

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OPTIONS AND POLICY OPTIONS - JANUARY TO MARCH 2022

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO Q2

Q2 – DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY? IF NOT, WHY NOT?

Comments made in relation to specific settlements are as follows:

Summary of Comments	NWL Planning Policy Officer Response
<p>Donington-le-Heath, Hugglescote, Snibston, Thringstone and Whitwick should not form part of the Coalville Urban Area / Principal Town. They should be regarded as separate settlements / Sustainable Villages.</p>	<p>Coalville, Donington-le-Heath, Greenhill, Hugglescote, Snibston, Thringstone, Whitwick and the Bardon Employment Area is considered to function as one urban area and this is the approach which has been adopted in the 2017 Local Plan (and found sound by an independent Planning Inspector). There have not been any changes in circumstances which would warrant departing from this approach.</p> <p>No change recommended</p>
<p>The plan should recognise that the further away from the main centre and facilities parts of the Coalville Urban Area are, the more travel is needed to access services.</p>	<p>The distance to facilities and services is an important component of the site assessment work currently being undertaken by planning policy officers.</p> <p>It is recommended that these comments are noted but that accessibility to frequent public transport and the opportunity to cycle via safe routes are also important considerations when deciding where growth should be allocated.</p>
<p>Ashby should be the principal settlement as it has more to offer than Coalville.</p>	<p>The Coalville Urban Area has been identified as the Principal Town because it has the largest population and widest range of services and facilities / access to jobs.</p> <p>No change recommended</p>
<p>Ashby has a higher level of services and facilities than Castle Donington and should be moved higher up the hierarchy (or acknowledged in the supporting text). It could be identified as the Market Town or Main Town.</p> <p>Some consultees put forward an alternative scoring methodology for consideration. This suggested scoring settlements based on the total number of facilities in each category (for example 5 primary schools = 5 points). The consultees suggested that if this method was applied, Ashby</p>	<p>Whilst two or more settlements may be in the same tier of the hierarchy, this does not mean that there are no differences between them. Settlements are grouped which, when looked at in the round, are broadly comparable in sustainability terms.</p> <p>The Settlement Study 2021 provides a baseline for comparing settlements. However, officers have also had to make a qualitative planning judgement when comparing settlements and grouping them in tiers.</p> <p>With regards to the identification of Ashby and Castle Donington as Key Service Centres, it is acknowledged that Ashby has a larger and more varied retail offer than Castle Donington (as well as a 'town centre' compared to a 'local centre'). However, there are more employment opportunities in and</p>

<p>would score considerably higher than Castle Donington and this would justify moving Ashby higher up the hierarchy.</p>	<p>around Castle Donington, which are expected to increase as a result of the Freeport designation at East Midlands Airport. Castle Donington also has a better public transport offer than Ashby (in terms of number of services, destinations, frequency and times of day). On balance, it is considered appropriate to place Castle Donington and Ashby in the same tier.</p> <p>In terms of the alternative scoring methodology put forward, the quantum of schools, GP surgeries, pharmacies, dentists etc. in any given settlement is largely a reflection of the population size. The alternative methodology doesn't consider access to jobs or public transport.</p> <p>No change recommended</p>
<p>Castle Donington should be moved higher up the hierarchy and called 'Key Strategic Growth Location' to reflect its status as a focus for significant strategic growth.</p>	<p>The explanation above sets out why Castle Donington has been identified as a Key Service Centre and in the same tier as Ashby. Whilst Castle Donington does benefit from better access to jobs and is located in the Leicestershire International Gateway, it is smaller than Ashby and has a smaller (local) centre and a less varied retail offer.</p> <p>No change recommended</p>
<p>Ibstock should be moved higher up the hierarchy as it is more sustainable than the other Local Service Centres. From September 2022, Ibstock Community College will transition to an 11-16 school.</p> <p>It also has an extensive sports centre, something that Measham/Kegworth do not have. It is comparable to Castle Donington and only scores worse because of its convenience store provision.</p>	<p>The transition of Ibstock Community College to an 11-16 school is an important consideration and whilst this does not impact on the education scores in the Settlement Study 2021 (Ibstock scores a 2 regardless), it is something which sets Ibstock apart from Measham and Kegworth. Proximity to education will be a consideration for the site assessment work officers are currently undertaking</p> <p>Whilst similar in terms of scores, after undertaking a qualitative planning judgement, officers are of the opinion that Castle Donington is more sustainable given its public transport links and significantly better access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>Whilst Ibstock has a leisure facility (something which isn't mapped in the Settlement Study) this is part of the Community College and is dual access. Measham also has a sports centre and Kegworth has a good range of outdoor formal sports facilities.</p> <p>On balance, it is not considered reasonable to put Ibstock and Castle Donington in the same tier of the hierarchy.</p> <p>No change recommended</p> <p>The Settlement Study will be updated to make clear that Ibstock Leisure Complex (at Ibstock Community College) is available for use by local residents.</p>

<p>Measham and Appley Magna's relationship with Mercia Park (and the resulting growth in jobs) should be given greater weight.</p>	<p>Mercia Park (currently under construction) is not identified in the Settlement Study 2021. However, its proximity to both Measham and Appley Magna would not change the overall scoring in the Settlement Study.</p> <p>Looking at these settlements in the round, the presence of Mercia Park is not considered sufficient to move Measham or Appley Magna up the hierarchy. Access to employment opportunities is just one element of what makes a settlement sustainable. The fact that Measham does not have a secondary school and has access to just one frequent (hourly) bus service are also important considerations. Similarly, Appley Magna doesn't have a local shop and only has access to an infrequent bus service.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>Breedon-on-the-Hill should either move up the hierarchy or take more development than the other Sustainable Villages because it is located in the Leicestershire International Gateway.</p>	<p>The location of Breedon in the northern part of the district and its proximity to the Leicestershire International Gateway is just one consideration. When considering in the round, the level of facilities and services in Breedon-on-the-Hill does not warrant it being moved further up the hierarchy. It has a level of facilities for day to day use but travel outside of the settlement is required to access employment (aside from the quarry), supermarkets, secondary education, GP surgery, pharmacy and formal recreation. Furthermore, Breedon is only served by an infrequent bus service.</p> <p>As a rural village, Breedon is not considered an appropriate location to meet the growth aspirations of the Leicestershire International Gateway.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>Coleorton (Lower Moor Road) should be reclassified as an 'Other Village/Settlement' on the basis that the post office/shop has recently closed, there is no church, the buses are infrequent and not at times suitable for commuting to work.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the church has closed and so it will be removed from the Settlement Study. However, it should be noted that the church was only included on the map for Coleorton and was not included as part of the scoring process.</p> <p>It is noted that since the Settlement Study (2021) was prepared, the village shop and post office on Lower Moor Road has closed.</p> <p>This changes the scoring for the settlement as follows: Convenience Shop (0) Education (1) Employment (1) Connectivity (3) Service and Facilities (1)</p>

	<p>Total (6)</p> <p>The area of Coleorton (including not just the area of Lower Moor Road but also The Moor and areas towards Griffydham/Peggs Green and Swannington) is characterised by pockets of development rather than one continuous settlement. There is also a dispersed provision of services and facilities across the Coleorton area generally.</p> <p>In terms of the Lower Moor Road Area (that proposed as a Sustainable Village) the closure of the shop means that there are now no key facilities within the existing Limits to Development. Furthermore, whilst there is employment within 2km, this is a straight-line measurement so in reality it is much further. Having regard to all the above, it is considered that it would not be appropriate to retain Coleorton (Lower Moor Road) as a Sustainable Village. Instead, it is recommended that all of Coleorton be identified as a Local Housing Needs Village.</p>
<p>The high level of services and facilities in Ellistown and its relationship with Coalville should be taken into account when considering where growth should be directed.</p>	<p>Whilst Ellistown is located close to the Coalville Urban Area, it is a distinct settlement in its own right.</p> <p>Distances to facilities and services and proximity to public transport are considerations of the site assessment work which NWL planning policy officers are currently undertaking.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>The access to employment score for Heather should be increased to 2. Whilst the employment site falls outside the current Limits to Development it forms part of the built-up area of the settlement, is contiguous with the Limit to Development and is connected to the village via an existing footway.</p>	<p>It is agreed that a distinction between 'adjoining' the settlement and 'outside' could have been made. It is recommended that the assessment for employment at paragraph 3.21 of the Settlement Study is changed to 'Employment sites within <u>or adjoining</u> Limits to Development'.</p> <p>This means that Heather would score 2 under this category, increasing the total from 9 to 10. However, this would not however result in a change from its position in the hierarchy (i.e. it would stay as a Sustainable Village).</p> <p>Having reviewed all other settlements it is noted that Lockington (which is identified as a Local Housing Needs Village) would also score 1 under this criteria. However, there would not result in a change to its designation as a a Local Housing Needs Village.</p>
<p>Ravenstone should be moved up the hierarchy or receive more growth than the other Sustainable Villages because it is more</p>	<p>Whilst Ravenstone is located close to the Coalville Urban Area, it is a distinct settlement in its own right.</p>

<p>sustainable than the other Sustainable Villages and has a good relationship with Coalville.</p>	<p>In line with the Settlement Study (2021) methodology, Ravenstone has been identified as a sustainable settlement because it has a convenience shop and a primary school in the limits to development and it is served by an hourly bus service (15, serving Coalville and Ibstock). However, unlike settlements higher up the hierarchy, it does not have a range of employment opportunities or a local centre in the limits to development.</p> <p>The scoring in the Settlement Study 2021 shows that Ravenstone is on a par with villages such as Packington and Donisthorpe.</p> <p>The distance to facilities and services is an important component of the site assessment work currently being undertaken by planning policy officers.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>It is queried why Swannington is identified as a Sustainable Village.</p>	<p>In line with the methodology set out in the Settlement Study (2021), Swannington has been identified as a Sustainable Village because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has a primary school • There are employment sites within 2km of the settlement • It is served by the 29 Arriva Midlands service which is hourly / every 30 minutes during peak hours and provides access to the higher order settlements of Coalville, Ashby, Swadlincote and Leicester. <p>It also has 4 out of the 9 other services and facilities (a community venue, public houses, place of worship and informal recreation) within the limits to development.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>Identifying Woodville as a Sustainable Village fails to regard the settlement as a whole and is at odds with the fact it is classed as an Urban Area in the South Derbyshire Local Plan.</p>	<p>As a result of recent developments, the area of Woodville has extended into North West Leicestershire. The vast majority of Woodville, including its services and facilities are located in South Derbyshire.</p> <p>Woodville is identified as part of the Swadlincote Urban Area in the adopted South Derbyshire Local Plan.</p> <p>Whilst some growth on the edge of Woodville and within the boundary of North West Leicestershire may be appropriate to take account of the fact that it is part of a larger urban area, growth in Woodville will</p>

	<p>predominantly take place in South Derbyshire and be directed by the South Derbyshire Local Plan. Notwithstanding the status of Woodville in the South Derbyshire Local Plan, it would be inappropriate to identify Woodville any higher in the North West Leicestershire Local Plan settlement hierarchy.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change is recommended</p>
<p>Excluding Boundary from the settlement hierarchy fails to recognise its relationship with the Urban Area of Woodville.</p>	<p>Boundary is a cluster of dwellings positioned either side of the A511 and along the west side of Heath Lane. The area to the south is located in North West Leicestershire and the remainder is in South Derbyshire. There are very few residential dwellings in Boundary and whilst it has access to a frequent bus service, the availability of services and facilities in the settlement itself are limited to a pub. It is separated from Woodville by an open gap and so does not read as part of Woodville.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p> <p>It is recommended that no further changes are made in respect of Boundary's position in the settlement hierarchy.</p>
<p>Acresford should have a higher settlement hierarchy ranking because it adjoins South Derbyshire/shares similar locational advantages that attracted the Mercia Park developers.</p>	<p>Mercia Park was considered a suitable site for strategic employment uses given its location adjacent to the A42/M42.</p> <p>The settlement hierarchy considers the sustainability of settlements. Under the adopted Local Plan, Acresford falls under the definition of hamlet. In line with the Settlement Study (2021) methodology, Acresford is not regarded as a sustainable settlement because it does not have a primary school or a convenience shop and on the whole has limited facilities and services.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>Whilst Normanton le Heath has been included in the list of in the table at paragraph 3.11, it is not referenced in the list of changes to the settlement hierarchy under paragraph 3.12. Normanton le Heath is currently not in the settlement hierarchy under Policy S2 in the adopted Local Plan and so its addition to the list of Local Housing Needs Villages is a</p>	<p>Normanton le Heath was inadvertently missed off the list of settlements identified as Small Villages in policy S3, but the supporting text (correctly) did include it as a Small Village.</p> <p>Comments are noted</p>

change to the settlement hierarchy.	
If the New Settlement is pursued, this will need to go into the settlement hierarchy, either as a Sustainable Village or its own category.	It is recommended that these comments are noted and considered at a later date once there is more certainty on the proposed growth strategy.

Comments challenging elements of the Settlement Study methodology are as follows:

Summary of Comments	NWL Planning Policy Officer Response
Coalville comprises 7 settlements so the findings of the Settlement Study are distorted.	As set out above, the Coalville Urban Area is deemed to function as one area. This is a sound approach given it is adopted in the Local Plan (2017).
Whilst the study takes account of the number of convenience stores available within each settlement, the number and level of choice for the other services and facilities is not taken into account. All settlements should be reassessed to fully take account of the number of each service available, as well the types of services in order to fully understand the role of individual settlements.	As set out above, the numbers of different types of facilities and services is largely a reflection of the size of population. This suggested approach is not considered preferable to the one used to define the settlement hierarchy.
The hierarchy should align with the [Leicester and Leicestershire] Strategic Growth Plan 'International Gateway'	The identification in the Strategic Growth Plan of the northern part of the district as part of the Leicestershire International Gateway is acknowledged. There is no suggestion that this requires a bespoke policy approach, although it is something which can influence the overall distribution strategy.
Where a settlement is classed as a 'Sustainable Village' this does not necessarily mean that it is a location suitable for all types of development from a highways and transport perspective, nor that developer contributions would not be required towards the enhancement of sustainable transport measures	These comments are noted. Highways considerations form part of the site assessment work currently being undertaken by policy officers.
Disagree with the term 'other settlements' as it is dismissive	This tier is currently called 'Hamlets' in the adopted Local Plan. On reflection, it is considered that settlements falling under the "Other villages/settlements" category should be reclassified as "Small villages or hamlets in the countryside".

<p>This hierarchy considers only services and amenities . The hierarchy does not consider important environmental issues.</p>	<p>The focus of the settlement hierarchy is access to facilities and services as this gives the opportunity to focus development at locations which limit the need to travel and offer genuine choice of transport modes (NPPF 105).</p> <p>Environmental considerations will be taken into account as part of the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal. They will also form part of the site assessment work currently being undertaken by policy officers.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>
<p>The scoring concept is flawed in that it merely scores whether there is some type of provision without giving any consideration as to whether it is of a scale or type that will actually make the settlement and its inhabitants sustainable.</p> <p>One of the responses received suggested that more detailed work should be done, for example on the scale, type of employment on offer matched against the size or skills of the settlement's population or whether the bus services in a particular settlement go to places at which residents want to shop or work.</p>	<p>The scoring of settlements provides a means of comparing the relative sustainability merits of settlements, whilst recognising that not all settlements in the same tier will necessarily benefit from exactly the same level of provision. This is then supplemented by a planning judgement.</p> <p>The NPPF (2021) states that in order to be justified (one of the soundness tests) it should be based on proportionate evidence. The suggested approach in this instance is not proportionate and in some cases would be difficult to source. Furthermore, it would be snap shot in time which would very quickly become dated as people move in and out of settlements. The approach followed (scoring + planning judgement) is considered to be proportionate and sound.</p> <p>Based on the above considerations no change recommended</p>