

## Planning Newsletter

Issue 4 - December 2011

### Welcome

Welcome to the fourth Planning Newsletter. The newsletters are intended to inform you of progress with our Local Development Framework, and to provide an update on any national or regional planning issues that may impact on North West Leicestershire and surrounding areas.

### What's in this Issue?



The following topics are addressed in this issue:

- Core Strategy Update
- Localism Act 2011
- Evidence Base
- Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Figures Study Final Report
- National Planning Policy Framework
- River Mease
- Development Control Issues
  - New Team Members
  - Current Major Planning Applications
- Stephenson Green Appeal
- Feedback and Further Information

### Core Strategy Update – Cabinet Report 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The Council is continuing to develop its Core Strategy. To this end a report was presented to the Council's Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

The October Cabinet Report, along with the previous Cabinet Reports relating to the Core Strategy can be viewed [here](#).

Amongst other topics the report provided information on the responses to the latest consultation which took place between 31st May 2011 and 29th July 2011. The consultation generated some 1,750 responses. Of these, 1,576 took the form of a standard letter prepared by the Whitwick Action Group. A summary of the responses to the consultation can be found in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet Report, whilst Appendix 2 summarises the responses from a range of key stakeholders.

The issues that Cabinet were asked to decide on were the extension of the Plan Period to 2031, Housing Requirements and Housing Distribution. The table overleaf shows the latest suggested housing figures for each settlement having regard to the consultation responses and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) requirement that new housing development should be "located mainly at Coalville". In addition account has been taken of a range of factors including the distribution of existing dwellings; the potential availability of sites; previous build rates across the district and the distribution of jobs.

Settlement	Dwellings
Coalville	5,000
Ashby de la Zouch	1,400
Castle Donington	1,000
Ibstock	500
Kegworth	450
Measham	450
Rest of district	900
Total	9,700

Members resolved that:

- previous conclusions to protect the Green Wedge and not to allocate a site for strategic distribution in the district are confirmed;
- the plan period is extended to 2031;
- a housing requirement of 388 dwellings per annum (9,700 dwellings for the period 2006-2031) be agreed, and
- the distribution of housing across the district as set out above be agreed.

### **Core Strategy - Next Steps**

Although work on the evidence base is still on going it is currently envisaged that the 'final' draft submission version of the Core Strategy will be taken to Full Council for approval in early 2012. Following approval by Council, the following steps will need to be taken:

- publication of the Core Strategy for a formal consultation (minimum of a six week period);
- Submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State;
- public Examination conducted by a Government Planning Inspector who will make comments;
- receipt of Inspector's Report by the Council; and
- adoption by Council

### **The Localism Act 2011**

In the last newsletter we introduced the Localism Bill and its provisions. Since the last newsletter, the Localism Bill has been through Parliament and gained Royal Assent and is now known as the Localism Act 2011.

Different parts of the Act are set to come into force at different times. However, estimates (as of November 2011) state that the major measures, including Planning reforms and changes to planning enforcement rules will come into effect in April 2012.

The Localism Act covers a wide range of measures such as:

#### **Planning Reforms**

The Localism Act contains provisions to make the planning system clearer, more democratic, and more effective through measures such as new community rights and neighbourhood planning.

#### **Abolition of Regional Strategies (RSS)**

The Localism Act will enable the Government to abolish Regional Strategies in accordance with their stated intention in 2010. To this end the Government has recently published draft assessments of the likely environmental implications that would result from the abolition of RSSs, as required by European regulations.

A copy of the draft assessments can be viewed [here](#).

*The Secretary of State wrote to local authorities in 2010 to tell them that the Government intended to abolish regional strategies. The Localism Act will enable the Government to do this.*

#### **Duty to Cooperate**

The duty requires local authorities and other public bodies to work together on planning issues.

### **Community Right to Build**

The Act gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community want.

A community organisation, formed by members of the local community, will be able to bring forward development proposals which, providing they meet minimum criteria and can demonstrate local support through a referendum, will be able to go ahead without requiring a separate traditional planning application. Benefits of development, such as new affordable housing, will stay within the community.

The Government intends to fund sources of help and advice for communities who want to bring forward development under the community right to build.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

The Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live. The Act introduces a new right for communities to draw up a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood planning will allow communities, both residents, employees and business, to come together through a local parish council or neighbourhood forum and say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go – and what they should look like.

These plans can be as simple or as concise as people want. Local communities will be able to use neighbourhood planning to grant full or outline planning permission in areas where they most want to see new homes and businesses, making it easier and quicker for development to go ahead.

Provided a neighbourhood development plan or order is in line with national planning policy, with the strategic vision for the wider area set by the local authority, and with other legal requirements, local people will be able to vote on it in a referendum. If the plan is approved by a majority of those who vote, then the local authority will bring it into force.

Local planning authorities will be required to provide technical advice and support as neighbourhoods draw up their proposals.

### **Requirement to consult communities before submitting certain planning applications**

To further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. In this way local people will have a genuine chance to comment when there is still scope to make changes to proposals.

### **Strengthening enforcement rules**

The Localism Act will strengthen planning authorities' powers to tackle abuses of the planning system, such as deliberately concealing new developments.

### **Reforming the community infrastructure levy**

As well as being able to influence planning decisions, local people should be able to feel the benefits of new development in their neighbourhood. Local authorities are allowed to require developers to pay a levy when they build new houses, businesses or shops. The money raised must go to support new infrastructure – such as roads and schools. This is called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

The Localism Act will change the levy to make it more flexible. It allows some of the money raised to be spent on things other than infrastructure.

### **Reform the way local plans are made**

The plans local authorities draw up set out where new buildings, shops, businesses and infrastructure need to go, and what they should look like.

The Government considers it important to give local planning authorities greater freedom to get on with their job without undue interference from central government. A key change is that planning Inspectors will have reduced discretion to reword local plans.

### **Nationally-significant infrastructure projects**

Some planning decisions are so important to the overall economy and society that they can only be taken at a national level. These include decisions on such projects as major train lines and power stations. The Government thinks that these important decisions should be taken by Government ministers, who are democratically accountable to the public. The Localism Act restores this responsibility for taking decisions to Government ministers. It also ensures the National Policy Statements, which will be used to guide decisions by ministers, can be voted on by Parliament.



### **Evidence Base**

Since publication of the previous newsletter, the following evidence base documents have been completed or are nearing completion.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

The Council has completed a review of the 2010 SHLAA; the 2011 SHLAA is now available to view on the Council's website by clicking [here](#).

### **Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA)**

An Assessment of Employment Sites was carried out by Roger Tym & Partners in 2010, and provided an analysis of all the existing land either with planning permission or allocated in the adopted Local Plan for employment land uses – across the district. An Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) is now being prepared to assess potential land for future employment use.

If you are aware of land within the district that could feed into this process, please submit details of the land to us for consideration. Details that we are seeking can be found on the ELAA proforma, available on the Council's website (see link below). We are interested in receiving details of land with the potential for economic development use (i.e. not for housing development). We are seeking new, rather than existing, sites for assessment and will consider sites of any size. An indicative site plan will also be necessary.

Further details are available on the Council's website by clicking [here](#).

### **County-wide Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Project**

The project encompasses the 7 local authorities in Leicestershire and also includes Leicester City, Leicestershire County and Rutland Council. The primary objective of the project is to help produce for each authority a CIL charging schedule and supporting evidence base which will be submitted for examination and ultimately approved and adopted in accordance with the CIL Regulations.

### Transport Study

The Council has commissioned consultants to undertake a series of traffic modelling scenarios for potential development options within the District. It is anticipated that some initial findings will be available early in 2012.

### Detailed Water Cycle Study

The Council has commissioned consultants to undertake a Detailed Water Cycle Study. This will help us identify solutions to the River Mease issue and the need for any additional water infrastructure to support development. A draft final report is expected shortly.

### Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Requirements Project - Final Report

The above project has now been completed and is available to view [here](#). The Housing Requirements Study is a technical piece of work which has included the development of various projections for housing requirements taking account of demographic trends and considering how this might relate to alternative scenarios for employment growth. This technical work is to become part of the extensive evidence base which informs the preparation and review of Local Development Frameworks.



### River Mease Special Area Conservation

The River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is a European designation, part of which falls within the administrative district of North West Leicestershire. SACs are strictly protected sites designated under the Habitats Directive, the designation includes the River Mease SAC and also its tributaries. This SAC is also a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

A Water Quality Management Plan for the River Mease has recently been published and can be viewed on the Council's website by clicking [here](#).

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Current planning policy is set out in Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

The Government has published a draft NPPF which brings together all existing policy statements and guidance in one concise document. The draft NPPF is a key part of the Government's reforms to the planning system, to make it less complex, more accessible and to promote sustainable growth.

The draft NPPF sets out the Government's key economic, social and environmental objectives and the planning policies to deliver them. It will have the same legal status as current Government policy documents.

The Government published the draft NPPF for consultation between 25th July 2011 and 17th October 2011.

To view the NPPF Consultation Document, please click [here](#).

The next stage in the production of the NPPF is the Government publishing a summary of responses to the consultation on their website. They will do this as soon as is practicable. It is anticipated that the final NPPF will be published by April 2012.

The provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 already cover the status of national planning policy in plan preparation and decision making.

## Development Control Issues

### New Team Members

#### Ramona Usher

*Senior Conservation Officer*



Ramona has extensive experience of the historic environment, and has worked for various organisations in the UK, most recently as Conservation Officer for Nottingham City Council. She also worked for Graveland Borough Council as a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme Officer, Birmingham Conservation Trust developing projects in the Jewellery Quarter, and lectured in Nottingham Trent University in heritage and museum studies.

#### James Carpenter

*Principal Planning and  
Customer Liaison Officer*



James has worked across both public and private sectors as a Chartered Town Planner. His most recent role was as the Head of Design Support Services for OPUN, where he managed the CABE Design Review Panel that provided independent design advice on development schemes across the East Midlands, including in the North West Leicestershire area. James is currently the Chairman of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) for the East Midlands and takes an active role in the promotion of effective engagement in planning as a means to help secure appropriate development.

We are also pleased to announce that James has been shortlisted for the of RTPI Young Planner of the Year 2011 after being nominated by his former colleagues at OPUN.

#### Anna Watts

*Planning Technician*



Anna has recently joined the Council (following a spell on maternity leave) from Blaby District Council where she worked in both the Development Control and Licensing teams. Anna will be dealing with a small case load of minor planning applications and will provide the Planning and Development Team with technical support.



### Current Major Applications

Application No. 09/01226/OUTM - Validated 10.12.09 - Land to south of Park Lane, Castle Donington - 895 dwellings.

Application No. 10/01093/OUTM - Validated 19.11.10 - Bardon Grange, Coalville - 800 dwellings.

Application No. 10/01208/OUTM - Validated 23.12.10 - Stephenson Green, Coalville - 1,420 dwellings: Appeal against non-determination of the application lodged and Public Inquiry due to start on 7th February 2012.

Application No. 11/00594/OUTM - Validated 19.07.11 - Land at Holywell Spring Farm, Ashby - 400 dwellings

Application No. 07/01372/FUL - Validated 31.08.07 - Lounge site, A511, Ashby – Rail freight distribution centre – This application was submitted in 2007 and the main reason for the delay in determination relates to the River Mease Special Area of Conservation and the applicant being unable to connect to the public sewer.

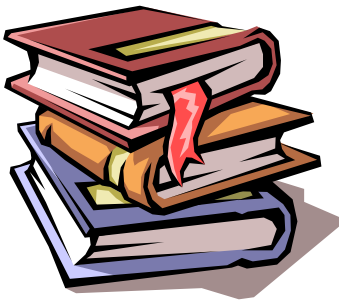
Application No. 11/00225/FULM - Validated 14.05.11 – Showpeople site at Hemington.

## Stephenson Green Appeal

An appeal has been lodged with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government against the non-determination of the planning application for up to 1,420 new houses and a new village centre on the site known as Stephenson Green in Coalville.

The recommendation of officers to the Planning Committee would have been refusal. Had the District Council's Planning Committee had had the opportunity to determine the application they would have refused it also.

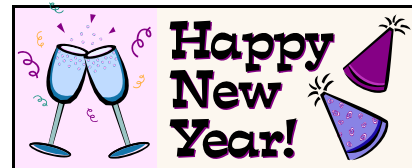
The public inquiry is scheduled for 7th February 2012 and will last an estimated 9 days.



FINALLY.....EVERYBODY IN  
THE PLANNING SERVICE WISH  
YOU A VERY

Merry   
Christmas

AND A.....



## Feedback

In order to make subsequent newsletters/e-mails as informative and timely as possible, we are seeking your views on how communication can be most effective

Have you found the Newsletter useful? Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve it?



## How to Contact us:

### **By Post:**

Spatial Planning,  
North West Leicestershire District Council,  
Council Offices, Whitwick Road,  
Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ

### **By Email:**

[planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

### **By Telephone:**

01530 454684

## How to Get Involved

If you would like to get involved in the preparation of our LDF, your details can be included on the Council's Consultation Database. This will ensure you are notified of progress and consultations regarding the LDF. Please fill out the application form overleaf if you are interested.



### **Data Protection Act 1998**

- Personal data supplied on this form will be used in accordance with North West Leicestershire District Council's notification under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the purpose of Advertising, Marketing, Public Relations, General Advice Services .
- The North West Leicestershire District Council will treat all information as confidential and is committed to respecting your privacy.
- You have the right to access your personal data and rectify any inaccuracies.
- For further information on how your information is used, how we maintain the security of your information and your rights to access information that we hold on you, please contact:

Data Protection Officer,  
North West Leicestershire District Council,  
Council Offices,  
Whitwick Road,  
Coalville,  
Leicestershire,  
LE67 3FJ

E-Mail [customer.services@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

**Feedback and Further Information**

You can become involved by :

**Telephone:**

01530 454676 677, 767, or 684

or by filling out this **Application Contact Form**

TITLE :      Mr           Mrs           Miss           Ms

OTHER     

FIRST NAME     

SURNAME     

ADDRESS     

POSTCODE     

E-MAIL     

TELEPHONE     

NUMBER

Post To:  
Planning Policy,  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices, Whitwick Road  
Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ

How would you like to be contacted? Please tick the relevant boxes.

Post       E-mail

How often you would like to be contacted by the planning policy department?

Quarterly

When there is something major to report

Are you a?

Local Resident

Landowner

Developer

Local Business

Represent a local organisation

-----  
DATE

/   /

•We would like to send you information when there is something major to report. If you do **NOT** wish to receive LDF Information, please tick the box

•Wherever possible, we would like to save resources by giving you information when there is something major to report , by e-mail , instead of by mail. Tick here if you would prefer **NOT** to receive information by e-mail.

If you do not want us to use your information for direct marketing purposes, please tick this box .