



# Core Strategy

## Issues and Options

November 2005

**North West Leicestershire District Council**

**Core Strategy And Policies Issues and Options  
Consultation**

**November 2005**

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## **CORE STRATEGY AND POLICIES**

### **ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

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#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This document seeks your views on a number of key issues and options for future development in North West Leicestershire. It forms an important part of the process that will lead to a new Development Plan for the District.

1.2 The District Council is keen to hear the views of all sections of the community before it establishes its preferred options for the new plan. This document explores the key issues that will be addressed and suggests a number of options for the future. To assist this process it seeks views via a series of questions. These are highlighted throughout the document.

#### **The New Plan-Making System**

1.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has brought in a radical change to the plan-making system affecting North West Leicestershire.

1.4 The old system of County Structure Plans and District Local Plans, which together made up the Development Plan for the District, has now been abolished.

1.5 In future the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire will consist of:

- The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – produced by the East Midlands Regional Assembly but issued by the First Secretary of State;
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – produced by the District Council and brought together as the Local Development Framework (LDF) for North West Leicestershire; and
- Minerals and Waste DPDs – produced by Leicestershire County Council.

1.6 The District Council's programme of work for the production of its LDF is set out in its approved Local Development Scheme (LDS). This can be viewed at the District Council offices or on its website ([www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)).

#### **Community Involvement**

1.7 The District Council's approach to community involvement in planning is set out in its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI covers:

- Principles for community involvement in planning;
- Proposed standards for community involvement;
- Communities and stakeholder groups that will be involved; and
- Methods of community engagement.

1.8 The SCI can be viewed at the Council Offices or on the District Council's website ([www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)).

#### **Core Strategy**

1.9 A key component of the District Council's LDF programme is the Core Strategy DPD.

- 1.10 The Core Strategy DPD will set out the spatial vision and strategy for North West Leicestershire. It will include strategic objectives for development and the key policies that the District Council will take forward to achieve these objectives.
- 1.11 The Core Strategy DPD will cover the following headings:
- District profile;
  - Spatial vision for North West Leicestershire;
  - Objectives for the future development of the District;
  - Overall spatial structure;
  - Housing;
  - Employment;
  - Environment;
  - Retail development;
  - Leisure;
  - Transport
  - Social Inclusion; and
  - Developer contributions.
- 1.12 The Core Strategy DPD must conform with the policies and priorities of the RSS, but must also have regard to the County Structure Plan (where policies continue in force), the Community Strategy and other relevant strategies.

#### **Other Development Plan Documents**

- 1.13 The Core Strategy DPD will form the basis for subsequent DPDs produced by the District Council. The District Council's 3-year programme (as set out in its LDS) includes the following DPDs:
- Development control policies;
  - Housing land allocations;
  - Employment land allocations; and
  - Green Wedge, limits to development, and areas of separation ("Limits").
- 1.14 The DPD covering development control policies will be prepared in parallel with the Core Strategy DPD. These will be followed by the Housing Land and Employment Land Allocations and Limits DPDs.
- 1.15 The need for additional DPDs will be reviewed on an annual basis.

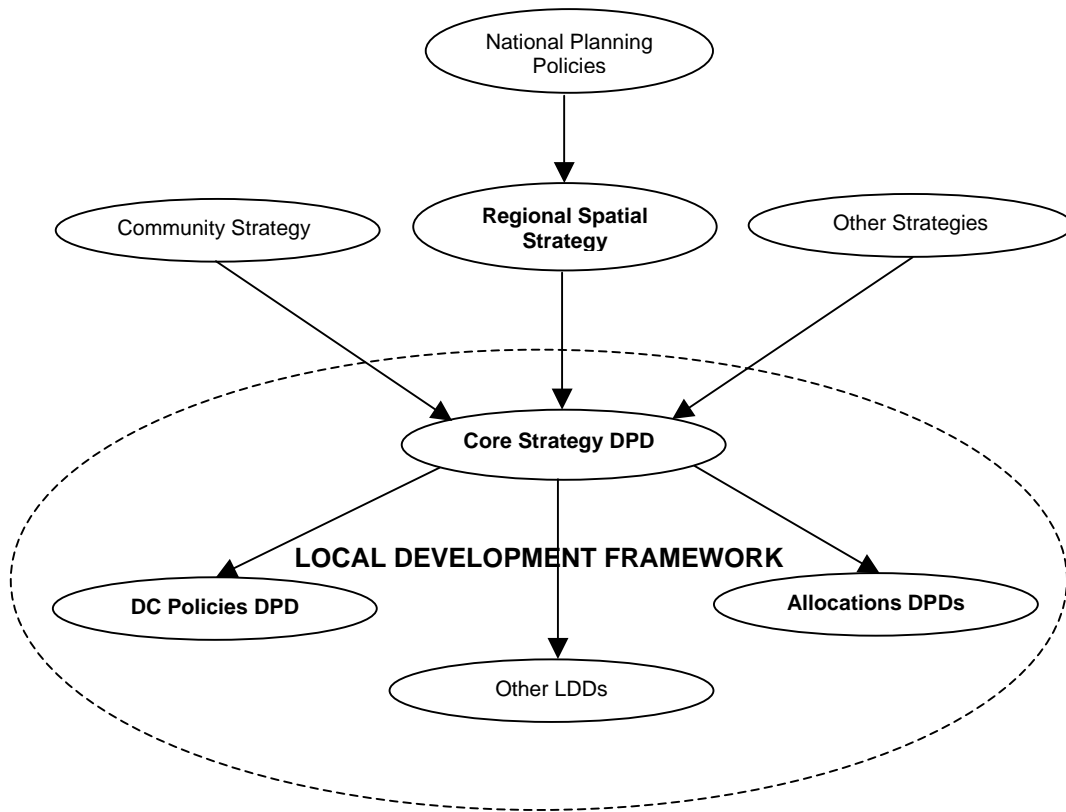
#### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 1.16 In addition to the various DPDs, the District Council is currently producing the following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
- Affordable housing; and
  - Housing land release.
- 1.17 SPDs are Local Development Documents that will be part of the LDF but will not form part of the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire.

#### **Relationship between Planning Documents**

- 1.18 The following diagram outlines the relationship between the various components of the

new plan-making system (those forming part of the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire being shown in bold):





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## **2. DISTRICT PROFILE**

- 2.1 North West Leicestershire is a mainly rural district with significant urban centres at Coalville (population 32,000) and Ashby-de-la-Zouch (population 11,000), together with a number of large villages and other smaller settlements. The total population of the District is 86,800 and the area 279 sq km, representing a population density of 322 persons per sq km.
- 2.2 Few traces of the former deep mining industry now remain. There is now very little dereliction. Unemployment is low, although pockets of relative deprivation remain. Major employment areas have been provided at strategic locations as part of the area's regeneration strategy.
- 2.3 The District is crossed by the A42, with the M1 passing on the eastern side. The A511 links the District's main urban areas to these trunk routes and to Leicester and Burton. East Midlands Airport is situated in the northern part of the District and provides a major source of local employment. There is no passenger rail service within the District, but the Leicester-Burton railway (the "National Forest Line") remains open for freight traffic, although with aspirations for the re-introduction of a passenger train service.
- 2.4 North West Leicestershire is at the heart of the National Forest and contains some areas of very attractive countryside, including Staunton Harold and the Charnwood Forest. There are nationally recognised conservation areas in the centres of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Castle Donington.
- 2.5 Much has been achieved in the regeneration of the District, but a key priority for the District Council remains the revitalisation of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centres.

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### **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 In producing its new Local Development Framework the District Council will not be starting out afresh with a blank sheet of paper. In many ways the LDF, despite its different format, will be a review of the existing policies and proposals contained in the adopted Local Plan. However, this review will not take place in isolation. It will also need to take account of changed circumstances, including changes to national, regional and Structure Plan policies, proposals and priorities, whilst also having regard to the Community Strategy and other relevant strategies.

#### **North West Leicestershire Local Plan**

- 3.2 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in 2002 and covers the period 1996-2006. Alterations dealing with housing design, density, parking and land release and airport safety have recently been adopted.
- 3.3 The Written Statement of the Local Plan can be viewed at [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk).
- 3.4 References to the “Local Plan” in this document are always to the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan.

#### **National Planning Policies and Guidance**

- 3.5 National planning policies and guidance are set out in a series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and also in various Government Circulars. These can be viewed at [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk).
- 3.6 The District Council must have regard to the content of PPGs, PPSs and Circulars when preparing its LDF.

#### **Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands**

- 3.7 Regional Planning Policy Guidance for the East Midlands Region was prepared between 2002 and 2004 and issued in the form of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) in March 2005. RSS8 covers the period up to 2021.
- 3.8 RSS8 can be viewed at [www.go-em.gov.uk](http://www.go-em.gov.uk).
- 3.9 The LDF for North West Leicestershire must conform with the policies and proposals contained in RSS8.
- 3.10 The East Midlands Regional Assembly is currently undertaking a review of RSS8, with particular emphasis being placed on future housing needs for the East Midlands Region and its various sub-regions. This will result in a new housing requirement for North West Leicestershire through to 2021.

#### **Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan**

- 3.11 The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan was adopted on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005. The adopted Structure Plan provides strategic guidance to 2016, but its policies are only saved for 3 years from the date of its adoption (unless the First Secretary of State agrees otherwise). Where Structure Plan policies have been superseded by those of RSS8, the latter will apply.

- 3.12 The Written Statement of the Structure Plan can be viewed at **[www.leics.gov.uk](http://www.leics.gov.uk)**.
- 3.13 The District Council must have regard to the saved policies and proposals of the Structure Plan in preparing its LDF.
- 3.14 References to the “Structure Plan” in this document are always to the adopted Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan.

### **Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire**

- 3.15 The Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire – *Working together for a Better Future* – covers the period up to 2010. It sets out a framework for service providers, local authorities and local communities to work together to improve the quality of life for local people.
- 3.16 The Community Strategy has been prepared by the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire to reflect the needs and aspirations of local people. It can be viewed at **[www.nwleics.gov.uk/nwlppartnership](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/nwlppartnership)**.
- 3.17 The District Council must have regard to the Community Strategy in preparing its LDF.
- 3.18 The Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire is currently being reviewed.

### **Other Strategies**

- 3.19 Other relevant strategies include:
- North West Leicestershire Cultural Strategy (Draft) 2002;
  - North West Leicestershire Housing Strategy (Draft) 2004-2007;
  - North West Leicestershire Social Inclusion Strategy 2005;
  - 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.
- 3.20 The District Council is also preparing a Regeneration Strategy for North West Leicestershire. There will be close links between this strategy and the LDF.

#### **4. SPATIAL VISION**

- 4.1 It is essential that the Core Strategy Development Plan Document for North West Leicestershire is based on a clear and well-articulated spatial vision for the future of the District.
- 4.2 This spatial vision should rest on strong sense of local identity.

##### **Community Strategy Vision**

- 4.3 The Community Strategy sets out a vision for the future of North West Leicestershire. This vision aims at making communities more sustainable.
- 4.4 Key elements of this vision are:
- Greater community spirit and involvement;
  - Enhanced physical, spiritual and mental well being;
  - Making North West Leicestershire a more attractive place to work live and visit; and
  - Improved access to services.
- 4.5 The Local Development Framework has a key role to play in delivering the spatial aspects of this vision (for example, ensuring that any new development has good access to local facilities).

**Q1**

***How should the Core Strategy DPD contribute to the achievement of the vision of the Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire?***

##### **Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy**

- 4.6 The Core Strategy DPD will need to articulate the “spatial vision” for North West Leicestershire. In doing so it will need to have regard to the vision of the Community Strategy and to the national and regional planning objectives discussed earlier.
- 4.7 Such a spatial vision could cover:
- Improved economic, social and cultural vitality and prosperity across the District;
  - An environmentally, socially and economically sustainable pattern of development taking in the towns and villages of the District;
  - Creation of thriving and vibrant town centres in Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch;
  - A high quality of design in new development involving the minimum use of “greenfield” land;
  - Improved access to jobs and services across the District;
  - Protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment of the District;
  - Progress in achieving the objectives of the National Forest; and
  - Provision of high quality public transport.

**Q2**

***What should be the spatial vision for North West Leicestershire?***

### **Timescale for the Core Strategy**

- 4.8 On the basis of current national planning policies the timescale for the Core Strategy DPD would be 10 years. This would accord with the period covered by the Structure Plan (ie up to 2016). However, the timescale of RSS8 extends to 2021. In July 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published the consultation paper *Planning for Housing Provision*. This proposes a rolling 5-year housing supply within a 15-year time horizon, consistent with RSS8.

**Q3**

***Should the Core Strategy DPD look forward to 2016 or 2021?***

## 5. OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document must set out spatial objectives that will underpin the strategic policies of the Local Development Framework and provide the basis for subsequent DPDs. It will be necessary to relate these local objectives to those at national and regional levels and to those of the Community Strategy.

### National and Regional Planning Objectives

- 5.2 The central aim of national planning policy is the promotion of sustainable development. The key national policy objectives that flow from this aim are to:

- *Promote urban and rural regeneration;*
- *Promote a sustainable economy;*
- *Promote communities which are healthy, safe and crime free;*
- *Bring forward sufficient suitable land for development in the right places;*
- *Give high priority to ensuring access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities;*
- *Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail development, in existing centres;*
- *Give priority to protecting the natural environment;*
- *Promote the more efficient use of land;*
- *Reduce the need to travel particularly by car and encourage public transport provision.*

- 5.3 These objectives have been taken forward and expanded in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

### Community Strategy Aims

- 5.4 The Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire has the following aims, ie to:

- *Improve the physical, mental and spiritual health of people in North West Leicestershire;*
- *Reduce inequalities in health between different groups and areas in the District;*
- *Enable people to feel reassured and safer on the street and at home;*
- *Improve the skills and knowledge of people in the District;*
- *Make sure we treat everyone fairly and understand people's different needs whatever their background and circumstances;*
- *Attract and develop new businesses that provide long-term and higher paid jobs;*
- *Revitalise our town centres as hubs for local retail, leisure and business uses; and*
- *Ensure an adequate supply of quality affordable housing with high-energy efficiency.*

### District Council Aims and Priorities

- 5.5 The District Council has adopted a number of key strategic aims. These 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).

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

- Revitalise Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch 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.

5.7 The LDF will provide an opportunity for addressing the spatial aspects of relevant aims and priorities in a cross-cutting manner.

### Links between National and Local Objectives

5.8 The following table groups the aims of the Community Strategy and the District Council within the various national planning policy objectives:

<b>National</b>	<b>Community Strategy</b>	<b>District Council Corporate</b>
Promote urban and rural regeneration	To improve the physical, mental and spiritual health of people in North West Leicestershire	Provide for the community clean and tidy public areas which are enhanced by attractive parks and open spaces Improve the streetscene
Promote a sustainable economy	To improve the skills and knowledge of people in the District  To attract and develop new businesses that provide long-term and higher paid jobs	Work in partnership in making well paid and quality jobs available; building a matching employment base
Promote communities which are healthy, safe and crime free	People to feel reassured and safer on the street and at home  To reduce inequalities in health between different groups and areas in the District	Develop with partners strong and safer communities which will have a reduced level of crime and disorder Develop strong, inclusive communities
Bring forward sufficient suitable land for development in the right places	To attract and develop new businesses that provide long-term and higher paid jobs To ensure an adequate supply of quality affordable housing with high-energy efficiency	Ensure that everyone has access to accommodation they can afford
Give high priority to ensuring access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities	To make sure we treat everyone fairly and understand people's different needs whatever their background and circumstances	Increase opportunities and participation in healthy activities, working in partnership with others and to address public health issues
Focusing developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail development, in existing centres	To revitalise our town centres as hubs for local retail, leisure and business uses	Revitalise Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centres

<i>Give priority to protecting the natural environment</i>		<i>Reduce, recycle and re-use waste</i>
<i>Promote the more efficient use of land</i>		
<i>Reduce the need to travel particularly by car and encourage public transport provision</i>		

**Q4**

***Do the aims of the Community Strategy and District Council, when read with current national and regional planning policy objectives, provide an appropriate basis on which to develop the spatial objectives of the core strategy and policies of the LDF for North West Leicestershire;***

***Is there a good fit between the local aims and priorities and the national and regional planning objectives that need to be addressed; and***

***How should the various aims and objectives be brought together to provide a clear set of spatial objectives for the LDF?***

### **Spatial Objectives**

5.9 The core spatial objectives that could flow from the national, regional, community strategy and corporate objectives discussed above could include the following; ie to:

- Promote urban and rural regeneration, with sustainable economic development;
- Provide sufficient opportunities for the attraction and development of new and expanding businesses that provide higher quality employment in the District;
- Bring forward sufficient land for housing and employment land development to meet established regional and strategic requirements;
- Focus new residential, employment and retail development within and adjoining the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch;
- Diversify the rural economy to ensure that rural services and employment are maintained;
- Encourage the revitalisation of the town centres of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch;
- Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet identified needs;
- Reduce the need to travel particularly by car and encourage the use of public transport;
- Improve access to jobs, services and facilities across the District;
- Provide a pattern of development which assists in the creation of communities that are healthy, safe and crime free;
- Promote a high quality of design in all new development;
- Protect and enhance the natural and built environment of North West Leicestershire; and
- Protect the District's historic and cultural heritage from loss or damage resulting from development.

**Q5**

***What should be the spatial objectives for North West Leicestershire?***

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## 6. OVERALL SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 6.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document must establish the overall spatial strategy which will then be reflected in subsequent DPDs.

### Strategic Framework

- 6.2 National planning policies, together with those of Regional Spatial Strategy and the Structure Plan, provide the strategic framework for the preparation of the spatial strategy for North West Leicestershire through the Core Strategy DPD of its Local Development Framework.

- 6.3 The key features of this strategic framework are:

- A sequential approach to the location of new development;
- A sustainable basis for such development;
- Concentrating development in urban areas, including Sub-Regional Centres such as Coalville and market towns such as Ashby-de-la-Zouch;
- Designating Rural Centres for limited growth;
- Reviewing the limits of the Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington Green Wedge;
- Reviewing designated Areas of Separation between settlements; and
- Providing for appropriate development in the Countryside.

### Sequential Approach

- 6.4 Policy 2 of RSS8 sets out a “sequential approach” to the location of new development that accords with current national planning policies. This approach requires the selection of land for development in LDFs to take the following priority order:

- (a) Suitable previously developed sites and buildings within urban areas that are or will be well served by public transport;
- (b) Other suitable locations within urban areas not identified as land to be protected for amenity purposes;
- (c) Suitable sites in locations adjoining urban areas, which are or will be well served by public transport, particularly where this involves the use of previously developed land; and
- (d) Suitable sites in locations outside of (that is not adjoining) urban areas, which are or will be well served by public transport, particularly where this involves the use of previously developed land.

- 6.5 This policy will form the basis for site selection in the LDF, but there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q6**

***Does RSS8 Policy 2 provide a sufficient basis for the sequence of choosing sites for new development in North West Leicestershire; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

### Sustainable Basis for Development

- 6.6 Policy 3 of RSS8 sets out criteria for ensuring that any new development meets established sustainability criteria. In order to meet this objective Policy 3 must be read

together with Policy 2 of RSS8. The criteria set out in Policy 3 are:

- *The availability and location of previously developed land and vacant or under-used buildings;*
- *The accessibility of development sites by non-car modes and the potential to improve such accessibility to town centres, employment, shops and services;*
- *The capacity of existing infrastructure, including the highway network, public transport, utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development;*
- *Physical constraints on the development of land, including, for example, the level of contamination, stability and flood risk;*
- *The impact that the development of sites will have on the region's natural resources, environmental and cultural assets and the health of local people;*
- *The likelihood that the site can be viably developed, taking into account the availability of resources (both public and private); and*
- *The suitability of sites for mixed use development and the contribution that development might make to strengthening local communities.*

- 6.7 This policy will form the basis for ensuring that any new development in the District meets established sustainability criteria, but there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q7** ***Does RSS8 Policy 3 provide a sufficient basis for assessing the suitability of land for development in North West Leicestershire; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

### **Urban Areas**

- 6.8 Policy 5 of RSS8 provides a very strong urban focus for new development, and identifies Coalville as a “Sub-Regional Centre” capable of accommodating such development. According to this policy, LDFs should:

- (a) *Locate significant levels of new development in and around the region's Principal Urban Areas of Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton and Nottingham and take into consideration the roles of settlements closely related to PUAs;*
- (b) *Locate appropriate development though of a lesser extent in the Sub-Regional Centres in the Three Cities Sub-area: Coalville, Hinckley and Loughborough;*
- (c) *In conjunction with the above, take into consideration:*
  - *The development needs of other settlements and rural areas generally (see Policy 6); and*
  - *The influence of major urban areas outside the region...*

- 6.9 Policy 6 of RSS8 provides the basis for planning policies in the rural areas, but including those market towns (eg Ashby-de-la-Zouch) which have not been designated as Sub-Regional Centres in Policy 5. This policy states that LDFs should ensure that new development strengthens rural enterprise and linkages between settlements and their hinterlands, helps to shorten journeys and facilitates access to jobs and services by:

- *Encouraging the provision of public transport and opportunities for the use of other non-car modes of travel;*
- *Providing for housing and a range of services in market towns to serve a wider hinterland;*

- *Providing for employment development to strengthen the vitality and viability of market towns;*
- *Identifying other settlements, or groups of settlements, which are accessible to the rural population, as the preferred location outside of market towns, for local needs housing including affordable housing and most other services;*
- *Encouraging development opportunities relating to employment on farms and existing rural industries; and*
- *Securing improvements in transport and communications infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that poor linkages have led to disadvantage compared to the rest of the Region.*

- 6.10 It is considered that Ashby-de-la-Zouch would be classed as a “Market Town” in terms of this policy. Views are sought as to whether this designation should apply to any other settlements in North West Leicestershire.

**Q8** ***Apart from Ashby-de-la-Zouch should any other settlements in North West Leicestershire be designated as “Market Towns”?***

**Rural Centres**

- 6.11 “Rural Centres” have been identified in the Structure Plan as settlements capable of accommodating limited growth.
- 6.12 Strategy Policy 2c of the Structure Plan sets out criteria to be used by District Councils to identify Rural Centres within their areas. They should serve a rural hinterland and contain all or most of the following functions:

- (a) *A primary school;*
- (b) *A post office;*
- (c) *A general store*
- (d) *A general medical practice;*
- (e) *A pharmacy (if not within the general medical practice);*
- (f) *Community and leisure facilities;*
- (g) *Additional employment to that provided by (a) to (f) above;*
- (h) *A regular, six day a week return bus service.*

- 6.13 The Urban Housing Potential Study produced for the District Council has advised that the following settlements should be considered as Rural Centres:

- Castle Donington;
- Ibstock;
- Kegworth; and
- Measham.

- 6.14 It is intended that Rural Centres will be identified in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q9** ***Which settlements should be designated as “Rural Centres” in North West Leicestershire?***

## Green Wedges

- 6.15 Green Wedges have been an established feature of planning policy in Leicestershire for some time and this policy has been reaffirmed in the Structure Plan. Strategy Policy 5 of the Structure Plan sets out the main purposes for Green Wedges as follows:

- (a) Protecting structurally important areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development;*
- (b) Ensuring that open land extends outwards between the existing and planned development limits of the urban areas;*
- (c) Preserving strategic landscape and wildlife links between the Countryside and urban open spaces;*
- (d) Preventing the coalescence and maintaining the physical identity of settlements adjoining the main urban areas.*

- 6.16 The policy also states that within Green Wedges land uses will be encouraged that provide appropriate recreational facilities within easy reach of urban residents and promote the positive management of land to ensure that the Green Wedges remain or are enhanced as attractive contributions to the quality of life of nearby urban residents.

- 6.17 Strategy Policy 5 also provides a basis for the control of development within Green Wedges. It states that the following land uses will be acceptable in Green Wedges, provided the operational development associated with such uses does not damage the open and undeveloped character of the Green Wedge:

- (a) Agriculture, including allotments and horticulture not accompanied by retail development;*
- (b) Outdoor recreation;*
- (c) Forestry;*
- (d) Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways;*
- (e) Burial grounds.*

- 6.18 In addition the following types of development will only be acceptable if appropriate measures are taken to minimise severance and adverse effects on the amenity of the Green Wedge:

- (a) Mineral extraction;*
- (b) Road proposals or dedicated public transport routes referred to in the Development Plan, or where there is no alternative route available outside a Green Wedge;*
- (c) Park and ride facilities, if no suitable site outside a Green Wedge is available.*

- 6.19 Provision will be made in Green Wedges for the retention or creation of green links between urban open spaces and the Countryside, and for the retention and enhancement of public access facilities, particularly recreation.

- 6.20 The Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington Green Wedge was originally proposed in the Leicestershire Structure Plan approved in 1994. Its boundary was subsequently defined in the Local Plan.

- 6.21 Although Strategy Policy 5 forms the basis for planning policy within the Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington Green Wedge, there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q10** *Does Structure Plan Strategy Policy 5 provide a sufficient basis for the control of development within the Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington Green Wedge; and*

*If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?*

- 6.22 Strategy Policy 5 could enable the designation of additional Green Wedges where a case can be made in terms of the main purposes identified in the policy. However, any new Green Wedges would have to be associated with planned urban extensions.

**Q11** *Should any other Green Wedges associated with planned urban extensions be designated in North West Leicestershire?*

- 6.23 Strategy Policy 6 of the Structure Plan provides for a review of the boundaries of established Green Wedges (including Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington) and states that such reviews should also have regard to the sequential approach to deciding on sites for new development.

- 6.24 Although the Local Plan defines the limits of this Green Wedge, it will be necessary to review the boundaries as part of the LDF process. This will be undertaken as part of the Limits DPD, but the principles governing the review process will need to be established as part of the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q12** *Should the review of the boundary of the Coalville/Whitwick/Swannington Green Wedge involve:*

- *A limited review of the established boundary;*
- *A more radical approach, where, say, the western part of the Green Wedge (ie the area between Thringstone and Swannington) could be re-designated as "Countryside"; or*
- *A review process which would be closely linked in with the sequential approach to the search for appropriate sites for new development?*

### **Areas of Separation**

- 6.25 Policy 7 of the Structure Plan provides for designation of "Areas of Separation" between neighbouring settlements:

*Predominantly open land between the defined development boundaries of neighbouring settlements which is not part of a Green Wedge but performs an essential function in keeping the built-up areas of those settlements separate may be defined in local plans as Areas of Separation. Within such areas, development will be permitted only where it would not result in a material reduction in the degree of separation between the neighbouring built-up areas.*

- 6.26 The Local Plan defines the following Areas of Separation:



- Hugglescote-Ellistown;
- Ibstock-Heather;
- Coalville-Ravenstone;
- Donisthorpe-Moira; and
- Hemington-Castle Donington.

**Q13**

***Should Areas of Separation identified in the Local Plan remain in force?***

6.27 There may be other areas of land that should be designated as Areas of Separation.

**Q14**

***Are there any other areas in North West Leicestershire that should be designated as Areas of Separation?***

6.28 Policy 7 does not require a review of the boundaries of the designated Areas of Separation. However, changed circumstances may point to the need for such a review as part of the LDF process. This would take place as part of the Limits DPD but the principles governing the review process will need to be established as part of the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q15**

***Is there a need for any amendments to be made to the boundaries of Areas of Separation in North West Leicestershire; and***

***If so on what basis should such amendments be considered?***

### **Countryside**

6.29 Strategy Policy 8 of the Structure Plan provides the basis for the control of development in the countryside. Countryside is defined as land beyond the existing and planned limits to the built-up areas of settlements, which is not land comprising a designated Green Wedge.

6.30 Strategy Policy 8 states that:

*The Countryside will be protected for its own sake. Development in the Countryside will only be acceptable if the general appearance and character of the landscape and the countryside is safeguarded or enhanced. Built development should be well integrated in relation to existing development and designed sympathetically to fit into the local surroundings. Existing buildings should be re-used where appropriate.*

*Development will be limited to the following purposes:*

- (a) Small scale development for employment or leisure;*
- (b) Dwellings essential for agricultural or forestry needs;*
- (c) Affordable housing for local needs adjoining villages in accordance with rural exceptions policies in local plans;*
- (d) Land-extensive outdoor recreation uses that do not include substantial built development; and*
- (e) Agricultural or forestry buildings.*

*In addition, the following uses may be accommodated if: they cannot be satisfactorily located within the existing and planned limits to the built up areas of settlements; it can be demonstrated that there is an*

*overriding need for the development to be located in the Countryside; and appropriate works of mitigation are to be undertaken:*

- (f) Telecommunications installations;*
- (g) Energy installations;*
- (h) Minerals extraction and waste management development; and*
- (i) Transport infrastructure.*

- 6.31 The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies the areas to which countryside policies will apply.
- 6.32 Although Strategy Policy 8 forms the basis for the control of development in the countryside, there may be other more local considerations that may also need to be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q16** ***Does Structure Plan Strategy Policy 8 provide a sufficient basis for the control of development in the countryside of North West Leicestershire; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

#### **Limits to Development**

- 6.33 The Local Plan defines “limits to development” around the various settlements of the District. Within these limits development is to be permitted where it accords with the policies of the plan. Outside these limits only development which is consistent with Countryside and other protection policies is acceptable.
- 6.34 However, there are other ways of controlling the spread of development that can be considered at this stage.
- 6.35 Instead of defining limits to development around all settlements, the District Council could:
- Define limits to development for the larger settlements only with others being subject to “countryside” policies;
  - Replace all limits to development with a policy that assesses proposals against a set of criteria.

**Q17** ***Should the District Council:***

- ***Continue to define limits to development for all settlements in North West Leicestershire;***
- ***Restrict such limits to the larger settlements only, with other smaller settlements covered by “countryside” policies; or***
- ***Replace the limits to development approach with a criteria-based policy?***

- 6.36 If the existing approach is to be retained or modified then it is proposed that the Limits to Development shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map will be reviewed as part of the Limits DPD.

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## **7. HOUSING**

- 7.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will need to address certain key issues in relation to the quantity and distribution of new housing development in North West Leicestershire. In doing so it will provide the basis for its own strategic policies and proposals and for the selection of appropriate sites for development in the Housing Land Allocations DPD.

### **Need for New Housing**

- 7.2 Both the Structure Plan and RSS8 identify a need for 3,150 dwellings to be built per annum in Leicestershire. However, the Structure Plan covers the period 1996-2016, whereas RSS8 refers to 2001-2021.
- 7.3 The Structure Plan gives a specific requirement (368 dwellings per annum) for North West Leicestershire, but RSS8 does not go below a Leicestershire figure.
- 7.4 The Government has advised that the District targets contained in the Structure Plan should be adjusted to reflect the requirements of RSS8. Although the required build rates in Leicestershire are identical account must also be taken of the impact of the two different plan periods.
- 7.5 The Local Plan allocated sufficient land for some 2,666 dwellings for the period 1996-2006. Planning permission has not yet been granted for some of these allocated sites. However, as these proposed housing sites cannot now be regarded as “commitments” they must be reviewed through the LDF.
- 7.6 The District Council has commissioned an independent Urban Housing Potential Study, which has identified the potential amount of housing that could be accommodated within “urban areas” (defined in the study as the Coalville Urban Area, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham). It is estimated that about 1,500 dwellings could be accommodated on the identified “urban capacity” sites.
- 7.7 When allowances are made for the numbers of dwellings already committed (ie built, under construction or with planning permission) and for the future development of urban capacity and other small sites, a “residual” housing requirement for North West Leicestershire is produced. This residual requirement represents the number of dwellings that will need to be accommodated on new greenfield sites within or adjoining existing built up areas.
- 7.8 It is estimated that, based on the Structure Plan, the residual housing requirement for North West Leicestershire for the period 2005-2016 would be roundly 600 dwellings.
- 7.9 However, on the basis of the RSS8, this residual requirement will increase to roundly 1,250 dwellings for the same period. This increase results from the change in the base date from that of the Structure Plan (ie 1996) to that of the RSS8 (ie 2001) and accords with the Government advice referred to in paragraph 7.4 above.
- 7.10 If the plan period is taken as 2005-2021 then the RSS8 based residual requirement would increase to 2,800 dwellings.
- 7.11 Full details of the calculation of the housing requirements for North West Leicestershire can be found in the Housing Background Paper, available from the Council Offices or at **[www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)**.

**Q18** *Does the residual housing requirement identified for North West Leicestershire (ie 1,250 dwellings) represent an appropriate target for the provision of new housing on greenfield sites in the District between 2005 and 2016?*

- 7.12 A target of 1,250 dwellings would need between 30 and 40ha of land on greenfield sites.

**Q19** *If the residual requirement of 1,250 dwellings is accepted as the appropriate housing target for North West Leicestershire for the period 2005-2016 is 30-40ha of greenfield land sufficient to accommodate this number of dwellings?*

- 7.13 The overall housing requirement for North West Leicestershire is being reassessed as part of the review of RSS8. This may lead to a need for yet more greenfield land to accommodate the additional dwellings that may be proposed for the District.

#### **Distribution of New Housing Development**

- 7.14 It will be for the LDF to determine how the residual housing requirement should be distributed across the District. This will need to take place in the light of the policies of RSS8 and the Structure Plan.

#### **Urban areas**

- 7.15 Current regional and strategic policies envisage the bulk of new housing development taking place on land within and adjoining Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The precise balance between these two towns and the rest of the District will need to be addressed in the LDF.

**Q20** *What is the right balance for new house building between the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the rest of North West Leicestershire?*

- 7.16 It will also be necessary to decide how the new housing development is to be shared between Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

**Q21** *If most new house building takes place within or adjoining the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch what is the right balance between these two towns?*

- 7.17 The District Council will need a strong evidence base and clear justification for any proposals it takes forward.

**Q22** *How should the District Council decide on the right approach to these issues:*

**and**

***What evidence should be brought to bear?***

### **Accommodating the new housing**

- 7.18 If most new housing development takes place within and adjoining Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch there are a number of ways in which it could be accommodated.
- It could be accommodated on a number of sites in each town;
  - On the other hand proposals have been put forward by developers for major “strategic sites” in both towns, each site capable of eventually accommodating up to 1,500 dwellings.
- 7.19 A “strategic site” is a large greenfield development, adjoining an existing urban area, capable of accommodating a substantial number of dwellings and the full range of community facilities. Development of such sites can be expected to take place over a long period, possibly beyond the current plan period (ie 2016).
- 7.20 Two options for such a strategic site have been put forward by developers:
- Grange Road, Hugglescote – this site was allocated for development in the Local Plan; and
  - Money Hill, Ashby-de-la-Zouch – this site was rejected by the Local Plan Inspector.
- 7.21 There may be other options for such strategic sites that have yet to be promoted or debated.
- 7.22 If a strategic site is the best approach to accommodating new housing on greenfield land adjoining the urban areas, then it is thought likely that only one such site will be needed.
- 7.23 If there is a need for a strategic site then its general location and scale should be addressed in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q23**

***How should new housing be accommodated within and adjoining the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch:***

- ***Should there be a range of smaller greenfield sites;***
- ***Should there be a major strategic site on greenfield land adjoining Coalville, together with other smaller sites if necessary; or***
- ***Should there be a major strategic site on greenfield land adjoining Ashby-de-la-Zouch, together with other smaller sites if necessary?***

### **Rural centres**

- 7.24 Rural Centres may provide appropriate locations for some limited and smaller scale development. The amount of development involved will clearly depend upon the overall need and the amount of new development accommodated elsewhere. It will be necessary to decide what is the appropriate scale of development (if any) for such

Rural Centres.

- 7.25 Whilst the suggested Rural Centres meet certain service requirements it is clear that some have more services to offer (eg secondary school provision, supermarkets) than others and as a result may be more sustainable locations for new development.

**Q24** *What is the appropriate scale of housing development for Rural Centres in North West Leicestershire, both individually and taken together; and*  
*How should the District Council decide this question?*

### **Other villages**

- 7.26 Current planning policies envisage only very limited new development in other villages in North West Leicestershire. A possible exception to this is where a proposal for housing development outside established village limits will meet an identified need for affordable housing. Such developments are usually referred to as “exception sites”.

**Q25** *Should the District Council continue to restrict the amount of housing development in other villages in North West Leicestershire; and*  
*What, if any, exceptions should there be?*

### **Affordable Housing**

- 7.27 A community’s need for affordable housing is a material consideration to be taken into account in deciding planning applications.
- 7.28 The District Council’s existing policy seeks to secure affordable housing provision by negotiation on sites of 1ha (or which are capable of accommodating 25 dwellings) or more in the light of identified needs. The most recently published Supplementary Planning Guidance identifies a need for 104 affordable dwellings per annum in the District.
- 7.29 The District Council has recently commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment for North West Leicestershire which will provide a comprehensive overview of this issue. Furthermore, the Government has suggested that the threshold for requiring affordable housing should be reduced to 0.5ha or 15 or more dwellings.

**Q26** *How should the District Council seek to ensure the provision of affordable housing as part of new developments in North West Leicestershire;*  
*Should the existing approach to the provision of affordable housing be continued; or*  
*Should the District Council set affordable housing targets both for individual sites and for the whole of North West Leicestershire?*

- 7.30 In *Planning for Sustainable Communities in Rural Areas* the ODPM states that development plan documents may allocate sites solely for affordable housing. If this approach is adopted the principle will need to be addressed in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q27**

***Should sites be allocated for affordable housing in rural areas of North West Leicestershire?***

#### **Re-use of Previously Developed Land and Buildings for Housing**

- 7.31 Policy 21 of RSS8 sets a regional target of 60% for additional dwellings to be built on previously developed land and through conversions by 2021. Development Plans should put in place policies to achieve appropriate targets for higher levels of re-use of previously developed land than in the past.
- 7.32 Housing Policy 3 of the Structure Plan states that at least 50% of additional dwellings should be provided in such a way by 2016 and advocates the setting of appropriate targets in LDFs.
- 7.33 In 2004/5 the regional target was met in North West Leicestershire.

**Q28**

***Should the Core Strategy DPD include a District-wide target for the re-use of previously developed land and buildings for new housing; and  
If so what should the target be?***



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## 8. EMPLOYMENT

- 8.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document must address certain key issues concerning employment land provision in North West Leicestershire. This will then form the basis for its own strategic policies and proposals and also for the choice of sites for development in the Employment Land Allocations DPD.

### Supply of Employment Land

- 8.2 North West Leicestershire has seen substantial areas of land successfully developed for employment purposes over the last 20 years.

- 8.3 Policy 23 of RSS8 sets out the regional priorities for employment land; these being to:

- *Ensure that, by the allocation and de-allocation of employment land (B1, B2, B8) through the development plan and spatial planning process and through selective public investment, there is an adequate supply of good quality land for office and industrial uses available for development in sustainable locations;*
- *Bring forward good quality allocated employment sites to meet the specific requirements of potential investors;*
- *Review employment land allocations in their areas to ensure that they are relevant to current and likely future requirements, and that surplus employment land is considered for beneficial alternative use; and*
- *Monitor gains and losses in the overall supply of good quality industrial and office floorspace.*

- 8.4 Almost all of the employment sites allocated in the Local Plan have now been developed or have planning permission. However, any outstanding allocations which do not yet have planning permission cannot now be regarded as “commitments” and so will need to be reviewed through the Local Development Framework.

- 8.5 The District Council has commissioned an Employment Land Study for North West Leicestershire which has advised that:

- There is an oversupply of office space with limited additional growth in office jobs predicted; and
- That there is likely to be a shortfall in land for industrial and distribution uses taking account of land lost to other uses.

- 8.6 This study (which can be viewed on [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)) assesses the suitability of existing employment land provision in North West Leicestershire.

- 8.7 The Structure Plan identifies a requirement for 326ha of land for employment purposes between 1996 and 2016. Some 148ha has been built since 1996 whilst 114ha had planning permission in 2005, leaving a requirement for 64ha of new land to be identified. Details of the calculation of this requirement are set out in the Employment Background Paper available from the District Council Offices or at [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk).

- 8.8 RSS8 does not set out a target for additional employment land as such, but refers to the need to maintain “an adequate supply” of such land.

- 8.9 An “adequate supply” could be taken (in the absence of any other figures) to be the Structure Plan residual requirement of 64ha of new employment land.
- 8.10 However, it could be argued that the District Council should consider two key aspects of an “adequate supply”; ie:
- Catering for local needs; and
  - The contribution that North West Leicestershire ought to make towards regional and sub-regional needs and objectives.
- 8.11 Catering for local needs would be relatively straightforward matter, but agreeing the contribution that should be made to regional and sub-regional needs and objectives could prove more complex.

**Q30** *What is the right balance between local employment needs and the contribution North West Leicestershire makes to regional and sub-regional needs and objectives?*

- 8.12 Within the District both RSS8 and the Structure Plan identify the main focus for new employment development as the sub-regional centre of Coalville and the market town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. However, it will be for the LDF to determine the appropriate balance between these towns and the rest of the District.

#### **Distribution of New Employment Land**

**Q31** *What is the right balance for the provision of new employment land between the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the rest of North West Leicestershire?*

- 8.13 If most new employment land is to be provided on land adjoining Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch it will then be necessary to determine the right balance between these two settlements.

**Q32** *If most new employment related development is focussed on the urban areas of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch what is the right balance between these two towns?*

- 8.14 The District Council will need a strong evidence base and clear justification for any proposals it takes forward through the LDF.

**Q33** *How should the District Council decide on the right approach to these issues; and*  
*What evidence should be brought to bear?*

## Types of Employment Land Development

- 8.15 There is known to be strong demand for national and regional distribution facilities in the District. At the same time there is concern about the supply of land and buildings for new local enterprises and for the expansion of existing firms.

**Q34** *What form should new employment development areas in North West Leicestershire take;*

*Should they be:*

- *Large strategic sites;*
- *Extensions to existing employment areas;*
- *Smaller sites aimed at meeting mainly local needs; or*
- *A mix of the above?*

- 8.16 Concerns have been expressed about the needs of local enterprises and their potential for future expansion.

**Q35** *Should the District Council try to secure employment land to meet the needs of local enterprise and expansion in North West Leicestershire; and*

*If so how should it go about this?*

## Loss of Employment Land to Other Uses

- 8.17 Concerns have also been raised about the loss of existing employment sites to other uses (in particular housing). This is in part a result of the national emphasis on the re-use of previously developed land for new housing, but also reflects the higher market values that can now be achieved for housing development.
- 8.18 The Local Plan identifies certain strategic employment areas which are to be protected (Policy J10) and other employment sites where change of use may be permitted if certain tests are met (Policy J11).

**Q36** *Should the existing Local Plan Policies J10 and J11 be retained; or*

*Should the District Council take a stronger line over the loss of employment land to other uses (such as housing) in North West Leicestershire; and*

*If so how can it do this successfully?*

- 8.19 Current regional and Structure Plan policies do not require the District Council to allocate additional employment land to replace that lost to other uses. Concerns have been expressed that such losses should be taken into account and that additional employment land should be allocated in the LDF to make good such losses.

**Q37** *Should the District Council release additional greenfield land for employment purposes in North West Leicestershire in order to compensate for employment land that has been redeveloped for other purposes (such as housing)?*

### **Skills Development**

- 8.20 Skills development has been identified as a key priority for North West Leicestershire. Most of the issues involved are outside the scope of the planning system, but the LDF may have a role to play in allocating land for initiatives which will foster skills development.

**Q38** *How can the LDF help in promoting greater skills development in North West Leicestershire?*

### **Rural Areas**

- 8.21 Both RSS8 and the Structure Plan seek to promote rural diversification and the provision of sustainable employment in rural areas. Such development is expected to:
- Be of a scale and type that is appropriate to the form, character and setting of the settlement;
  - Have an acceptable traffic impact; and
  - Be consistent with a sustainable pattern of development.
- 8.22 The Local Plan supports small-scale development within village limits together with the re-use of rural buildings for employment purposes.

**Q39** *Should the existing Local Plan policy for rural employment be retained; or  
Should a more positive approach be adopted for the provision of employment land in rural areas in North West Leicestershire?*

### **Tourism**

- 8.23 RSS8 Policy 26 sets out regional priorities for tourism and states that LDFs should:

*...seek to identify areas of potential for tourism growth which maximise economic benefit whilst minimising adverse impact on the environment and local amenity. Measures should include:*

- *Provision for additional tourist facilities including accommodation close to popular destinations that have adequate environmental and infrastructure capacity;*
- *Improvements in the quality of existing facilities and services; and*
- *Improvements to accessibility by public transport and other non-car modes.*

- 8.24 The Local Plan encourages the development of tourism facilities within settlement limits. Outside such limits the approach is more restrictive, with new facilities being

limited to those which are:

- Small scale and essential and close to established tourist attractions;
- Forest related development; or
- Involve the reuse or adaptation of an existing rural building.

**Q40**

***Should the existing Local Plan policy for tourism-related development be retained; or***

***Should the Core Strategy DPD identify specific areas with potential for tourism growth in North West Leicestershire?***

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## 9. ENVIRONMENT

- 9.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will impact on certain key aspects of the environment of North West Leicestershire. Its strategic policies and proposals will provide the basis for more detailed measures in future DPDs.

### National Forest

- 9.2 The National Forest was designated in 1990 and takes in the area between and including the Charnwood and Needwood Forests. The National Forest will comprise a mix of wooded areas, open country and farmland and will include towns and villages. About 47% of North West Leicestershire lies within the Forest boundary.
- 9.3 The original National Forest Strategy was published in November 1994. This strategy was revised and rolled forward in 2004.
- 9.4 RSS8 advocates a regional target of an additional 65,000 ha of tree cover by 2021, with the National Forest seen as an important opportunity in relation to this objective.
- 9.5 Strategy Policy 13 of the Structure Plan sets out the strategic policy basis for the National Forest:

*Within the National Forest, provision will be made for the planting of woodlands with public access, subject to environmental constraints.*

*In appropriate locations within the rural area of the National Forest, development will be acceptable which facilitates its use for agriculture or as a sustainable natural resource. Development which involves new buildings, significant structures or other operations, will be required to be accompanied by proposals for creating an appropriate woodland setting. All substantial development proposals will be required to reflect the National Forest context in their accompanying landscaping and planting.*

*Within the National Forest beyond the boundary of the Charnwood Forest, provision will be made for the creation of new leisure and tourism facilities and for public access, subject to environmental constraints. Development will be acceptable which meets the objectives of the National Forest Strategy in:*

- (a) Providing public access opportunities through the provision of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways;*
- (b) Providing for appropriate sporting activities within a wooded setting, including golf, fishing and water sports;*
- (c) Providing for leisure facilities that can only be established in a planned landscape;*
- (d) Providing landscaped sites to create a mature woodland setting for long-term forest-related leisure development;*
- (e) Promoting natural biodiversity and enhancing the wider ecological value of the environment by providing for habitat creation and nature conservation.*

*Restoration of mineral/waste disposal sites will be required to accommodate one or more of those uses.*

- 9.6 This policy forms the basic planning policy for the National Forest, but there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q41**

**Does Structure Plan Strategy Policy 13 provide a sufficient basis for the promotion of the National Forest in North West Leicestershire; and**

**If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core**



## **Strategy DPD?**

- 9.7 The Local Plan contains more detailed policies for development and for encouraging tree planting within the National Forest. It is envisaged that a review of these policies will take place on a Forest-wide basis, leading to a future National Forest Policies DPD.

### **Leicestershire Forest Park**

- 9.8 Policy 26 of RSS8 states that LDFs should identify areas of potential for tourism growth which maximise economic benefit whilst minimising adverse impact on the environment and local amenity. The associated text refers to the National Forest as an example of such an area.
- 9.9 The Local Plan identifies Ashby Woulds and Measham as appropriate areas for the development of large, new rural recreation facilities.
- 9.10 A proposal has been put forward for the development of a Leicestershire Forest Park based on Conkers at Moira. The facilities provided in such a development could include:
- Multi-activity recreation;
  - Woodland recreation;
  - Water recreation;
  - Visitor accommodation, including a hotel, caravan parking and chalets;
  - Conference facilities; and
  - Related retail facilities.
- 9.11 The principle of such a development will need to be addressed in the Core Strategy DPD.

## **Q42**

***Should the Core Strategy DPD include a policy supporting the development of a major Forest Park adjoining Conkers at Moira; and***

***If so what uses would be appropriate within such a Forest Park and what safeguards should be applied?***

### **Landscape Character**

- 9.12 Policy 31 of RSS8 states that LDFs should:

- *Promote initiatives to protect and enhance the natural and heritage landscape assets, in particular the Sherwood, Charnwood and Rockingham Forests; and*
- *Be informed by landscape character assessments to underpin and act as key components of criteria-based policies for the consideration of development proposals in rural or urban fringe areas.*

*Where not already in place, local authorities should work towards preparing comprehensive assessments of the character of their landscapes to coincide with the review of their development plans, thus enabling the removal of local landscape designations and associated policies from development plans.*

- 9.13 Government policy (as set out in PPS7 *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*) is

now firmly against new local landscape designations. However, existing local designations can remain in place and be reviewed in the LDF.

- 9.14 Government advice also stresses the importance of landscape character assessments. Landscape character assessments have been prepared for North West Leicestershire and the National Forest.

**Q43** ***What role should landscape character assessments play in the Core Strategy DPD for North West Leicestershire?***

**Charnwood Forest**

- 9.15 The Charnwood Forest is a long-established local landscape designation which also takes in land in Hinckley & Bosworth and Charnwood Boroughs. Leicestershire County Council is seeking designation of the Charnwood Forest as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 9.16 Strategy Policy 14 of the Structure Plan deals with acceptable development in the Charnwood Forest:

*Development within or which affects the Charnwood Forest Policy Area will be acceptable where it can be demonstrated to conserve and enhance the character of Charnwood Forest, including its landscape, ecology, cultural heritage, built heritage and recreational value.*

*The siting, scale, design and materials of the development should reflect and complement the character of the surrounding landscape and minimise any harm.*

*Where development may adversely affect the special qualities of the Charnwood Policy Area, it will only be allowed where:*

- (a) It can be demonstrated that there is a clear and overriding need for the development, and;*
- (b) Any harm must be adequately compensated for with respect to the conservation and enhancement of the Charnwood Forest Policy area.*

- 9.17 This policy forms the basis for the control of development in the Charnwood Forest, but there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken in to account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q44** ***Does Structure Plan Strategy Policy 14 provide a sufficient basis for the control of development in the Charnwood Forest; and***  
***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

- 9.18 The boundary of the Charnwood Forest Policy Area is defined on Local Plan Proposals Map.
- 9.19 The Structure Plan does not propose a review of the boundary of the Charnwood Forest, but PPS7 would appear to require such a review.

**Q45**

***Should the boundaries of the Charnwood Forest be reviewed as part of the LDF process; and***

***If so what form should such a review take?***

### **Strategic River Corridors**

9.20 Policy 35 of RSS8 sets out regional priorities for strategic river corridors:

*LDFs... ..should seek to protect and enhance the natural and cultural environment of the Region's strategic river corridors of the... ..Trent, Soar... .., along with their tributaries.*

*Actions of agencies and other bodies including those of adjoining Regions should be coordinated to maintain and enhance the multifunctional importance of strategic river corridors for wildlife, landscape and townscape, regeneration and economic diversification, education, recreation, historic environments and archaeology and managing flood risk.*

9.21 Parts of the flood plains of the Trent and the Soar lie within North West Leicestershire.

**Q46**

***Does RSS8 Policy 35 provide a sufficient basis in relation to the strategic river corridors of the Trent and the Soar within North West Leicestershire; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

### **Design**

9.22 Policy 3 of RSS8 aims to promote constantly improving standards of design and construction through:

- *The use of "design led" approaches which take account of local natural and historic character, for example urban design frameworks, town and village design statements, local "concept statements", countryside design summaries, and "master planning" exercises;*
- *Design and construction techniques that minimise energy use, improve water efficiency and drainage, contribute to the reduction and sustainable management of waste and which consider building orientation at the start of the design process;*
- *Architectural design which is functional, yet which respects local natural and built character;*
- *Increased densities for new housing in line with national guidance;*
- *Access from new development to local facilities on foot, by cycle or by public transport;*
- *Highway and parking design that improves both safety and the quality of public space;*
- *Design which helps to reduce crime, supports community safety and vitality, and benefits the quality of life of local people; and*
- *Approaches to design, layout and construction which takes account of, and where appropriate provides for increases in biodiversity.*

9.23 Strategy Policy 10 of the Structure Plan also promotes good design by seeking development which:

*(a) Protects and enhances the form and local character and distinctiveness of the built and natural*

- environment;
- (b) Ensures that areas of open spaces and green linkages are reserved and provided in new development;
  - (c) Incorporates comprehensive landscaping within and around the development on a scale appropriate to the scale and impact of the development;
  - (d) Maximises conservation of natural resources through the siting, orientation, scale and layout of buildings and spaces;
  - (e) Incorporates innovative design where appropriate, especially in respect of energy efficiency and particularly in urban areas;
  - (f) Takes account of the access needs of all people, including people with disabilities;
  - (g) Minimises traffic nuisance and develops a high quality walking and cycling network;
  - (h) Enhances the feeling of personal safety and minimises the potential for crime;
  - (i) Incorporates ecological sites;
  - (j) Incorporates sustainable drainage systems wherever possible.

9.24 These policies will form the basis for the promotion of good design in North West Leicestershire, but there may be other more local considerations that should also be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q47**

***Do RSS8 Policy 3 and Structure Plan Strategy Policy 10 provide a sufficient basis for the promotion of good design in North West Leicestershire; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

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## 10. RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

- 10.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will have a key role to play in establishing the local perspective on retail development and in giving effect to the District Council's key aim of revitalising its town centres.

### Town Centres

- 10.2 National planning policy now strongly supports sustaining and enhancing the role of existing town centres. Reflecting this priority Policy 24 of RSS8 seeks:

*...to promote the vitality and viability of existing town centres, including those in Market Towns. Where town centres are under performing, action should be taken to promote investment through design led initiatives and the development and implementation of town centre strategies.*

*LDFs should include policies and proposals to:*

- *Bring forward retail and leisure development opportunities within town centres to meet identified need;*
- *Prevent the development of additional regional scale out-of-town retail and leisure floorspace; and*
- *Monitor changes in retail floorspace on a regular basis.*

- 10.3 Central Areas and Shopping Policy 1 of the Structure Plan states that the role of central areas of towns including Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch will be:

*...sustained and increased, and where appropriate expanded, through the provision of retail, leisure, cultural, tourist and other central area facilities, office development and mixed use developments.*

- 10.4 This policy also states that:

*Provision will also be made for measures to improve the accessibility of the above centres, particularly by public transport, and for improvements to the quality, safety, convenience and attractiveness of their environments.*

### Out of Centre Retailing

- 10.5 Turning to out of centre retail development, Central Areas and Shopping Policy 4 of the Structure Plan states:

*New, or significant incremental expansion of retail or leisure and entertainment development should not be permitted in out of centre locations unless:*

- (a) There is a clearly defined and agreed need for the proposed development;*
- (b) No suitable sites are available in the sequentially preferred locations set out in Strategy Policy 3A or in district or local centres providing the development is consistent with the scale and function of that centre;*
- (c) The proposal would not prejudice the development of sites allocated for these or any other purpose;*
- (d) The flow of investment to established centres can be shown to be of a level that will enable their vitality and viability to be maintained and enhanced taking into account the cumulative effect of the impact of other development proposals and outstanding planning permissions;*
- (e) Easy, convenient and safe access for the population of the catchment area on foot or by a realistic choice of transport can be secured;*
- (f) Impact on car use and car parking provision is acceptable;*

- (g) *Impact on car use and car parking provision is acceptable;*
- (h) *Historic and natural environments are not adversely affected; and*
- (i) *Appropriate conditions on the type of goods sold can be applied.*

*There is no requirement for a new regional or sub regional shopping centre within the Plan Area.*

- 10.6 Central Areas and Shopping Policy 2 deals with local shopping provision outside the central areas, while Central Areas and Shopping Policy 5 deals with rural areas.
- 10.7 These policies will form the basis for planning decisions, but there may be other more local considerations that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q48** *Do RSS8 Policy 24 and Structure Plan Central Areas and Shopping Policies 1, 2, 4 and 5 provide a sufficient basis for the promotion of retail development in Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centres and for the control of out of centre retail development in North West Leicestershire?*

#### **Revitalisation of Town Centres**

- 10.8 A key District Council priority is the revitalisation of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centres.
- 10.9 The two town centres have been the subject of “Master Planning” exercises, with partnership working seen as the way forward in both cases.
- 10.10 It is considered that Area Action Plans will be the appropriate planning policy document for each town centre. However, it will be necessary for overall policies to be set out in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q49** *How should the Core Strategy DPD assist in the revitalisation of Coalville and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centres?*

#### **Future Provision**

- 10.11 A retail capacity study has been undertaken for North West Leicestershire. This suggests that the following amounts of additional retail floorspace will be required by 2016:
 

Convenience shopping	700-1,445 sq m
Comparison shopping	3,666-12,265 sq m
- 10.12 The retail capacity study can be viewed at [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk).

**Q50** *Should the Core Strategy DPD promote the development of specific areas of land to accommodate the identified need for additional retail floorspace in town centres in North West Leicestershire; or*  
  
*Should it restrict itself to a criteria-based policy and respond to developments as they emerge?*

## 11. LEISURE

- 11.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will need to address certain key leisure related issues via its strategic policies and proposals. These will then provide the basis for a more detailed approach, including a future Recreation and Open Space Provision DPD.

### Recreation Land and Buildings

- 11.2 Policy 33 of RSS8 seeks to:

*...ensure that there is adequate provision of sports and recreational facilities consistent with the priorities for urban and rural areas outlined in Policies 5 and 6, and the relevant Sub-area policies ....*

*Where appropriate, local authorities should also work across administrative borders to ensure that identified need is met in the most effective manner.*

- 11.3 Leisure Policy 3 of the Structure Plan seeks to protect existing recreation land and buildings:

*It will not be acceptable for land or buildings in recreation use and serving a particular community to be developed for non recreational use unless:*

- a) suitable alternative provision results in at least the equivalent community benefit and is made close enough to serve the same community;*
- b) the site no longer provides open space or other facilities which are required for private or public use; or*
- c) the benefits to the community arising from the development would outweigh the loss of the land or building.*

- 11.4 The District Council has recently commissioned an audit of open space and recreation facilities and needs in North West Leicestershire (in line with advice contained in PPG17 *Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation*). This will be used to inform a future Recreation DPD.

**Q51 Do RSS8 Policy 33 and Structure Plan Leisure Policy 3 provide a sufficient basis for future leisure provision in North West Leicestershire; and**

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

### Water Recreation

- 11.5 Leisure Policy 5 of the Structure Plan deals with the development of new areas of water for recreation use and associated development:

*The development of new areas of water for recreational use will be encouraged where they do not cause unacceptable damage to the existing water supply.*

*The development of related recreation facilities in the vicinity of the waterways network on sites in or adjoining settlements will be encouraged.*



**Q52**

*Does Structure Plan Leisure Policy 5 provide a sufficient basis for the control of development of water recreation areas and associated facilities in North West Leicestershire; and*

*If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?*

## 12. TRANSPORT

- 12.1 Improvements to transport infrastructure and services are addressed in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) produced by Leicestershire County Council.
- 12.2 However, the Local Development Framework and its Core Strategy Development Plan Document will have a role to play in reducing the need to travel through the location of new development and its relationship with the transport network, and in dealing with the spatial aspects of transport proposals.

### Transport Objectives

- 12.3 Policy 43 of RSS8 sets out the following transport objectives for LDFs:

- *To support sustainable development in the Region's Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres...;*
- *To promote accessibility and overcome peripherality in the Region's rural areas...;*
- *To support the Region's regeneration priorities...;*
- *To promote improvements to inter-regional and international linkages that will support sustainable development within the Region;*
- *To improve safety across the Region and reduce congestion, particularly within the Region's Principal Urban Areas and on major inter-urban corridors;*
- *To promote opportunities for modal shift away from the private car and road based freight transport across the Region.*

- 12.4 The above objectives, which also underpin the policies of the LTP, will need to apply to the LDF, but there may also be other more local issues that should be taken into account.

### Q53

***Does RSS8 Policy 43 provide a sufficient basis for transport policy in North West Leicestershire in the Core Strategy DPD; and***

***If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?***

### Sustainable Transport

- 12.5 Policy 44 of RSS8 states that local authorities and other bodies should:

*... work together to achieve a progressive reduction over time in the rate of traffic growth in the East Midlands and support delivery of the national Public Service Agreement congestion target. This should be achieved by promoting measures to:*

- *encourage behavioural change;*
- *reduce the need to travel;*
- *restrict unnecessary car usage;*
- *manage the demand for travel;*
- *significantly improve the quality and quantity of public transport; and*
- *encourage cycling and walking for short journeys.*

- 12.6 The LDF may have a significant role to play in relation to promoting the measures

identified in RSS8 Policy 44.

**Q54** *Are the measures identified in RSS8 Policy 44 sufficient to secure sustainable transport in North West Leicestershire; and*

*If not are there any other measures that should be included in the Core Strategy DPD?*

### **East Midlands Airport**

12.7 Current national, regional and strategic policies support the operational expansion of East Midlands Airport subject to appropriate environmental safeguards.

12.8 Policy 57 of RSS8 states that LDFs should:

- *Provide for the further operational expansion of NEMA within its boundaries subject to rigorous assessment of the full range of impacts;*
- *Consider the surface access needs of NEMA as part of the wider transport strategy for the area, paying particular regard to the role of buses and coaches, cycling and walking;*
- *Assess the measures necessary to increase the share of trips to NEMA made by public transport in accordance with agreed targets;*
- *Ensure that transport proposals are compatible with the need to create effective public transport links to NEMA for the long term;*
- *Identify and safeguard land for improving access to NEMA, particularly by non-car modes, and including a fixed rail link to support expansion in the long-term;*
- *Give particular encouragement to the transfer of freight traffic generated by NEMA from road to rail; and*
- *Seek to ensure that travel plans are brought forward for new development at NEMA.*

12.9 Accessibility and Transport Policy 13 of the Structure Plan addresses the operational needs of the Airport and states that:

*Provision will be made for the operational needs of the East Midlands Airport and for improved surface access to the Airport, subject to an evaluation of the potential benefits of any such development to the Leicestershire and East Midlands economy against the environmental harm associated with the expansion of air transport.*

12.10 These policies will provided the basis for planning decisions relating to the Airport, but there may be other more local considerations which should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD.

**Q55** *Do RSS8 Policy 17 and Structure Plan Accessibility and Transport Policy 13 provide a sufficient basis for future development at East Midlands Airport; and*

*If not are there any other factors that should be taken into account in the Core Strategy DPD?*

12.11 The Airport Company is now reviewing its master plan, as required by the recent Government White Paper. It is envisaged that the results of this review will feed into an

Airport Action Area Plan, produced by the District Council as part of its LDF.

12.12 Policy 17 of RSS8 advocates:

*...an approach to optimising the economic benefits of Nottingham East Midlands Airport consistent with sustainable patterns of development and movement*

12.13 However, Policy 16 of RSS8 states that:

*Development associated with Nottingham East Midlands Airport should be focussed where possible, in surrounding urban areas, in particular the Principal Urban Areas of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham and the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough.*

12.14 The adopted Local Plan provides for the development of operational land at the Airport.

**Q56** *Should development at and adjoining East Midlands Airport continue to be restricted to that which is necessary for the operation of the Airport?*

#### **National Forest Line**

12.15 The District Council supports the reopening to passenger traffic of the National Forest railway line between Leicester and Burton. The issues involved in this reopening are mainly to do with funding. However, the planning system can have a role to play in safeguarding the route and seeking developer contributions for such things as station sites.

**Q57** *Should the Core Strategy DPD address the reopening to passengers of the National Forest Line; and*

*If so how should the Core Strategy DPD further this objective?*

#### **Road Infrastructure**

12.16 The last 20 years have seen considerable road building in North West Leicestershire, including the construction of the A42 and the A50, and improvements to the A511 (including the Coalville relief road and the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Bypass).

12.17 Improvements are currently envisaged at M1 Junctions 23a/24/24a (including a bypass for Kegworth), together with the dualling of the A453 north of M1 Junction 24. The LDF will have a role to play in safeguarding land for such improvements.

**Q58** *Should the Core Strategy DPD seek the provision of any new road infrastructure in North West Leicestershire; and*

*If so what should be sought?*

## Ashby Canal

12.18 The Local Plan contains policies to safeguard the historic route of the Ashby Canal and to promote its reopening from Snarestone through to its northern terminus.

12.19 Local Plan Policy T16 states:

*Development will not be permitted which would prejudice the re-opening of Ashby Canal, as identified on the Proposals Map, and associated canalside facilities. In the event of the canal being reopened, development outside Limits to Development, shown on the Proposals Map, will only be permitted where it is strictly ancillary to the use of the canal as a navigable waterway.*

12.20 Local Plan Policy T17 states:

*Reconstruction of the Ashby Canal between Snarestone and Swains Park, together with any necessary diversions from, extensions to or missing links in its historic route (as protected by Policy T16) will be permitted, provided such reconstruction or new construction is arranged so as to minimise any adverse visual impact on the countryside and nearby settlements.*

12.21 The Ashby Canal between Donisthorpe and Conkers at Moira has now been reopened. Leicestershire County Council is promoting the reconstruction of the canal between Snarestone and Measham. Reopening of the section of the canal between Measham to Donisthorpe remains a longer-term prospect.

**Q59**

***Are Local Plan Policies T16 and T17 still appropriate in relation to the reopening of the remaining portions of the Ashby Canal?***

### **13. SOCIAL INCLUSION**

- 13.1 The District Council has adopted a Social Inclusion Strategy for North West Leicestershire. This seeks to address issues of social exclusion in the District. Social exclusion is a short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes and poor housing.
- 13.2 The planning system can have a general impact on a number of these issues and also has a specific impact in terms of such things as affordable housing and access to facilities.

**Q60**

***How can the LDF help in promoting social inclusion?***

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## 14. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

- 14.1 Developer contributions (also known as “planning obligations” or “Section 106 Agreements”) may be sought in relation to new development where appropriate. It will be necessary for the Core Strategy Local Development Document to spell out general policies about the principles and use of such obligations.

### Existing Policy

- 14.2 Strategy Policy 11 of the Structure Plan sets out the following approach to developer contributions:

*Developers should meet the requirements for, and costs of, relevant infrastructure and facilities and other resources required to support the development. A comprehensive assessment of these requirements will be made.*

### Revised Approach

- 14.3 ODPM Circular 05/2005 (*Planning Obligations*), whilst retaining the “necessity tests” (ie that any planning obligation sought must be reasonable and necessary from a planning point of view), identifies three categories where such obligations would be appropriate:
- To **prescribe** the nature of a development (eg by including some affordable housing);
  - To **compensate** for loss or damage that would result from the development (eg loss of open space); and
  - To **mitigate** a development’s impact (eg through increased public transport provision).
- 14.4 In all cases the outcome should be that the proposed development is made to accord with published local, regional and national planning policies.

**Q61**

***Should Structure Plan Strategy Policy 11 be enlarged upon in the Core Strategy DPD to take in the three categories of need for planning obligations identified in ODPM Circular 05/2005; and***

***Should the Government’s “necessity tests” be given greater prominence in the policy?***

- 14.5 Circular 05/2005 advises planning authorities to include general policies dealing with the principles and use of planning obligations, including the matters to be covered by such obligations and the factors that will be taken into account.

**Q62**

***In what circumstances should planning obligations be sought;***

***What matters should be covered by such obligations; and***

***What factors should be taken into account?***



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**15. MAKING YOUR CONTRIBUTION**

- 15.1 We welcome your views on the issues and options raised in this document, together with comments on any other matters you wish to raise in relation to the content of the forthcoming Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
- 15.2 If you are responding a particular issue please quote the appropriate question number (eg **Q23**) which appears in the left-hand margin of this document.
- 15.3 Please send your comments, in writing, to:

**The Manager for Planning and Environment  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices  
Whitwick Road  
COALVILLE  
LE67 3FJ**

- 15.4 Or by e-mail to:  
  
**planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk**
- 15.5 To be received not later than: **FRIDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

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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>	<p>The purpose of the Examination is to consider if the development plan is sound.</p> <p>The majority of representations made at Examination will usually be 'written representations'. However, in some instances a Planning Inspector may allow representations to be examined by way of oral hearings, for example round table discussions, informal hearing sessions and formal hearing sessions.</p>
<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 Development Scheme</i> and <i>Annual Monitoring Reports</i> . 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</b>	Sets out the Council's programme for preparing <i>Local Development</i>

<b>(LDS):</b>	<i>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'.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal (SA):</b>	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 <i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i> .