



Members of Local Plan Committee
NWLDC

14th November 2025

Dear Councillors,

Item 11 Agenda for 19 November Meeting - Diseworth

Summary

We urge you to reject the Officer's recommendation and to designate an Area of Separation over sites "A" – "I" as identified in the report submitted.

Designating an Area of Separation around the conservation village of Diseworth offers greater protection than standard countryside policy because it introduces a specific, enforceable test against coalescence, rather than relying on general rural development controls. This is critical given the scale of proposed growth and infrastructure nearby.

Background

The Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan prioritises development near the International Gateway, which includes Diseworth's hinterland, and so the village has strategic growth pressure totally unlike other areas, lying directly between the new Isley Woodhouse immediately to the west and the Freeport-based shed development 250 metres to its east.

Reasons


1. An Area of Separation (covered by Policy En5) is more robust because it targets the integrity of gaps, not just countryside character. It would offer greater protection than standard countryside policy because it introduces a specific, enforceable test against coalescence, rather than relying on general rural development controls. This is critical given the scale of proposed growth and infrastructure nearby.
2. Countryside Policy (S3) only *restricts* development outside settlement limits as it allows exceptions (e.g., rural housing, agricultural buildings, infrastructure). It is primarily about *controlling* development rather than preserving strategic gaps. On the other hand, Areas of Separation (En5) impose an additional layer of protection as development is only permitted if it does not compromise the physical and visual separation between settlements. This is a specific spatial safeguard, whereas countryside policy is general and can be overridden by strategic allocations.

3. The surprising justification for refusal (that there will be pressure to make more designation elsewhere) is simply not defensible due the specific facts in this case. On the other hand, designating a separation area would mitigate the cumulative impacts of housing and logistics schemes upon the village character. (We are unsure as to the meaning of the first reason given due to the way in which it is worded. However, assuming it means that there could be a challenge at examination, then that is the case generally and there is nothing special about this specific issue in that context.)
4. Diseworth's Neighbourhood Plan is currently being consulted upon as part of the democratic process. That document focuses upon issues of separation around the village and should be given considerable weight in this decision.
5. Benefits of Designation
 - Maintenance of distinct settlement identity and avoids merging with Isley Walton, Castle Donington, the Airport or new strategic sites.
 - Preservation of landscape character and biodiversity corridors.
 - Reduction of urbanisation impacts (traffic, noise, light pollution) on a small rural community.
 - Alignment with NPPF paragraph 77, which supports well-planned growth while protecting valued landscapes.
 - Preservation of a village community and culture

Other issues

As this stage, we simply wish to record that Council has been aware of our concerns about this issue for a considerable time. We first confirmed that fact, in writing, as long ago as 23 August 2024. However, despite numerous reminders over the following 14 months, we saw the final version report for the first time on 27th of October 2025 and only became aware of the Council's recommendation w/c 10 November 2025, despite having asked for that information. This has placed us at a considerable disadvantage in replying to the unexpected recommendation as it has left no time for us to instruct our landscape consultant and obtain our own "like for like" report on the issue. We think this is unreasonable.

Yours faithfully,



Protect Diseworth