

Chapter 2: The Strategy

2.1 The Local Plan is primarily a statement of the Council's land use and transportation policies which will shape development in the borough over the next ten or more years. It will also set the context for other policies and strategies of the Council and other public and private sector agencies, and will provide a framework for partnerships working toward the Council's wider goals. The Plan is both a positive, enabling document – in that it removes uncertainty and guides new development – and a controlling vehicle – in that it seeks to prevent development which conflicts with recognised national and local concerns including those derived following consultation with the local community.

2.2 This chapter reiterates and amplifies the Council's strategy for the Plan. It includes the Council's 'vision' for the plan and the guiding principles which underpin its detailed policies and proposals. From these have been derived a set of strategic aims and locational principles which provide further foundation for policies; each policy is designed to work towards the implementation of one or more of the strategic aims.

THE VISION FOR THE PLAN

2.3 The Council aims to create a successful and prosperous district, providing for housing, employment, leisure and community needs in an attractive, high quality environment. In preparing the Local Plan, the Council's aim has been to follow an open, democratic process leading to a plan which attempts to balance and meet the various, sometimes conflicting, interests of Broxtowe's communities where they live, where they work, and during times of recreation and relaxation. Throughout that process the Council has embraced the principles of sustainable development by using past decisions and development patterns as foundation for present decisions but without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PLAN

2.4 The Plan will provide the framework for land use and development in the borough by:

- applying the principles of sustainability to all development and land use proposals;
- providing space for necessary development while respecting local environments and communities;
- encouraging the most efficient use of land within already developed areas through redevelopment and re-use of land or buildings, and in new development locations;
- improving transport infrastructure and services in a programme consistent with Local Transport Plans;

- making the best use of existing infrastructure and community facilities;
- conserving wherever possible the character of towns, villages and the countryside including wildlife, landscape, historic and archaeological interest, and the best agricultural land;
- bringing forward opportunities for economic development which promote the regeneration of deprived areas and promote the development of vibrant communities;
- providing opportunities for recreation and cultural development.
- Within urban areas, opportunities for the efficient use and reuse of land have been examined so as to provide new housing and employment development opportunities close to existing facilities and services so as to reduce the demand for development land elsewhere and to reduce the need to travel.
- Measures are proposed to ensure that new housing development reflects the local character and variety found in presently developed areas and brings forward a well-designed mix of housing sizes and types, including high density and 'affordable' housing.
- Beyond the existing urban areas, new development has had regard to the existing infrastructure and facilities, including sustainable forms of transport; to agricultural land quality and other environmental resources; and in Green Belts to the purposes of Green Belts as set out in PPG2.

Urban and New Development Areas

2.5 It is in these areas that the majority of us presently live and work and where our future needs will largely be met. Although the plan provides the means to examine and identify land for significant new developments it is worth noting that over 90% of us will continue to live in the already developed areas. Whilst therefore the plan focuses attention on the need for new development it is important that the Council also gives attention to the quality of the environment in presently developed areas and introduces measures to protect and enhance it wherever possible.

- Opportunities will be taken for the best use or reuse of urban land, but protection will be given to the supply of urban open space which offers relief from the mainly built up area and provides opportunity for the enhancement of the urban environment.

Town Centres

2.6 Town centres are most typically recognised for their shopping function although their historical development and individual character emerges from a variety of civic and service uses, and from their central or easily accessible position in relation to the communities they serve. The factors which caused the original concentrations of shops and services remain relevant today and it is therefore essential to recognise and build on the importance of attractive and vibrant town centres.

- The Council will continue to promote each of the four town centres of Beeston, Eastwood, Kimberley and Stapleford as a

focus for shopping and community and leisure related activities.

- Developments will be expected to add or contribute to the attractiveness of town centres by quality design and by the provision of a range of services to meet the needs and demands of the community.
- Accessibility to town centres will be maintained and improved by direct provision of parking etc and/or by contribution toward measures which encourage easy access by a variety of modes of transport, by pedestrians and by people with physical disabilities.
- In parallel with measures to improve the appearance and performance of town centres the plan seeks to prevent the leakage of investment and activity from them by strictly controlling development elsewhere.

Rural Areas

2.7 These areas provide a valuable environmental resource. The closeness of Nottingham City and the passage of the M1 motorway and other main traffic routes through Broxtowe make our open land and villages even more vulnerable to development. It is therefore essential to carefully balance the need for development against the need to conserve all that is best in the borough's countryside.

- The review of green belt boundaries has been undertaken giving priority to the 5 purposes of green belts: to check unrestricted sprawl; to prevent the merging of towns; to safeguard the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and character of historic

towns; and to encourage the recycling of urban land.

- The importance of agricultural land quality, landscape, and wildlife features have been recognised in new development land choices.

Throughout the Plan Area

2.8 Wherever development occurs it will be expected to accord with the highest standards of design. The previously mentioned need for efficiency in the use of land should be seen as a design challenge rather than a reason for compromise.

2.9 Planning obligations have a positive role to play and will be pursued in order to reconcile the aims and interests of developers with the need to safeguard the local environment or to meet the costs imposed as a result of development.

Strategic aims of the Plan

2.10 A series of strategic aims has been developed to provide foundation for policies in this Plan. These aims are:

- meeting the borough's need for new housing, employment development and community facilities;
- encouraging accessibility by means of transport other than the private car and minimising the need to travel;
- encouraging economic development;
- protecting and enhancing urban and rural environments including their cultural, historic and natural heritage;

- recognising and promoting the continued importance of town centres as shopping, commerce and community service centres;
- encouraging the enhancement of existing and provision of new recreation and leisure opportunities across the borough;
- adopting the principles of sustainability.

Locational Principles

2.11 The location of new development is based on the following principles:

- wherever possible, relating new development to existing built-up areas and on previously-developed land
- retaining valuable open spaces within built-up areas
- ensuring that breaks between settlements are maintained
- locating development in proximity to public transport corridors as defined in the Structure Plan, or in other locations with good existing or proposed public transport
- ensuring good road access to new development
- avoiding isolated development in the countryside
- wherever possible, avoiding harm to recognised nature conservation sites, prominent landscape sites, cultural and historic assets or good quality agricultural land
- making optimum use of existing facilities and services or enabling

the provision of new or enhanced facilities and services

2.12 The locational principles the plan has adopted conform closely to the guidance contained in PPG3: Housing. They also take account of Policy 1 in RPG8 which advises that in identifying sites for development a sequential approach should be taken, beginning with previously developed sites within urban areas, followed by other locations within urban areas, locations adjoining urban areas and, finally, locations not adjoining urban areas. In the search for previously developed land, an examination of all urban land was undertaken to identify and assess sites with development/redevelopment potential. The results of the study are shown in Technical Report 2: 'Study into Urban Capacity and the Recycling of Brownfield Land'.

2.13 New development, wherever possible, is proposed on previously developed sites and other suitable land within the urban area and accessible by public transport. Other proposed development sites are located to form urban extensions having regard to the purposes of the green belt. No development is associated with existing nodes in public transport corridors due to the absence of such nodes in the borough.

2.14 New housing development is subject to a phasing policy designed to limit the release of greenfield sites and to allow for development on previously developed sites to take precedence. More detail is given on phasing in the Housing chapter.

2.15 A series of detailed objectives for each subject chapter have been derived from the strategic aims. These are set out towards the beginning of each subject chapter. Each policy in

the plan is designed to meet or work towards the implementation of at least one of these objectives. In this way all the policies in the plan represent a coherent approach towards meeting the same strategic aims.

KEY POLICIES

Sustainable Development

2.16 The Council is committed to the principles of sustainable development. Through its planning decisions the Council has long sought to reconcile the demands of social and economic objectives with the protection of the environment, whilst at the same time involving the public and others in the decision making process. This review adopts a more explicit role for the concept of sustainability, applying it throughout the plan.

2.17 Sustainable development was defined by the 1987 World Commission Report on Environment and Development as: “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. The government was one of some 150 nations which endorsed a detailed document known as Agenda 21 at the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This set out how developed and developing countries could work towards achieving sustainable development and established a direct role for local government through “Local Agenda 21”. The Borough Council has subsequently developed a variety of Local Agenda 21 initiatives, now incorporated in the Community Strategy, to promote sustainability at a local level and adopted a Sustainability Policy in 1999.

2.18 The importance of the planning system in regulating land use and development in a sustainable manner was recognised in the government’s UK Sustainable Development Strategy (1994) and subsequently updated and reaffirmed in ‘A Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for Sustainable Development

in the UK' (1999). The strategy, as summarised in PPG12 paragraph 4.1, sets out detailed objectives to help progress to more sustainable development; these are equivalent to the aims in the 'Sustainable Planning Framework' developed through PPG1 (1997) which remain relevant to the Council's sustainability approach.

2.19 This framework requires the planning system to:

- provide for the community's needs for commercial and industrial development, food production, minerals extraction, new homes and other buildings whilst respecting environmental objectives;
- use already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places in which to live and work;
- conserve both the cultural heritage and natural resources (including landscape, water, soil and air quality) taking particular care to safeguard designations of national and international importance; and
- shape new development patterns in a way which minimises the need to travel.

2.20 This framework has been applied to the Plan in formulating policies and proposals and the Council will take into account the above principles of sustainability in determining future development proposals.

K1 The Council will assess development proposals in the context of the principles of sustainable development.

The Economy

2.21 The local economy has performed well over the last decade and unemployment levels are below the national and county averages. However, the overall figures disguise a number of pockets of higher unemployment in parts of the borough and there have been significant job losses in certain sectors of the economy. The Local Plan will work in conjunction with the Council's Economic Development Strategy to provide the foundations for a diverse, strong and lasting quality local economy. The Economic Development Strategy seeks to harness external funding opportunities and to encourage partnership working with appropriate agencies and private sector partners to secure sustainable economic growth. The Local Plan has a key role to play in this Strategy, in setting the framework for that growth, by ensuring an adequate supply of land and floorspace for employment development and maintaining and developing an efficient communications network.

K2 The Council will make provision for the development of a thriving economy in the Borough by:

- (a) encouraging development proposals which create additional employment opportunities or assist in diversifying the economic base, subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the plan;**
- (b) ensuring an adequate and diverse supply of land and premises for employment development;**

- (c) **ensuring the provision of adequate transportation, infrastructure and services to support development; and**
- (d) **reconciling the demands of economic regeneration with protection of the environment.**

Housing

2.22 Housing is a key priority for the Council, which aims to ensure adequate provision of good quality, affordable homes for private ownership and rental, to meet the needs of the community. The Local Plan will work in conjunction with the Council's Housing Strategy in meeting this objective, by providing for new development, encouraging high densities, securing an appropriate element of affordable housing, and promoting diversity and quality in new and existing housing areas. Accordingly the Plan identifies measures towards meeting the Structure Plan requirement of 5,500 new dwellings during the plan period, including new development sites, the selection of which is undertaken in accordance with the sustainability principles set out elsewhere in the Plan. The Local Plan will also support measures to protect and enhance environmental quality in existing housing areas.

K3 The Council will make provision for the housing needs of the community, including the requirement for new dwellings identified in the Nottinghamshire Structure Plan, by:

- (a) **wherever possible, making best use of previously developed and degraded land and buildings;**

- (b) **locating new housing in areas accessible to employment opportunities, shops and services, and with good access to public transport;**
- (c) **safeguarding valuable environmental and heritage features, including protecting the character and amenity of existing built-up areas;**
- (d) **promoting high quality layout and design at higher densities of development;**
- (e) **securing the provision of an appropriate amount of affordable housing; and**
- (f) **encouraging measures to maximise energy efficiency in housing layout and design.**

Town Centres

2.23 Town centres provide the focus for the life of the community and maintaining their health is therefore of great importance. The centres provide for a range of differing activities throughout the day, including social and cultural facilities, various business uses and residential accommodation, which complement the more traditional shopping facilities. Changes to shopping patterns over recent years, notably the development of out-of-town shopping facilities, have reduced the vitality and viability of traditional town centres leading to loss of shops and services and a decline in the attractiveness of some centres. The Council has taken steps to break this cycle by promoting enhancements to town centres and individual shop units, backed where appropriate by grant aid assistance. Policies of the plan will aim to reinforce the role of the borough's four main centres as the

location for a wide range of retailing and other uses which can benefit from easy access by a choice of means of transport. The Local Transport Plan is committed through mobility management studies for town centres to increase and improve public transport access and conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. For the purposes of Policy K4 (only), "employment" refers to Class B1 uses and not to Classes B2 and B8.

K4 The role of Beeston, Eastwood, Kimberley and Stapleford town centres as the focus for shopping, employment, social, community and leisure uses, combined with residential uses to create mixed development as appropriate, will be maintained and enhanced through:

- (a) provision for appropriate new development;**
- (b) protection of the character and townscape of centres;**
- (c) enhancements to accessibility, in particular by public transport, bicycle and on foot; and**
- (d) safeguarding the character and function of prime shopping frontages.**

The Environment

2.24 The Council places great emphasis on protecting the quality of the environment in the borough. The plan will safeguard key features and habitats and contains detailed policies to protect and enhance environmental quality and amenity in urban and rural areas. In particular, the majority of the borough's countryside will continue to

be protected by Green Belt designation.

2.25 The Green Belt boundary in the 1994 Broxtowe Local Plan was held substantially at the same line as in the previous borough-wide plan issued in 1985.

2.26 The Greater Nottingham Green Belt will continue to be an area of great restraint on development. It surrounds the Greater Nottingham built-up area and links up with the Green Belt around Derby. A major aim of the Green Belt is to help prevent coalescence of urban areas, so as to maintain the distinctiveness of local communities. In addition, the Green Belt will help to protect the countryside from the uncontrolled spread of development and assist in the regeneration of land within urban areas.

2.27 Some additions have been made to the Green Belt where it has been considered appropriate. The largest of these is at the site of the former Moorgreen Colliery, south-east of Engine Lane, where a new community woodland named Colliers Wood was created through a restoration scheme in 1997. Other smaller changes to the Green Belt boundary are described in the Technical Report on Green Belt Review.

2.28 The core of Trowell village is proposed for exclusion from the Green Belt, as it represents a substantial built-up area. Other smaller settlements such as Strelley village, Cossall village and Moorgreen will continue to be 'washed over' by the Green Belt. These settlements have no apparent opportunities for further infilling development and accordingly no

defined areas for infilling have been shown.

2.29 Comparing this Local Plan with the 1994 Plan for Green Belt coverage, the reductions in Green Belt total 94 hectares and the additions total 17.1 hectares. The net loss is therefore approximately 77 hectares, slightly reducing the total Green Belt coverage of the borough from 5232 ha (65.3% of the borough) to 5155 ha (64.4%).

K5 The green belt in Broxtowe will extend to the area defined as Green Belt on the proposals map.

2.30 New development should be located and designed so as not to harm unacceptably the local environment. Accordingly the Council will pay close attention to the juxtaposition of land uses and to the scale and design of new buildings in order to ensure that local character and amenity are properly safeguarded.

2.31 The policies and proposals of this plan seek to provide for the economic and social needs of the borough but at the same time ensuring that the environmental wealth and quality of the borough are protected and enhanced. Where there is an overriding need for development which would result in damage to environmental assets the Council would expect provision to be made to compensate for this harm.

K6 Proposals for new development will be assessed in the context of existing land uses and developments on adjacent land, and planning permission will not be granted where the character and quality of the environment and the level of amenity currently enjoyed would be unreasonably harmed. Where exceptional circumstances

have been demonstrated to support development which would result in damage to environmental assets, the Council would expect provision to be made to compensate for this harm.

Access and Transport

2.32 Good accessibility and transport underpins the borough's economic success and is vital to the individual's quality of life. It is now generally recognised that we must seek ways to reduce our past dependence on the private car. Whilst recognising that the car has brought increased freedom to individuals, including choice of where to live and work, when and where to shop, enjoy leisure and cultural activities and so on, it has also brought increasing congestion and pollution, and led to reduction in the availability of public transport for those who do not have access to the car. The Plan's strategy seeks to improve opportunities for access by public transport, by ensuring that new development is located and designed so as to reduce the need for travel, is accessible by public transport, and encourages movement on foot and by cycle. Notwithstanding this objective, it is recognised that road access will continue to dominate our movement patterns in the near future and the Council will encourage the County Council and Highways Agency to make improvements to the road network where appropriate.

K7 The Council will require that new development is located and designed so as to minimise the need for travel and to encourage accessibility by public transport, cycling and on foot.

The needs of the disadvantaged

2.33 The local plan is primarily a land use document and therefore has limited scope for addressing social needs and problems. Nevertheless the plan can assist in tackling certain forms of deprivation including problems of social exclusion that can exist in urban and rural areas and help provide for the needs of the disadvantaged. Social considerations are particularly relevant to defining the need for affordable housing and encouraging the provision of local employment opportunities. In addition, policies will ensure provision for ease of access in new developments which are intended to be accessible to the public thereby assisting the needs of the disabled and infirm, and will aim to promote a safe environment in new layouts as a means to assist in reducing crime levels.

K8 In determining applications for planning permission, the Council will require that developments make provision for people with special needs, in particular to ensure ease of access and to promote a safe and secure environment.