be re-instated.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

- The Coal Authority is a specific consultation body which must be consulted on development plans.
- The Local Planning Authority has defined responsibilities regarding Neighbourhood Development Plans which should be set out in the SCI. Many SCIs now refer to the obligations set out for consultation in the 2012 Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulations. Under Schedule 1 this lists the prescribed consultation bodies, which include The Coal Authority.
- not all parish councils have offices at which plans can be viewed
- When responses from statutory consultees are received, the Council should post these immediately on their website along with the application details.
- Viability appraisals are critical in the determination of planning applications and there will be occasions when the public interest is such that it is reasonable and appropriate to make the details of viability appraisals generally available for public scrutiny. Therefore NWLDC must warn developers that any viability appraisal may be placed in the public domain, which is something, addressed in the Environmental Information Regulations.

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# North West Leicestershire STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

## CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

June 2014



## Statement of Community Involvement

As Local Planning Authority, North West Leicestershire District Council has to make many important decisions about where new development should go. This is done through the planning system. Consultation with local communities is an important part of this. To help make sure that our consultations are appropriate we have to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Before considering the SCI it is useful to outline how the planning system works.

### What is planning?

.....  
The purpose of the planning system in the UK is to manage the use and development of land and buildings. It is how we as a society strike a balance between allowing development of land and buildings to support economic development, and provide the things we need like homes, jobs, shops and transport whilst conserving our heritage and the environment.

The planning system has two main parts to it:

- Plan making and
- Managing development.

### Plan Making

The purpose of plan making is to set out how an area will develop over time and to provide a guide to future development. The main document is the Local Plan, but other documents can also be produced some of which are outlined below.

#### The Local Plan

The Local Plan will set out the planning strategy, policies and proposals for the district; it is intended to do a number of things:

- It will provide a vision for the future of the area, based on evidence of what is needed and what makes the local area distinctive
- It will provide priorities and policies to guide future development,
- It will allocate land for housing, employment, retail and other uses

The Local Plan will be the main consideration in determining planning applications.

## **Supplementary Planning Documents**

In addition to the Local Plan the council can produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SPDs supplement policies within the Local Plan and can be area or topic based. For example, the council has existing SPDs on affordable housing and retail. Although SPDs do not have the same status as the Local Plan they can be a material consideration when making planning decisions.

## **Neighbourhood Plans**

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by communities themselves with the support of the Council. Neighbourhood planning can be taken forward by two types of body - town and parish councils or neighbourhood forums. Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood Plans can allocate land or policies for the development of land in a neighbourhood if the majority of voters in the neighbourhood give approval. These plans must be in conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan and have regard to national planning policy.

Some neighbourhoods already have plans, often called Parish Plans. Neighbourhood Plans are different as from April 2012 they became part of the legal planning framework. This means that if they are agreed, planning decisions for that area have to be made in line with what they say, as well as the Local Plan for the area.

*Please note that as Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by local communities they are not included as part of the SCI.*

## **Managing Development**

The management of development is done through the determination of planning applications.

### **Planning Applications**

Most new development, building work and how land and buildings are used, are all managed through the process of planning permission. This is called development control or development management.

We receive about 1,000 planning applications per year which range from householder extensions and minor applications to large-scale proposals including new housing, employment, retail and other development. The Local Plan is the most important consideration in deciding planning applications and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan (i.e. the Local Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **What is the role of Councillors in the planning system?**

Elected members have an extremely important role to play in the planning process, both as decision makers and as somebody who will represent the views of local people. Before the Local Plan can be submitted for independent examination it must be agreed by a meeting of all councillors. The Planning Committee is required to determine planning applications. Although not all councillors are members of the Planning Committee they can attend meetings and make representations on behalf of local people.

Councillors will help you to understand the planning process and assist you to respond to consultations on the Local Plan or planning applications. They will also communicate your views to officers and other councillors so as to ensure that all views are taken in to account when determining how the council should proceed.

You can discuss any concerns or views you have with a councillor over the telephone or by meeting them in person. Councillors have regular surgeries which provide an opportunity for any ward resident to go and talk their councillor face to face. If you cannot attend a surgery then councillors will try and meet with you separately. You can also write to councillors using either e-mail or a letter.

Information about which councillors represent which areas together information about how you can contact them can be found on the district council's website at: [www.nwleics.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/councillors)

## **How can I be involved in planning?**

.....  
For the plans that we prepare and the planning applications that are submitted to us to decide, we must consult and engage with people and organisations in making our decisions.

Local Plans have to be widely consulted on; there is a formal process of consultation and examination that all Local Plans need to go through, with fixed deadlines. There are many stages in the preparation of a Local Plan and there are different opportunities to have your say throughout.

In terms of planning applications, for some large proposals developers will consult with residents and affected groups before making an application to the local authority (from April 2012 developers have been required to do this by law for certain applications). Once any planning application has been received and recorded, we take steps to publicise it, consult and invite comments.

To set out how and when we will consult and engage with stakeholders, organisations, businesses and residents on plans and planning applications we are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



## What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

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Local authorities are required by law to publish a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out how the council intends to involve the community in plan making and in deciding planning applications.

Our latest SCI was adopted in October 2006. Since then there have been many changes, in both legislation and advances in technology providing us with more ways to engage through digital media.

We therefore need to prepare a new SCI to provide a framework for community engagement which is up to date, flexible, deliverable and cost-effective.

Once the new SCI is adopted, the Council will follow the procedures for consultation and engagement set out in the document. This will be tested by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Local Plan; failure to consult in accordance with the SCI would result in an unsound plan.

The SCI should be a clear statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved and how we intend to meet or exceed the minimum requirements set out in the regulations for both plan making and the consideration of planning applications.

## What are we required to do?

---

### Local Plan

There are regulations on who the council must consult and minimum legal requirements concerning how we consult on the Local Plan.

We must consult with the following:

- 'Specific consultation bodies' which includes a range of bodies with responsibilities for the environment, infrastructure, mining and we must also consult neighbouring authorities. Consultation with this latter group is more tightly specified, and is also part of the Duty to Cooperate placed on local authorities.
- 'General consultation bodies'. These are voluntary groups, groups representing different ethnic, national, or faith groups, businesses in the area, and groups representing the interests of local disabled people. The council can decide which organisations within these general categories it thinks are appropriate to consult.

**1. Are you aware of any organisations which may represent a specific interest that should be consulted?**

The council is also required to make documents available for inspection during any consultation at defined locations, which should include:

- At the Council Offices, Coalville, and at other such places within the district that we consider appropriate (documents to be available during normal opening hours), and
- On the Council's web site. (We have an online response system that we could use called Citizen Space, this will allow us to receive online responses to our consultations).

We have gone further to try and enable interested parties or individuals to be engaged in any consultations we undertake by setting up a database of contacts. You can request to be added to our database if you wish to be notified of consultations.

### **Planning Applications**

Planning legislation sets out a minimum standard of publicity and notification of applications, depending on the nature of the application. More complex and contentious applications may require additional consultation arrangements depending on the nature of the particular proposal.

Legislation requires that for all major applications the application must be publicised either by:

- A site notice displayed in at least one place on or near the development site for at least 21 days, or,
- Serving notice on adjoining owners or occupiers, and,
- Advertisement in a local newspaper

### **How could I be consulted?**

.....  
Consultation methods and processes for engagement need to be as relevant and effective as possible based on the different stages of the plan-making process and the nature of planning applications.

In general we want to increase our use of electronic communication, online representations and social media as much as possible as these are easier and more efficient ways of communicating. For those that find it difficult to access electronic communication we will continue to make hard copies of consultation documents available. Where a person does not have an email address, letters shall be sent to

them informing them of the consultation and written representations will be welcomed.

Set out below are some suggested additional ways in which we could engage and consult with local people in addition to what we are required to do.

## **Local Plan – how might we consult you and keep you up to date:**

.....

### **Residents:**

Documents will be made available on the Council’s website and at the Council Offices, Coalville. In addition documents will also be made available at the public libraries within the District during their normal opening hours.

### ***2. Where else could we make hard copies of documents available?***

- We will continue to use our database to which people’s contacts details can be added to to ensure they are informed of any consultations
- Inform people via email or letters of any consultations we are undertaking and/or progress on the Local Plan
- Use social media to let you know of consultations or other important news, for example when a report is to be considered by the council
- Place information in local/community newsletters (e.g. Ashby Life)
- Place information on local websites (e.g Leicestershire Villages/AboutMyArea)
- Use the council’s e-newsletter (which will replace Vision magazine)
- Provide information at Community Events (such as Heart of the Forest Festival and Picnic in the Park)
- Information placed on community notice boards

### ***3. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?***

### ***4. How would you like to be involved in plan making?***

### ***5. What methods of engagement do you think work best?***

### **Town/Parish Councils:**

- Emails/letters to inform you of consultations we are undertaking
- Regular emails to inform you of progress on the Local Plan

- Provide information at Parish Liaison Meetings
- Hold workshops with parishes to engage with Parish Council members

**6. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?**

**7. How would you / your organisation like to be involved in plan making?**

**8. What methods of engagement do you think work best?**

**Businesses:**

- Emails/letters to inform you of consultations we are under-taking
- Regular emails to inform you of progress on the Local Plan
- Utilise the quarterly Business Focus Newsletter to provide information/updates
- Use social media to inform you of a consultation
- Add your details to our database
- Provide information via the council's e-newsletter (which will replace Vision magazine)
- Meetings held with the business sector

**9. Do you agree with the suggested methods of engagement? Please suggest others, or amendments if you wish?**

**10. How would you / your organisation like to be involved in plan making?**

**11. What methods of engagement do you think work best?**

**Planning Applications – how might we consult you and keep you up to date**

.....  
 For all planning applications:

- Letters are sent to all owners/occupiers of residential properties that immediately adjoin the boundary of the application site
- Site notices are posted where an application is likely to have a wider impact or is in an area (e.g. in the countryside) where there are no immediate neighbours, but there may be public interest in the proposal, or where the proposals would affect the setting of a listed building or conservation area.

In addition the Council's Public Access system for planning applications is available on our web site and can be used to obtain details of current planning applications. This is available by individual property or by weekly list. Plans are also available to view at the Council Offices in Coalville (during normal opening hours).

Plans are sent to Parish Councils\* as part of the consultation exercise and those neighbours notified of applications are advised that they can, by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk, view the plans at the Parish Council offices.

*\*A pilot scheme is currently being undertaken by some Parish and Town Council's whereby planning applications are being sent via e-consultation rather than providing hard copies. If we get several hard copies of major applications one will be sent to the relevant Parish Council, otherwise all applications, minor or major, will be in electronic format. We will consider the success of this pilot scheme.*

### **12. Are these consultation methods appropriate?**

**Please suggest other ways in which you could be notified of planning applications**

## **How can I respond to the Statement of Community Involvement Consultation?**

Before we prepare a our new SCI we would like to invite you to consider how you would like to be involved in planning decisions in the future. We will consider your responses in preparing a new SCI.

The closing date for comments is Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014. All comments must be received before 5.00pm on that day.

The consultation information is available to view and / or download from our website at:

**[www.nwleics.gov.uk/localplanmysay](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/localplanmysay)**

Please e-mail your response to: **[planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)**

Alternatively, you can provide comments via post to the following address: -

**SCI Consultation, Planning Policy, North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville LE67 3FJ**

Hard copies can also be obtained from Main Reception at the District Council offices, and at the public libraries in the District (during their normal opening hours).

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**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

**STATEMENT  
OF  
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Adopted October 2006

EXISTING SCI

This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact the Planning Policy and Regeneration Section on 01530 454771 or e-mail: [planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 As part of the new plan-making system brought in under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the District Council must produce a Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.2 This should set out how the Council intends to engage with and involve the community in producing its new Local Development Framework for North West Leicestershire and in deciding planning applications.
- 1.3 The new system requires:
  - a strong evidence base which is accessible and transparent;
  - the promotion of community engagement and involvement in the planning process – to all sections of the community.
- 1.4 The Government has identified the main benefits of community involvement as:
  - strengthening the evidence base for plans, strategies and planning decisions;
  - community commitment to the future development of an area;
  - promoting regeneration and investment; and
  - fostering ownership and strengthening delivery.
- 1.5 Many elements of the Local Development Framework will require joint working between local planning authorities, local communities and stakeholders. It is hoped that involving communities at an early stage in plan-making will help to resolve otherwise contentious issues, thereby avoiding the need for the independent Examinations to be lengthy and costly.
- 1.6 For community involvement to be successful it must involve an inclusive approach based on the differing needs of the various parts of the community. The Council therefore wishes to use the most effective means to enable people to be informed and to contribute throughout the plan-making process.
- 1.7 A glossary of the various terms used in the new plan-making system is appended to this Statement.

## **THE COUNCIL'S PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING**

The key principles which will guide the Council's commitment to community involvement in Planning are for a process which:

- is recognised as legitimate and timely leading to outcomes that are in the public interest;
- engages all sections of the community;
- is open, fair, transparent and effective;
- gives ready access to information for all persons and groups at all stages;
- provides real opportunities to:
  - ◇ contribute to identifying issues and objectives;
  - ◇ take an active part in developing the vision, options and proposals;
  - ◇ be consulted and make representations on formal proposals; and
  - ◇ get feedback and be informed about progress and outcomes.

## **2. THE NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN SYSTEM**

- 2.1 The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has brought in a radical change to the plan-making system in England. The new system came into operation on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004 (the “Commencement Date”) and changes the form and scope of the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire.
- 2.2 The Planning Act requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless there are good planning reasons for doing otherwise. The Development Plan remains the cornerstone of the planning system in the United Kingdom.
- 2.3 However, the old system of County Structure Plans and Local Plans, which together made up the Development Plan, has now been abolished.
- 2.4 In their place the future Development Plan for North West Leicestershire will consist of the following documents:
- The Regional Spatial Strategy – produced by the Regional Assembly but issued by the Secretary of State;
  - Development Plan Documents – produced by the District Council (which will be brought together in the District Council’s Local Development Framework (LDF)); and
  - Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents – produced by Leicestershire County Council (to replace the existing Minerals and Waste Local Plans).
- 2.5 As part of the transitional arrangements for the new system existing County Structure Plan and Local Plan policies will be ‘saved’ (ie remain in force) for various periods from Commencement Date.
- 2.6 In the case of the County Structure Plan this ‘saved’ period will be for 3 years from the date of its adoption.
- 2.7 Existing policies contained in the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan will be saved for 3 years from Commencement Date. However, it may be appropriate, depending on circumstances, to save certain Local Plan policies for longer periods. The District Council must seek the Secretary of State’s approval in such cases.
- 2.8 Existing Structure Plan and Local Plan policies will continue to form part of the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire for the periods over which they are saved.

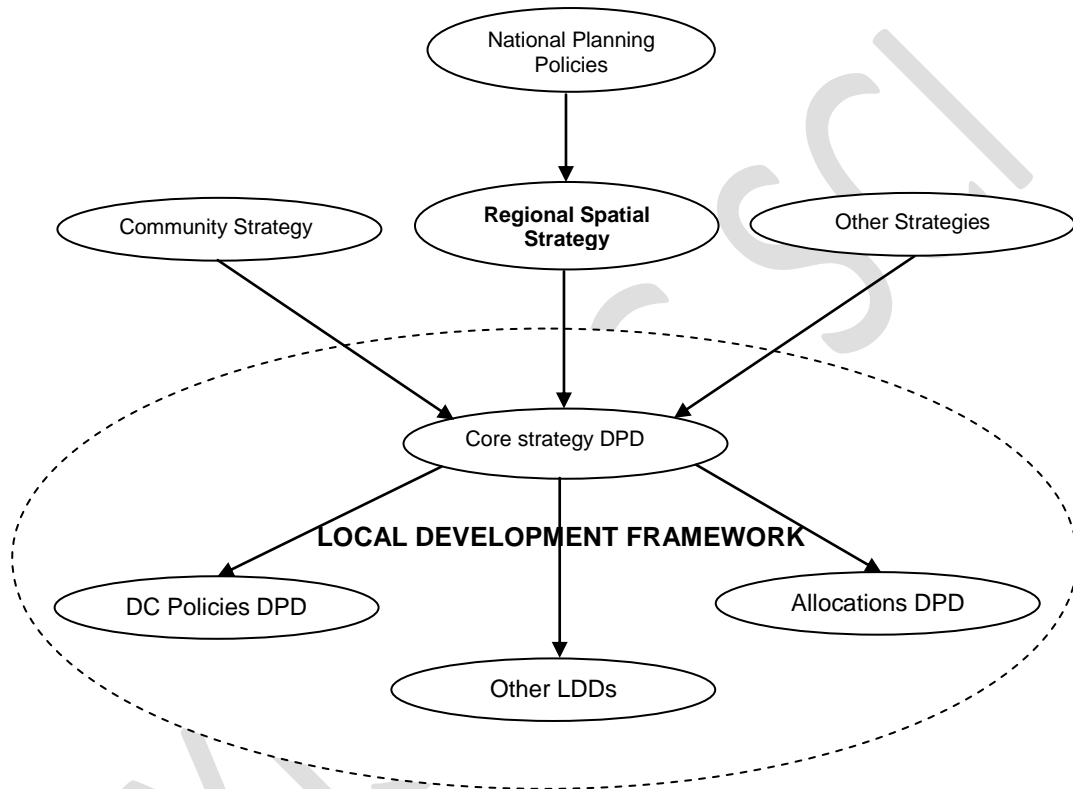
### **The Local Development Framework**

- 2.9 The District Council will be responsible for the preparation of the Local Development Framework for North West Leicestershire.
- 2.10 The Local Development Framework will consist of the following Local Development Documents:
- Development Plan Documents;

- Supplementary Planning Documents; and
- Statement of Community Involvement.

2.11 In addition, existing Local Plan policies will continue to form part of the Local Development Framework for North West Leicestershire for as long as they are saved.

2.12 The following diagram outlines the main components of the Local Development Framework for North West Leicestershire:



### **3. THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- 3.1 The Statement of Community Involvement must set out the standards to be achieved by the Council in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and planning applications.
- 3.2 It should be a clear public statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents and how they will be consulted on planning applications.
- 3.3 Local planning authorities are required to set out in the Statement of Community Involvement how they will meet, or exceed, the minimum requirements set out in the Regulations in the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework and in the consideration of planning applications.
- 3.4 The Statement of Community Involvement is a Local Development Document in its own right and as such is subject to statutory requirements.

#### **4. THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC AIMS AND PRIORITIES**

4.1 The District Council's key strategic aims are to:

- Provide for all of our community, reliable, well performing and value for money services (Quality, Good Value, Accessible Services);
- Work in partnership in making well paid and quality jobs available; building a matching employment base (Local Prosperity and Employment);
- Ensure everyone has equal opportunity to access our services; be socially included through strong communities (Strong, Inclusive Communities);
- Ensure that everyone has access to accommodation they can afford (Enough Decent and Affordable Homes);
- Increase opportunities and participation in healthy activities, working in partnership with others and to address public health issues (Sport and Leisure [Partners in Health]);
- Develop with partners strong and safer communities which will have a reduced level of crime and disorder (Safer Communities); and
- Provide for the community clean and tidy public areas which are enhanced by attractive parks and open spaces (Attractive, Sustainable Environment).

4.2 The following priorities will bring about significant improvements and will be the Council's focus with appropriately aligned resources, ie to:

- Revitalise Coalville and Ashby Town Centres;
- Develop strong, inclusive communities;
- Deliver the outcome of Housing Options Appraisal to meet tenants' expectations;
- Increase the number of people and specific target groups' participation in healthy activities;
- Improve the safety of the community;
- Reduce, recycle and re-use waste; and
- Improve the streetscene.

4.3 The Local Development Framework will provide an opportunity for addressing the spatial aspects of relevant aims and priorities in a cross-cutting manner.

## **5. THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 The key part of the new plan-making system for the District Council is the Local Development Framework. This will replace the Council's adopted Local Plan.
- 5.3 The Council's programme for the preparation of its Local Development Framework is set out in its Local Development Scheme. This has now been 'signed off' by the Government Office and can be inspected at the Council Offices or on the District Council's website.
- 5.4 The District Council's plan-making programme, as set out in the Local Development Scheme, involves the preparation of the following Development Plan Documents during the next 3 years:
- Core Strategy;
  - Development Control Policies;
  - Housing Land Allocations;
  - Employment Land Allocations; and
  - Green Wedge, Areas of Separation and Limits to Development.
- 5.5 In addition, the following Supplementary Planning Documents will be prepared:
- Affordable housing – a review of existing supplementary planning guidance on affordable housing; and
  - Housing land release – taking forward the provisions of the housing land release policy contained in Alteration No.3 to the adopted Local Plan.
- 5.6 Over the longer term the District Council will consider the need to prepare the following planning documents:
- Airport Action Area Plan – to follow on from the Airport Company's Master Plan review (as required by Secretary of State for Transport);
  - Town Centres Action Area Plans – to follow on from current master-planning exercises and town centre partnership working;
  - Charnwood Forest Area Plan – depending on the outcome of the County Council's application for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty status;
  - Recreation and open space provision – to follow on from an audit of current provision and needs; and
  - Gypsy sites provision – depending on the review of need now being undertaken.

### **Links with other Plans and Strategies**

- 5.7 The Local Development Framework must conform with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands Region produced by the East Midlands Regional Assembly and issued by the Secretary of State.
- 5.8 It must also have regard to national planning policy statements (PPSs), the provisions the adopted Leicestershire Structure Plan (adopted March 2005) and the North West Leicestershire Community Strategy (adopted March 2002).

5.9 Other relevant strategies include:

- North West Leicestershire Cultural Strategy (Draft) 2002;
- North West Leicestershire Housing Strategy (Draft) 2004-2007;
- Destination 2010 – The Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands;
- National Forest Strategy 2004-2014;
- Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 2001-2006;
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy 2001;
- National Forest Biodiversity Action Plan 2004; and
- Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 1998.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal**

5.10 Strategic Environmental Assessment is a process intended to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from Local Development Framework proposals are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated to decision-makers and monitored. The role of Strategic Environmental Assessment is to:

- Support sustainable development;
- Improve the evidence base for decision-making; and
- Facilitate and respond to consultation with stakeholders.

5.11 The new Planning Act requires local planning authorities to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) to ensure that, in addition to considering the environmental impacts of policies and proposals, an assessment is also made of their economic and social impacts.

5.12 The Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of Local Development Framework preparation and its outputs will be consulted upon during the various consultation periods.

### **Evidence Base**

5.13 The District Council has put together a comprehensive evidence base, including:

- Urban capacity study;
- Retail needs and capacity assessment and town centres health check;
- Affordable housing survey;
- Quality of employment; and
- Open space audit.

5.14 These documents are available at the Council Offices and on the Council website. Widespread consultation has featured in the development of the evidence base to date and will also apply to its enlargement in future.



## 6. STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### Minimum Standards

- 6.1 Minimum standards for community involvement in the preparation of the Local Development Framework are set out in the Regulations, but the District Council wants to do more.
- 6.2 The Regulations require the Council to:
- Place all documentation on its website ([www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)) together with any supporting information needed to enable people to understand what they are being asked to comment upon and where and when this documentation can be inspected;
  - Make all relevant material available for inspection at the Council Offices and other suitable places for the period for which it is open for comment;
  - Send copies to the Government Office and to each statutory consultee (having regard to the guidance set out in the Government's Planning Policy Statement 12; and
  - Advertise in local newspapers circulating in the area stating where the relevant material can be inspected, how copies of it can be obtained, the closing date for representations and where to send such representations.
- 6.3 The Council will comply with the general duty in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 6.4 The Council will comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by not discriminating against disabled people and providing an equal quality of service.

### Council Standards

- 6.5 In addition to these basic requirements the District Council will:
- Maintain a Local Development Framework database of consultees which will be available for inspection;
  - Contact people and bodies registered on the Local Development Framework database at each key stage;
  - Make use of the Council's newspaper *Vision* to update residents of the progress of the Local Development Framework;
  - Provide copies of all documents in alternative formats (eg other languages, Braille etc);
  - Place copies of the relevant documents at local libraries and with parish councils;
  - Provide feedback wherever possible; and
  - Provide press releases for the local media.
- 6.6 The Council will follow these standards when producing any planning document which forms part of the Local Development Framework. When each document is published for consultation it must be supported by a statement setting out the form of community involvement undertaken in that

particular case. If an Inspector finds that the Council has not followed the standards set out in its Statement of Community Involvement then the planning document could be withdrawn.

6.7 The Council will also make available relevant background information, including (when available):

- Urban capacity study;
- Employment needs and quality of employment land;
- Retail needs assessment and shopping centres health checks;
- Open space audit; and
- Ashby-de-la-Zouch car parking study.

6.8 Community involvement is seen as a continuous process enabling everyone taking part to see how policies and proposals develop at the various stages. This will require a commitment to effective feedback from the Council.

### **Key Stages in the Preparation of the Local Development Framework**

6.9 The nature of community involvement will vary depending on the type of planning document being produced:

- Development Plan Documents – these must go through specified stages of community involvement before being submitted to a Government Inspector for examination and decision;
- Supplementary Planning Documents – these will also be subject to public scrutiny (but not independent examination) but will be adopted by the Council itself.

6.10 The scale and extent of community involvement will also vary depending on the subject of the planning document. For example, the Core Strategy will require widespread consultation across the District and with national and regional bodies, while an action plan for a particular area will be much more specific.

- The Core Strategy will set out the District Council's spatial vision and establish the overall strategy for the development of North West Leicestershire to 2016. It will enable key choices to be made (such as the broad distribution of new housing across the District) which will then provide the context for more detailed work.
- The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will be prepared in parallel with the Core Strategy and will update, where necessary, the existing set of control policies which apply across the District.
- The Housing Land, Employment Land and Green Wedge, Areas of Separation and Limits to Development Development Plan Documents will apply the general strategy developed in the Core Strategy to specific areas across the District.
- The Proposals Map will be updated as each Development Plan Document is adopted.

### **Key stages for Development Plan Documents**

6.11 The key stages for community involvement in Development Plan Documents

are as follows:

<p>Evidence gathering and issues identification</p>	<p>Evidence will be gathered with a view to identifying issues, and options for the future. This will involve consulting various bodies on technical and other matters.</p> <p>Consideration will also be given to national, regional and other relevant policies. Evidence will be made available for public scrutiny where possible.</p> <p>Informal consultations will be undertaken with interested parties in order to establish the key issues and options for change.</p> <p>Consultations will be held on issues and options for each Development Plan Document. This will involve all identified stakeholders and a full range of events.</p> <p>These consultations will involve direct contact with stakeholders, media releases, exhibitions and workshops.</p> <p>Continuous community engagement will be sought throughout the preparation stage.</p>
<p>Preferred options (Regulations 25 and 26)</p>	<p>This is a statutory 6 weeks period during which anyone may make representations on the Council's preferred options.</p> <p>Preferred options will be published at an early stage as the basis for public engagement.</p> <p>This stage will may also require wider participation through public exhibitions and other events, 'planning for real' exercises, group meetings etc.</p> <p>The resulting feedback will enable the Development Plan Document to be completed.</p>
<p>Submission (Regulations 27 and 28)</p>	<p>This stage involves the final document that is to be submitted to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Each Development Plan Document will be published for a statutory 6 weeks period, during which written representations may be submitted to the Council.</p> <p>Submission will be widely advertised, with documents being circulated to statutory consultees. Persons and bodies registered on the Local Development Framework database will also be informed.</p> <p>In the case of the Allocations Development Plan Document there will be a further 6-weeks consultation period if new development proposals are put forward by developers and others during the submission consultation period.</p> <p>The Council will advertise these alternative proposals and make the details available for inspection at the Council Offices and on the Council website.</p> <p>The Council will also encourage those putting forward alternative proposals to present them for public discussion in the areas affected.</p> <p>At the same time the document will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, together with all background material and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>All representations will be summarised and submitted to the independent Examination.</p>
<p>Examination</p>	<p>This will be conducted by a Planning Inspector.</p> <p>Six weeks notice of the Examination will be given.</p> <p>The Inspector's recommendations will be binding on the Council.</p> <p>The Council will no longer have the discretion to reject any of the Inspector's recommendations.</p>
<p>Adoption</p>	<p>The Council will be responsible for the adoption of a Development Plan Document as soon as practicable after receiving the Inspector's binding recommendations.</p>

### Key stages for Supplementary Planning Documents

6.12 The key stages for community involvement in the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents are as follows:

Evidence gathering and issues identification	Evidence will be gathered with a view to identifying issues and options for the future. Consideration will also be given to national, regional and other relevant policies.  This will involve consulting various bodies on technical and other matters. Evidence will be made available for public scrutiny where possible.
Consultation	The draft proposals will be the subject of community involvement in a similar way to that of Development Plan Documents. Topic-based documents will be the subject of wider consultation, whilst site-specific documents will be more local in scope. Documents will be subject to <b>4-6-weeks</b> consultation after which responses will be considered.
Adoption	Supplementary Planning Documents will be adopted by the District Council. A statement of the representations received and the responses to those representations will be published.

EXISTING

## **7. COMMUNITIES AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS**

- 7.1 The Council will maintain a comprehensive database of community and stakeholder groups, which will be kept up to date throughout the Local Development Framework process. The Council will keep this database under review, but stakeholders are asked to provide details of any changes of address etc to enable the database to be kept up to date.
- 7.2 The database of stakeholder groups may be inspected at the Council Offices and viewed at [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk).
- 7.3 The types of groups which will be involved include:
- Those representing the wider community, including the local strategic partnership, parish councils, area forums, and other community groups;
  - Those representing the business community, including chambers of trade and Network Gold;
  - Special interest groups, such as conservation societies and nature conservation bodies;
  - Hard to reach groups (see Appendix 2);
  - Developers and those with property and/or development interests; and
  - Statutory bodies, including adjoining authorities, and regional and national agencies (set out in Appendix 3).
- 7.4 The above list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.
- 7.5 The Council will also endeavour to make individuals aware of its proposals, through events, media releases and its Vision newspaper.
- 7.6 In the case of “hard to reach” groups the Council approach to consultation is set out in Appendix 2.
- 7.7 This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact the Planning Policy and Regeneration Section on 01530 454771 or e-mail: [planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)
- 7.8 The Council is particularly keen to encourage the parish councils of the District to play their full part in the new plan-making system. To this end it will endeavour to make officers available to explain proposals and to help facilitate a well-informed debate on the issues under consideration.
- 7.9 Parish Plan Groups will also have an important part to play in the process. Parish Plan documents will be used as a resource to gather more information on community needs. Parish Plan and Village Design Statement groups will be consulted and advised of their role in relation to the LDF process and other planning matters.
- 7.10 The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire is the local strategic partnership for the District. The Partnership has representatives from across the District including:

- Charnwood & North West Leicestershire Primary Care Trust;
- Faith Communities;
- Job Centre Plus;
- King Edward VII College;
- Leicestershire Chamber of Trade & Industry;
- Leicestershire Constabulary;
- Leicestershire County Council;
- North West Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils;
- North West Leicestershire Council for Voluntary Services;
- North West Leicestershire Health Forum;
- North West Leicestershire Partnership in Safer Communities;
- Stephenson College.

**7.11** The Council is currently reviewing its approach to area working across the District.

**7.12** The District Council has signed a Compact with the voluntary and community sector within North West Leicestershire.

EXISTING

## **8. METHODS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

8.1 A variety of methods of community involvement will be employed in relation to the following stages of such involvement:

- Information;
- Consultation;
- Participation; and
- Feedback.

8.2 The District Council currently uses a number of methods to encourage and facilitate community engagement. Documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices and other appropriate places in accordance with Regulation 26 and Regulation 28. Wherever possible community involvement on the Local Development Framework will be dovetailed with other consultation activities. The main vehicles for involvement are:

### **Local Strategic Partnership**

8.3 The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire represents a wide range of interests across the District. It provides a means for conveying information and views on various issues to the District Council. It can also play an important role in passing on information on the progress of the Local Development Framework and the issues that are being raised and considered.

8.4 It is anticipated that the Local Strategic Partnership will have a significant part to play in relation to the Core Strategy and also with the strategic aspects of other Development Plan Documents.

### **Leicestershire Countywide Forum for Liaison with Builders and Developers**

8.5 The District Council is represented on this Forum which brings together planning officers and representatives of the house-builders across Leicestershire. The Council will make use of this Forum to report progress on the Local Development Framework and to encourage involvement in the process and in community engagement by developers.

8.6 It is anticipated that the Forum will be involved with the Core Strategy and the strategic aspects of other Development Plan Documents.

### **North West Leicestershire Agents Forum**

8.7 This Forum was established in order to improve liaison with those responsible for submitting planning applications and providing development advice. The Council will make use of this Forum to report progress and to encourage involvement at a more local level.

8.8

It is anticipated that the Forum will be involved particularly in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

### **Internet**

8.9 The Council will make extensive use of the internet ([www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)) to

make information available on the progress of its Local Development Framework.

- 8.10 The Local Development Framework web pages will be kept up to date and will be interactive, allowing representations to be submitted electronically where appropriate.
- 8.11 It is, however, recognised that not all stakeholders will have ready access to the internet so that paper copies will continue to be made available.
- 8.12 The Council will also establish an e-mail alert system whereby stakeholders identified on the Council's database can be provided with the latest information. In order to make this system effective stakeholders should provide the Council with appropriate e-mail addresses and ensure that any changes are notified.

### **Vision Magazine**

- 8.13 The Council's magazine *Vision* is to be produced and distributed across the District ten times a year and is intended to:
- Give residents better and more frequent information about Council and partner services and activities;
  - Contribute to the Council's Comprehensive Improvement Assessment Improvement Plan; and
  - Offer opportunities for additional partnership working.
- 8.14 *Vision* will be used as a means of conveying information on the progress of the Local Development Framework and also for particular consultation exercises.

### **Local Media**

- 8.15 Notices will be published in local newspapers circulating in the area and press releases will be made available to the local media at all key stages in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

### **Exhibitions and Workshops**

- 8.16 Exhibitions and workshops will be employed throughout the process, although the format may vary depending on the issues to be discussed. They will be of particular importance in relation to the issues and options and preferred options stages of the process. The objectives and expected outcomes of each workshop will be clearly set out beforehand. Careful consideration will be given to venues, timing and participants to ensure that events are as effective as possible.
- 8.17 Workshops will be facilitated using a variety of techniques aimed at promoting discussion and leading to positive outcomes.
- 8.18 A report of proceedings at each event will be produced and made available at the Council offices and on the Council web site.

### **Reporting back**



- 8.19 The Council will acknowledge all representations received and will prepare summaries of such representations. Persons and bodies registered on the Local Development Framework database will be informed of the availability of these summaries, which will also be posted on the Council's web site.
- 8.20 Registered persons and bodies will also be informed of Council decisions and will be notified of key dates in the timetable.
- 8.21 Press releases will be prepared at key stages.
- 8.22 Reports will be prepared summarising and assessing all representations received during the various consultation activities. These will be taken via the LDF Working Party to the Council's Executive Board, as necessary. The results of each consultation exercise will then provide an input into the next stage of the process, and will be weighed against the requirement to conform with the Regional Spatial Strategy and to have regard to PPGs/PPSs and the Community Strategy in that process.

### **Examination**

- 8.23 At the Examination a Planning Inspector will consider whether the Development Plan Document before him is 'sound'.
- 8.24 The presumption will be that the Development Plan Document is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the Examination. The tests of soundness are:
- it has been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme;
  - it has been prepared in compliance with the Council's Statement of Community involvement (or with the minimum requirements set out in the Regulations where there is no Statement of Community Involvement );
  - the plan and its policies have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal;
  - it is a spatial plan which is consistent with national planning policy and in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the region and it has properly had regard to any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas;
  - it has had regard to the authority's community strategy;
  - the strategies/policies/allocations in the plan are coherent and consistent within and between development plan documents prepared by the authority and by neighbouring authorities, where cross boundary issues are relevant;
  - the strategies/policies/allocations represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;
  - there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring; and
  - the plan is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.
- 8.25 The Inspector's report will be binding on the District Council.

### **Resources**

- 8.26 Community involvement will be led by the Council's Planning Policy and

Regeneration Section but will require a corporate effort across the Council, involving the Communications Unit and other areas of expertise.

- 8.27 The resources to be devoted to the preparation of the Local Development Framework are set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme. This scheme has been agreed with the Government Office and the Planning Inspectorate.
- 8.28 An external facilitator has been engaged to take the debate on issues and options of the Core Strategy through to Preferred Options Stage. A consultant is also to be engaged to take forward the Development Control Policies DPD, also to Preferred Options stage. The Council will keep the need for such inputs under review throughout its future LDF work.

EXISTING SCI

## **9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council receives in the region of 1,300 planning applications a year, the majority of which are determined under delegated powers. Major and/or contentious planning applications are normally considered by the Planning and Environment Group which meets every 4 weeks.
- 9.2 The Council encourages applicants and developers to seek pre-application advice prior to the submission of a formal planning application. Normally this would involve the submission of sketch drawings and other relevant details. An informal written response from a planning officer will normally be sent within 3-4 weeks. In some circumstances it may be necessary to hold a meeting between Council officers, statutory consultees and developers and their agents. In these circumstances the Council would normally expect the submission of plans and drawings prior to the date of the meeting. The Council also operates a duty officer system to deal with simple inquiries at its reception.
- 9.3 The Council will also encourage applicants to undertake pre-submission consultations where appropriate. Where appropriate applicants are advised to make early contact with such bodies as the Environment Agency. The District Council is currently working towards the implementation of a 'development team' approach.

### **Consultation Procedures**

- 9.4 The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, requires that for all major applications the application must be publicised either by:
- A site notice displayed in at least one place on or near the development site for at least 21 days, or,
  - Serving notice on adjoining owners or occupiers, and,
  - Advertisement in a local newspaper.
- 9.5 For all planning applications letters are sent to all owners/occupiers of properties that immediately adjoin the boundary of the application site. In addition the Council will notify more widely where an application is likely to have a wider impact than upon immediate neighbours, especially in conservation areas. The Council also posts site notices where an application is likely to have a wider impact or is in an area (eg in the countryside) where there are no immediate neighbours, but there may be public interest in the proposal.
- 9.6 More complex and contentious applications may require additional consultation arrangements depending on the nature of the particular proposal.
- 9.7 The Council's public access system for planning applications is available on the Council's web site and can be interrogated to obtain details of current planning applications. This is available by individual property or by weekly list.
- 9.8 Plans are available to view at the Council offices in Coalville, between the hours of 8.45am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Plans are sent to Parish Councils as part of the consultation exercise and those neighbours notified of

applications are advised that they can, by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk, view the plans at the Parish Council offices. Consideration is being given to arrangements for application plans to be viewed on-line.

### **Amended Plans**

- 9.9 Following submission of a planning application, negotiations often take place between planning officers and developers and their agents to seek amendments to a submitted scheme. In most cases, upon receipt of amended plans, the Council will re-notify neighbours, Parish Councils and statutory consultees to seek their views on the amendments. In view of the tight time scales to determine planning applications the re-notification time is set at 14 days. Very minor alterations to plans will not normally be the subject of re-notification.

### **Applications to be Considered by the Planning and Environment Group**

- 9.10 Some 90% of planning applications are determined under delegated powers by authorised officers of the Council. Most major and/or controversial applications are reported to the Planning and Environment Group for decision by Members of the Council. If an application is to be determined in this way the Council will inform the applicant/agent and anyone who has submitted comments on a particular application (including the Parish Council) of the date of the meeting and their right to speak at the meeting. There is a right for one objector or supporter, the applicant or agent and a Parish Council representative to speak at the Planning and Environment Group. Each speaker has no more than three minutes. A guidance note is sent to all interested parties advising of the procedure and issues which are planning related and those which are not. The guidance notes are available from the Planning reception or can be downloaded from the Council's web site.
- 9.11 Planning and Environment Group reports are available in hard copy and on the Council's web site on the Wednesday preceding the meeting of the Planning and Environment Group, ie seven days prior to the meeting.

### **Notification of Decisions**

- 9.12 Anyone who submitted comments in respect of a particular planning application is notified of the decision. Parish Councils are sent a copy of the decision notice. When the Council's web site is fully developed, decision notices will be available there. At present whilst decision notices cannot be viewed, the decision is available on the Council's web site.
- 9.13 In addition to the statutory site notices and press notices, details of major applications will be published on the Council's website following the introduction of a document management system which will allow plans to be viewed on-line. In addition the Council will strongly encourage applicants to arrange a public meeting or exhibition before an application is submitted to allow the local community to be more fully informed prior to submission. Applicants will also be encouraged to submit a brief statement outlining how the results of the pre-application consultation have been taken into account in the final application. The results of any such consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, or on behalf of, the Council.
- 9.14 Bodies such as Natural England will be allowed a longer period of time to

comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation.

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## **10. MONITORING**

- 10.1 The Statement of Community Involvement will be kept under review and its effectiveness and relevance will be monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Review.
- 10.2 Any revision of the Statement of Community Involvement will follow the same procedures as are laid down for this first document.
- 10.3 Regard will also be had to changes in circumstances (eg population), legislation, and policy (in particular national planning policy) and to emerging best practice in relation to nature and scope of consultation arrangements with a view to the need to review the SCI.

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## APPENDIX 1

### GLOSSARY

<b>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR):</b>	Part of the <i>Local Development Framework</i> , the Annual Monitoring Report will assess the implementation of the <i>Local Development Scheme</i> and the extent to which policies in <i>Local Development Documents</i> are being successfully implemented.
<b>Community Strategy:</b>	Local authorities are required under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare these, with aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas. Through the Community Strategy, authorities are expected to co-ordinate the actions of local public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Responsibility for producing Community Strategies may be passed to Local Strategic Partnerships, which include local authority representatives.
<b>Core Strategy:</b>	Sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a <i>Development Plan Document</i> .
<b>Development control policies:</b>	These will be a suite of criteria-based policies which are required to ensure that all development within the areas meets the spatial vision and spatial objectives set out in the <i>Core Strategy</i> . They may be included in any <i>Development Plan Document</i> or may form a standalone document.
<b>Development Plan:</b>	As set out in Section 38(6) of the Act, an authority's Development Plan consists of the relevant <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> and the <i>Development Plan Documents</i> contained within its <i>Local Development Framework</i> .
<b>Development Plan Document (DPD):</b>	Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and together with the relevant <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> , will form the <i>Development Plan</i> for a local authority area. They can include a <i>Core Strategy</i> , <i>Site Specific Allocations</i> of land, and other Development Plan Documents, such as generic <i>development control policies</i> . They will all be shown geographically on an adopted <i>Proposals Map</i> . Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents. Each authority must set out the programme for preparing its <i>Development Plan Documents</i> in the <i>Local Development Scheme</i> .
<b>Examination</b>	The purpose of the Examination is to consider if the development plan is sound. The majority of representations made at Examination will usually be 'written representations'. However, in some instances a <i>Planning Inspector</i> may allow representations to be examined by way of oral hearings, for example round table discussions, informal hearing sessions and formal hearing sessions.
<b>Local Development Document (LDD):</b>	The collective term covering <i>Development Plan Documents</i> , <i>Supplementary Planning Documents</i> and the <i>Statement of Community Involvement</i> .
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF):</b>	The name for the portfolio of <i>Local Development Documents</i> . It consists of <i>Development Plan Documents</i> , <i>Supplementary Planning Documents</i> , a <i>Statement of Community Involvement</i> , the <i>Local</i>

*Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports*. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for a local authority area and may also include Local Development Orders and Simplified Planning Zones.

<b>Local Development Scheme (LDS):</b>	Sets out the Council's programme for preparing <i>Local Development Documents</i> . All authorities must submit a Scheme to the Secretary of State for approval within six months of commencement of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
<b>Planning Inspector</b>	A Planning Inspector is a person appointed on behalf the Planning Inspectorate (itself an executive agency of Government) to conduct the <i>Examination</i> , oversee and to carry out site visits, and consider both written and oral evidence in order to reach a reasoned decision on the soundness of proposed <i>Development Plan Documents</i> .
<b>Proposals Map:</b>	The adopted Proposals Map illustrates on a base map (reproduced from, or based upon a map base to a registered scale) all the policies contained in <i>Development Plan Documents</i> , together with any saved policies. It must be revised as each new <i>Development Plan Document</i> is adopted, and it should always reflect the up-to-date planning strategy for the area. Proposals for changes to the adopted Proposals Map accompany submitted <i>Development Plan Documents</i> in the form of a submission Proposals Map.
<b>Regional Planning Guidance (RPG):</b>	Existing regional guidance that sets out regional planning policies that may be used as a material consideration in the preparation of <i>Development Plan Documents</i> .
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS):</b>	Sets out the region's policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the <i>Development Plan</i> for local planning authorities. The <i>Core Strategy Development Plan Document</i> must conform with the Regional Spatial Strategy.
<b>Site specific allocations:</b>	Allocations of areas of land for specific purposes (eg housing or employment land) or for mixed uses or development to be contained in <i>Development Plan Documents</i> . Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.
<b>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):</b>	Sets out the standards which authorities will achieve with regard to involving local communities in the preparation of <i>Local Development Documents</i> and development control decisions. The Statement of Community Involvement is not a <i>Development Plan Document</i> but is subject to independent examination.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD):</b>	Provides supplementary information in respect of the policies in <i>Development Plan Documents</i> . They do not form part of the <i>Development Plan</i> and are not subject to an independent examination.
<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):</b>	Supplementary Planning Guidance did not form part of the Development plan, but could be a material consideration in deciding planning applications. To carry weight it had to be the subject of proper consultation and a Council resolution. It will be superseded by <i>Supplementary Planning Documents</i> under the new system.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):</b>	A generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European 'SEA Directive' (2001/42/EC) requires a formal 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use'.



**Sustainability Appraisal (SA):** A tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Act to be undertaken for all local development documents. Sustainability Appraisal will be undertaken alongside *Strategic Environmental Assessment*.

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## APPENDIX 2

### HARD TO REACH GROUPS

North West Leicestershire District Council has identified a number of Hard To Reach groups. These are set out below:

Hard to Reach Groups	Approach for Proactive Engagement
Ethnic Minority Groups	BME Groups are often under represented in the planning process. It is important that the SCI meets the requirements of these groups by being in accordance with the Race Relations (amendments) Act 2000. All documents produced from the Council will be made available in alternative languages where these are requested. Information on the availability of alternative formats can be obtained from the District Council.
Faith Groups	Faith groups are also underrepresented in the planning process. In particular groups that are unable to use electronic media may be particularly hard to reach. The Council will make all consultation documents available in 'hard copy' in order to ensure that such groups are not excluded from the consultation process.
Young People	The District Council will seek to engage young people through local schools and the Youth Council. Existing Youth Groups such as the Scouts Council and Guide Association will also be contacted.
Elderly People	Elderly people are often perceived as hard to reach because of difficulties in gaining access to information. Elderly individuals can feel isolated and excluded from the community around them. Organisations which represent older people such as Help the Aged and Age Concern will be informed by direct mail at all stages of consultation of the LDF.
Transient Populations eg new residents, students, commuters, Gypsies/travellers.	There are several Gypsy and Traveller sites within the District and it is important that those resident on the sites and those who seek to transit accommodation in the District are involved both in the LDF process and production of the SCI. Gypsies and Travellers can be a very difficult to reach group. In order to involve this group as much as possible existing contacts (including Leicestershire County Council's Gypsy Liaison officer) and representative organisation (Such as the Gypsy Council) will be contacted, as well as direct contact where this is possible.
People with Disabilities	Again it is recognised that people with disabilities are underrepresented in the planning process. It is important that this SCI meets the requirements of these groups and is in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended. All LDF consultation documents will be made available in Braille. In addition consultation documents will be made available in electronic formats that can be read aloud by most home computers. Representatives from the North West Leicestershire Panel of Opportunities for people with disabilities Group have been added to the Council's Consultee Database. There is a learning disability locality planning group with a housing sub-group with representation from NWLDC housing service. The locality planning group may need to be consulted in the case of people with learning disabilities.

## APPENDIX 3

### STATUTORY CONSULTEES

The following bodies are specific consultation bodies and must be consulted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations, 2004:

- (a) The Regional Assembly for the East Midlands Region;
- (b) Adjoining local or other relevant authorities and Leicestershire County Council;
- (c) The Countryside Agency;
- (d) The Environment Agency;
- (e) Highways Agency;
- (f) The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage);
- (g) English Nature;
- (h) East Midlands Regional Development Agency (EMDA);
- (i) Advantage West Midlands;
- (j) Any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under Section 106 (3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003;
- (k) Any person who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority; and
- (l) Any of the bodies from the following list who are exercising functions in any part of the area of the local planning authority:
  - i. Strategic Health Authority;
  - ii. Person to whom a licence has been granted under Section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986;
  - iii. Sewage undertaker; and
  - iv. Water undertaker.

This list relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur.

## NON STATUTORY CONSULTTEES

- Age Concern
- Ancient Monuments Society
- Ashby Chamber of Trade
- Ashby Woulds Forum
- British Waterways
- Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and other environmental groups
- Church Commissioners for England
- Civic societies and local residents associations
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Coal Authority
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
- Commission for Racial Equality
- Community Appraisal Groups
- Confederation of British Industry
- Council for British Archaeology
- Country Land and Business Association
- Crown Estate
- Disability Rights Commission
- East Midlands Airport
- East Midlands Tourist Board
- Equal Opportunities Commission
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Freight Transport Association
- Garden History Society
- Gypsy Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Housing Corporation
- Historic period societies (eg Georgian Society)
- Home Builders Federation
- Learning and Skills Council
- Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Leicestershire Constabulary
- Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services
- Leicestershire Wildlife Trust
- National Farmers Union
- National Forest Company
- National Playing Fields Association
- National Trust
- Network Gold
- Network Rail
- North West Leicestershire Partnership for Safer Communities
- Parish Councils and Meetings in North West Leicestershire
- Parish Plan groups
- Primary Care Trusts
- Relevant bus companies
- Relevant train operating companies
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Rural Community Council
- Sport England (East Midlands Region)
- SUSTRANS

- Volunteer bureaux
- Woodland Trust

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