

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Background to the Plan

1.1 The Broxtowe Local Plan sets out the Council's policies and proposals for development and use of land in the borough and covers the period up to 2011. The Plan has been prepared following wide ranging consultation with relevant organisations, including businesses, having an interest in the area, and with members of the public and amenity groups. It will provide a context for and a means to co-ordinate other Council strategies and initiatives, including housing, economic development and local agenda 21 matters.

1.2 This introduction sets out the background to and context for the Plan, and describes its form and content.

1.3 The Council is obliged, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and subsequent Guidance Notes and Regulations, to prepare and maintain an up-to-date development plan for its area. The government sets out the role of the development plan in PPG1 General Policy and Principles (1997) as follows:

'The planning system regulates the development and use of land in the public interest. The system as a whole, and the preparation of development plans in particular, is the most effective way of reconciling the demand for development and the protection of the environment. Thus it has a key role to play in contributing to the government's strategy for sustainable development by helping to provide for necessary development in locations which do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs'.

1.4 The Plan provides the framework for decisions on development proposals unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore particularly important that the Local Plan is reviewed regularly. Government guidance suggests that a local plan review may be prompted by a review of the relevant structure plan and should examine the effectiveness of existing policies and proposals, together with the need for new ones to reflect changing circumstances.

1.5 The previous Broxtowe Local Plan was adopted in 1994. In recognition of the many changed circumstances since then, the review re-examined the whole of that Plan although where policies have continued relevance and have worked in practice, they are carried forward into this document.

The Context for the Plan

1.6 The context for this plan is set by the principal factors referred to in the following paragraphs.

1.7 National Planning Policy: is one factor that shapes the content of the plan. This is developed through primary legislation, Circulars, White Papers, parliamentary statements, and the series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes, now being gradually replaced by Planning Policy Statements. PPGs are referred to where appropriate under individual chapters and a list of current PPGs is attached as Appendix 11.

1.8 Regional Planning Guidance: this currently takes the form of RPG8

(January 2002). Revised regional planning guidance is being prepared by the East Midlands Regional Assembly working with the Government Office for the East Midlands, local authorities and others.

1.9 The Nottinghamshire Structure Plan: the Structure Plan sets the strategic context for development and environmental protection in the borough and the local plan is required to be in general conformity with its policies and proposals. A revised Structure Plan was adopted in 1996, covering the period up to 2011. This plan recognises the significance of south Nottinghamshire as a magnet for economic growth, and this is reflected in the policies for provision of new employment and housing which are to be balanced with measures for environmental protection. The main land use obligations of the Structure Plan for Broxtowe for the period 1991-2011 are:

- Housing: the borough is required to identify land to accommodate 5,500 dwellings;
- Employment: it is necessary to identify land to accommodate 90 hectares of employment development, plus around 25 hectares for a business park (however the Structure Plan authorities have subsequently accepted the Broxtowe Local Plan Inquiry Inspector's opinion that the business park is no longer needed);
- Environmental protection: a green belt will be maintained around Nottingham and the borough council needs to identify new boundaries following the identification of land for housing and employment development.

Other policies secure protection of major landmarks and sites of built and nature conservation interest;

- Accessibility: the Plan seeks the co-ordination of development and transport with an emphasis on accessibility by means other than the private car and general minimisation of the need to travel.

A revised Joint Structure Plan for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham has been prepared by the County and City Councils.

1.10 The Broxtowe Local Plan 1994: many policies have stood the test of time well and have been carried forward with little modification.

Broxtowe Borough Council Strategies

1.11 The Broxtowe Economic Development Strategy: the Local Plan will provide the framework for, and support the positive measures taken through, the annually reviewed Economic Development Strategy to secure a wide range of employment opportunities in the borough.

1.12 The Broxtowe Housing Strategy: the Local Plan will support the provisions of the annually reviewed Housing Strategy to ensure a wide variety of quality homes for residents of the borough, including the provision of affordable housing.

1.13 The Broxtowe Community Strategy: the Local Plan will support and implement the priorities and concerns identified in the strategy to promote sustainable development in the borough.

1.14 The Broxtowe Nature Conservation Strategy: the Local Plan

will support the objectives contained in the strategy to conserve and enhance wildlife in the borough whilst encouraging the creation of new habitats in the pursuit of a sustainable environment.

1.15 The Greenwood Community Forest Plan and other leisure and recreation strategies: the Council is a partner in the Community Forest (with other local authorities and government bodies) and the local plan will seek to implement the objectives of the Forest Plan as far as possible.

1.16 The Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan: this Plan, which is prepared jointly by the City and County Councils in consultation with the Borough Council and others, sets out proposals for transport-related infrastructure and funding over a period of 5 years. Its proposals are closely integrated with the provisions of the Local Plan.

The Plan-making Process

1.17 The Council has been committed to following an open democratic process in the preparation of the Plan with liaison and consultation with the community at all stages. The Plan needs the support of the community if it is to be effective and therefore full consideration has been given to advice and representations throughout its preparation. The Council has therefore followed a programme which balances its objective of effective community liaison with the requirements of statutory procedures. Details of the plan – making process are given in Appendix 10.

The Form of the Plan

1.18 The Local Plan comprises a written statement and a proposals

map. The written statement sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and in particular those which form the basis for deciding planning applications. Each policy or proposal is preceded by an explanatory comment in the form of 'reasoned justification' and for clarity, the formal policies are identified in heavy typeface. The proposals map illustrates the policies and proposals by reference to their location, defining sites for particular developments or land-uses and the areas to which specific development control policies apply. Separate, larger scale insets are prepared for each town centre.

1.19 The Plan also includes briefs for the major development sites. These identify the form of development which will be expected, noting any particular constraints, means of access, areas for open space and/or community woodland, requirements for community facilities, and any associated measures to which the development will be expected to contribute. A series of appendices amplify the Plan (such as nature conservation sites and listed buildings) together with other information forming part of the plan, such as car parking, access and open space requirements.

1.20 To accompany the Plan a series of Technical Reports has been produced to provide further information on specific issues covered by the Plan. Input from these Technical Reports directly influenced the content of the policies and allocations in the Plan. These reports study urban land availability; the Green Belt boundary; the need for affordable housing; and the provision of outdoor playing space.

1.21 It is important that the plan is read as a whole, as numerous policies may be relevant to the particular

proposal. The Council has not cross – referenced between policies as this may give the impression that such an holistic approach is only necessary in certain specified cases.

Implementation, Monitoring and Change

1.22 During the course of preparation of this local plan, changes to the planning system have been proposed by the government and these will be implemented under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004. The new system requires local planning authorities to prepare a new type of development plan called a 'Local Development Framework' (LDF). This will not be one large plan covering all aspects of policy and land use as the current local plan does, but splits this down into projects, each with its own individual 'Local Development Document' (LDD), together with a map indicating land uses and constraints similar to that which is already prepared for the current local plan. A 'Local Development Scheme' (LDS) sets out the content and programme of the LDF.

1.23 This local plan can be carried forward under the new legislation for three years after the date of adoption to allow the policies and allocations to continue until each topic is revisited. This means that some new documents will need to be prepared beyond 2007.

1.24 The current local plan will be monitored for the effectiveness of policies and this will direct any changes required when the LDD's are written over the next three years. Housing and employment are already monitored annually to assess the take-up of land and demand for additional sites, together with the details of house types and density and the type of

employment uses requiring sites of certain sizes and locations. This information is published annually and will continue to be gathered and utilised in the new system, with additional monitoring which will be required for other aspects. An annual monitoring report will then be required for the LDS, showing progress with reasons and revisions if the programme falls behind schedule.