

North Kesteven Local Plan

North Kesteven District Council
Adopted 2007



districtnk
100 flourishing communities
North Kesteven District Council

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Introduction

- 1.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires local planning authorities to prepare and keep up to date development plans which set out their policies and proposals for the control of development and other use of land in their area. The planning system is 'Plan-led' and, under this, decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the provisions of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.2 In North Kesteven the development plan is made up of:
- **The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) (formerly Regional Planning Guidance (RPG8))** - providing a broad development and planning strategy and policies for the East Midlands Region, with the overall objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - **The Lincolnshire Structure Plan** - dealing with broad strategic issues such as the distribution of population, employment growth and housing provision. Policies within a Structure Plan use general terms and do not refer to specific sites or locations.
 - **The Lincolnshire Minerals Local Plan** - setting out detailed policies and proposals to provide for the supply of minerals and to ensure proper environmental protection.
 - **The Lincolnshire Waste Local Plan** - setting out detailed policies for the management and disposal of waste.
 - **The North Kesteven Local Plan** - amplifying the broad framework of the Structure Plan by setting out detailed policies and proposals for the development of the District over a 20-year period. The Local Plan identifies land for new housing and employment development, and acts as a guide for most day-to-day planning decisions.
- 1.3 In order to secure consistency of approach to planning decisions, the Government, through national and regional policy, sets a broad strategic framework for land use and development which needs to be considered in the preparation of development plans. Development plan policy should implement national and regional policy at local level. The Local Plan has been prepared within this national, regional and strategic planning framework. It has been prepared having regard to central Government Planning Policy and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) which outlines the broad overarching principles for planning at UK and regional level. National planning policy is set out in Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) which are being updated and replaced by Planning Policy Statements (PPSs).
- 1.4 At the regional level, policy expressed in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) has now been replaced by Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Following the enactment of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Regional Spatial Strategies have become part of the statutory development plan. Following the provisions of the new Act all statutory planning documents must now be in general conformity with RSS policies. RPG8 for the East Midlands was published in 2002, covering the period to 2021, and contained the strategic housing requirement figures for Lincolnshire. A partial review of RPG8 was undertaken, being finalised and published by the Regional Government Office in 2005 as RSS8 for the East Midlands, covering the period 2001 to 2021, although the strategic housing requirement was not part of the review. RPG8 (January 2002) was therefore replaced by and became RSS8 (March 2005). However, the County housing provision figures in the 2002 version of RPG8 remain current, and are repeated in RSS8 (2005). RSS8 does not review the housing provision figures, which will be examined as part of the next RSS review.

- 1.5 At the sub-regional County level, the Local Plan is also informed by the Lincolnshire Structure Plan which proposes the broad strategic issues, including housing provision figures and employment provision within Lincolnshire. The Local Plan is set within the higher level strategic framework provided by the Structure Plan and is required to be in general conformity with it. Lincolnshire County Council prepared, reviewed and then adopted the Lincolnshire Structure Plan in September 2006, which covers the period 2001 to 2021.
- 1.6 As a Local Plan under preparation on commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this North Kesteven Local Plan will be saved for a period of three years from adoption.

The form of the Plan

- 1.7 The Local Plan comprises a Written Statement and Proposals Map. The Written Statement contains the policies and proposals in bold italic type to distinguish them from the rest of the text. They are followed by a justification explaining the reasons for the policy or proposal. The policies and proposals that affect a particular site or areas are illustrated on the Proposals Map, which covers the whole District. Where more detail is required, larger scale Inset Maps have been prepared.
- 1.8 Several supporting documents are published with the Local Plan, namely
- **A sustainability appraisal** – demonstrating that environmental issues have been taken properly into account.
 - **A housing capacity study** – examining the potential for new homes to be provided by the redevelopment of previously-developed land and buildings within settlement curtilages.
 - **A strategic flood risk assessment** – examining flood risk issues, and their implications for the suitability of parts of the District to be developed.
 - **Housing and employment land papers** – explaining in more detail the reasons behind the Plan's housing and employment land allocations.

Objectives, Strategy, Monitoring and Review

- 2.1 It is important that the Local Plan should clearly explain the objectives it intends to achieve. This has a number of benefits:
- it allows the Plan's relationship to the Council's overall strategy and to the strategies of other organisations to be understood;
 - it gives the Plan's policies and proposals a context;
 - it allows the Council and other interested parties to examine whether the Plan achieves what it is supposed to; and
 - it will help to make the Plan more understandable.

The Local Plan's objectives – Sustainable development

- 2.2 North Kesteven District Council has set out its aim for North Kesteven to be a District of 100 flourishing communities, and has the following three objectives:
- A good quality of life for all residents
 - A thriving and prosperous economy and
 - A clean, green and safe environment
- 2.3 The Local Plan is intended to make the maximum possible contribution towards the achievement of the Council's general aim and objectives, and is intended to ensure that the on-going development of the District is sustainable – i.e. having a proper balance between economic, social and environmental factors.
- 2.4 The Plan's aim is to ensure that residents' quality of life is not reduced and, indeed, is improved wherever possible. At the same time, the Plan aims to ensure that development during the Plan period does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs and to enjoy a high quality environment.
- 2.5 In more detail, the Plan's objectives are:
- To ensure that the District's economy will grow and become more diverse.
 - To meet the District's need for more and better paid jobs.
 - To promote rural enterprise and diversification.
 - To protect the District's air, soil, and water resources.
 - To ensure that new development is safe (in terms of highway safety, flood risk, risk of crime, etc.).
 - To maximise access throughout the District for everyone, including people with disabilities.
 - To safeguard and enhance the District's historic, landscape, cultural and wildlife assets.
 - To ensure that new development preserves the individual character of the District's different settlements and different landscape areas, and makes the maximum possible contribution to the District's visual quality.
 - To make the best use of the District's existing built-up areas.
 - To reduce people's need to travel, by ensuring that homes, jobs, and services are close to one another.
 - To facilitate walking, cycling and public transport use.

- To meet the District's need for new homes.
- To ensure that people will have access to the recreational facilities they require.
- To make the best use of capacity in infrastructure.
- To sustain and reinforce the role of the District's towns and other service settlements.

Each of the Plan's objectives will contribute towards the achievement of one or more of the Council's three corporate objectives set out above.

Locational strategy

- 2.6 Most of North Kesteven's land area is countryside, but the majority of the District's population lives in approximately 100 settlements that vary greatly in size and service base. They range from the two towns of Sleaford and North Hykeham with populations of over 10,000 people, through 'service villages' that provide for the daily needs of their populations and that of a small hinterland, down to the smallest hamlets that consist of just a few homes. The Council will, with a few exceptions, seek to achieve a sustainable form of development, concentrate new development into existing settlements and, in particular, will use larger settlements as the focal points for housing, jobs, shopping, leisure, services, and public transport. The advantages of this approach are as follows:
1. The character of the District's countryside and smaller settlements is protected, whilst larger settlements can generally absorb growth with less likelihood of harm.
 2. Locating homes, jobs, schools, shops, community, health and recreational facilities close to one another reduces people's need to travel, and facilitates access by public transport, walking and cycling. This has advantages both in terms of being more environmentally friendly, but also allows those sections of the community without a car to have easier access to jobs, shops, and services.
 3. Concentrating development within larger settlements will maximise opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.
 4. Locating non-residential uses in locations where rail accessibility is focussed helps to promote more sustainable transport choices for moving freight.
 5. Concentrating most uses into larger settlements helps to avoid the high infrastructure costs of servicing a widely dispersed rural area.
- 2.7 Regional and strategic policies identify Lincoln as a Principal Urban Area in the region. They seek to achieve the significant strengthening of its regional role and promote a sustainable pattern of development in the surrounding settlements. The Council has drawn up two hierarchies of settlements, one for the Lincoln Policy Area (see Appendix 1 for a list of those parishes within the Lincoln Policy Area) and one for the remainder of the District.

Lincoln Policy Area

2.8 In terms of land within North Kesteven that falls within the Lincoln Policy Area, the first preference is for those parts of the District that function as part of the City's built-up area.

2.9 First tier - Lincoln's built-up area

Although North Hykeham and South Hykeham Fosseway together are a settlement in their own right, they also function as part of greater Lincoln's built-up area. Furthermore, they offer:

- a wide range of employment opportunities, and have significant potential to offer more;
- primary, secondary and adult education;
- significant services (daily and weekly shopping, some specialist shops, financial and office services, medical services, and a range of community and recreational facilities);
- opportunities for travel by public transport, cycle and on foot; and
- relatively significant opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.10 North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway is the first-choice location for development in the North Kesteven part of the Lincoln Policy Area. In identifying land for housing or employment, the Council will focus upon North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway, and will encourage windfall housing and employment developments. It will also be the main location for further investment in shopping, educational, social, health, leisure and community services (provided that this does not conflict with the Structure Plan's promotion of central Lincoln as the most appropriate location for retail and service uses within the greater Lincoln area). Public transport services from the surrounding rural parts of the Lincoln Policy Area are focussed into North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway and consequently these facilities, although centralised, will be accessible to all sections of the community. In identifying sites for development and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within the settlement curtilage.
2. Extensions to the settlement.

2.11 Second tier - Service villages

Bassingham, Bracebridge Heath, Branston, Heighington, Metheringham, Skellingthorpe, Waddington, Washingborough and Witham St Hughs are not directly adjacent to Lincoln's built-up area, but they are all large villages, which offer (or, in the case of Witham St Hughs, is a location where significant development is proposed that will leave it as a large village, which offers):

- a modest range of employment opportunities, with some potential to offer more;
- at least primary and, in the case of Branston, secondary education;
- a service role for a rural hinterland, offering a range of convenience shops, including a Post Office, some community and recreational facilities and, in some cases, medical or financial services;
- public transport services linking to Lincoln and North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway; and
- modest opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.12 The service villages are the second-choice location for development in the North Kesteven part of the Lincoln Policy Area. In identifying land for housing, the Council will consider the service villages after North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway, and will encourage windfall housing developments. The appropriate scale of residential development for each village will depend upon its need for growth (to help sustain existing services and facilities), and its ability to accommodate growth without undue harm to its character and without overloading its infrastructure. New employment development up to a maximum of 5ha will be appropriate, provided it is of a scale to meet local needs only. Service villages are also appropriate locations for further minor investment in shopping, educational, social, health, leisure and community services that will serve the needs of the settlement's community, or that of the hinterland served by the village. In identifying sites for development and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within settlement curtilages.
2. Extensions to the settlements.

2.13 **Third tier - Villages**

Aubourn, Boothby Graffoe, Branston Booths, Canwick, Coleby, Doddington, Dunston, Eagle, Harmston, Nocton, North Scarle, Potterhanworth, South Hykeham, and Thorpe on the Hill are not directly adjacent to Lincoln's built-up area, but they are all significantly-sized villages, which offer:

- limited employment opportunities, with limited potential to offer more;
- no educational facilities or primary education only;
- a more limited range of shops, community and recreational facilities than the service villages;
- more limited public transport services linking to Lincoln and North Hykeham/South Hykeham Fosseway
- limited opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.14 These villages are the third choice location for development in the North Kesteven part of the Lincoln Policy Area. They are not considered suitable locations for housing and employment land allocations. Significant windfall developments will generally be inappropriate, and any proposals will be considered in the context of national and strategic planning guidance and the housing requirements set out in the Local Plan. Small-scale residential infill development of up to 3 houses will be considered on plots in otherwise built-up frontages and on previously-developed land within settlement curtilages, provided it is of a scale appropriate to the village, is necessary to meet identified local needs, or will support local services which could otherwise become unviable. Proposals for affordable housing will be considered under the exceptions policy set down in the Plan. New employment development will be appropriate, provided it is of a scale to meet local needs only, where it provides the most sustainable option for employment in the village. Villages may also be appropriate locations for minor investment in shopping, social, health, leisure and community services that will serve the needs of the settlement's community. Sites for development will not generally be identified, and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within settlement curtilages.
2. Plots in otherwise built-up frontages.

2.15 **Fourth tier - Hamlets**

All other settlements within the Lincoln Policy Area are considered as hamlets. They are not adjacent to Lincoln's built-up area, are small in size, and offer:

- Very few or no employment opportunities, and no potential to offer more
- No educational facilities
- Few or no shops, community or recreational facilities
- Very limited or no public transport services
- Very few opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings. These hamlets are not generally considered as suitable locations for development.

Rest of the District

2.16 **First tier - Town**

Sleaford (including Rauceby Hospital) is the only free-standing town within the District. It offers:

- a wide range of employment opportunities, and has significant potential to offer more;
- primary, secondary and adult/tertiary education;
- significant services (daily and weekly shopping, specialist shops, financial and office services, medical services, and a wide range of community and recreational facilities);
- excellent opportunities for travel by public transport, cycle and on foot; and
- significant opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.17 Sleaford is the first-choice location for development in the part of the District that does not fall within the Lincoln Policy Area. In identifying land for housing or employment, the Council will focus upon Sleaford, and will encourage windfall housing and employment developments. It will also be the main location for further investment in shopping, educational, social, health, leisure and community services. Public transport services from the surrounding rural parts of the District are focussed into Sleaford and consequently these facilities, although centralised, will be accessible to all sections of the community. In identifying sites for development and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within Sleaford's curtilage.
2. Extensions to the settlement.

2.18 **Second tier - Service villages**

Billingham, Heckington, Navenby and Ruskington are large villages that offer:

- A modest range of employment opportunities, with some potential to offer more.
- At least primary and, in the cases of Billingham and Ruskington, secondary education.
- A service role for a rural hinterland, offering a range of convenience shops, including a Post Office, some community and recreational facilities and, in some cases, medical or financial services.
- Public transport services linking to Sleaford and Lincoln; and
- Modest opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.19 The service villages are the second-choice location for development in the parts of the District outside of the Lincoln Policy Area. In identifying land for housing, the Council will consider the service villages after Sleaford, and will encourage windfall housing developments. The appropriate scale of residential development for each village will depend upon its need for growth (to help sustain existing services and facilities), and its ability to accommodate growth without undue harm to its character and without overloading its infrastructure. New employment development up to a maximum of 5ha will be appropriate, provided it is of a scale to meet local needs only. Service villages are also appropriate locations for further minor investment in shopping, educational, social, health, leisure and community services that will serve the needs of the settlement's community, or that of the hinterland served by the village. In identifying sites for development and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within settlement curtilages
2. Extensions to the settlements

2.20 **Third tier - villages**

Anwick, Ashby de la Launde, Beckingham, Blankney, Brant Broughton, Carlton-le-Moorland, Chapel Hill, Cranwell, Digby, Dorrington, Ewerby, Great Hale, Helpringham, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Leadenham, Leasingham, Little Hale, Martin, North Kyme, North Rauceby, Norton Disney, Osbournby, Scopwick, Scredington, Silk Willoughby, South Kyme, South Rauceby, Swaton, Swinderby, Tattershall Bridge, Threekingham, Timberland, Walcot, Walcott, Welbourn, Wellingore and Wilsford are significantly-sized villages, which offer:

- Limited employment opportunities, with limited potential to offer more.
- No educational facilities or primary education only.
- A more limited range of shops, community and recreational facilities than the service villages.
- More limited public transport services; and
- Limited opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

2.21 These villages are the third choice location for development in the part of the District outside the Lincoln Policy Area. They are not considered suitable locations for housing or employment land allocations. Significant windfall developments will generally be inappropriate, and any proposals will be considered in the context of national and strategic planning guidance and the housing requirements set out in the Local Plan. Small scale residential infill development of up to 3 houses will be considered on plots in otherwise built-up frontages and on previously-developed land within settlement curtilages, provided it is of a scale appropriate to the village, is necessary to meet identified local needs, or will support local services which could otherwise become unviable. Proposals for affordable housing will be considered under the exceptions policy set down in the Plan. New employment development will be appropriate, provided it is of a scale to meet local needs only, where it provides the most sustainable option for employment in the village. Villages may also be appropriate locations for minor investment in shopping, social, health, leisure and community services that will serve the needs of the settlement's community. Sites for development will not generally be identified, and in considering proposals for windfall developments, preference will first be given to:

1. Previously-developed land and buildings within settlement curtilages.
2. Plots in otherwise built-up frontages.

2.22 Fourth tier - Hamlets

All other settlements within those parts of the District outside of the Lincoln Policy Area are considered as hamlets. They are small in size, and offer:

- Very few or no employment opportunities, and no potential to offer more.
- No educational facilities.
- Few or no shops, community or recreational facilities.
- Very limited or no public transport services.
- Very few opportunities for the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings.

These hamlets are not generally considered as suitable locations for development.

2.23 In deciding where development should take place, the Council will take account of the above settlement hierarchy. However, it will also take account of certain 'common-sense' issues, i.e. avoiding any locations where:

- Land is unstable to an unacceptable degree.
- Land is at unacceptable risk of flooding.

Monitoring and review

2.24 It is important that the Local Plan is kept as up-to-date and relevant as possible. To achieve this, the Council will monitor those issues that may be expected to affect the development and planning of its area. The Council will publish annual monitoring reports concerned with:

2.25 Housing

- How many new homes have been provided, and in what locations?
- How many new homes are committed in planning permissions and Local Plan allocations, and in what locations?
- How many new homes have been provided by the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings?
- How many new homes have been provided by the development of windfall sites?
- How many affordable homes have been provided, and in what locations?
- The type and size of new homes provided
- The density at which development has taken place
- How many car parking spaces have been provided as part of residential developments?
- How much public open space has been provided as part of residential developments?

2.26 Economy

- How much land has been developed for employment purposes, in what locations and for what use?
- How much employment land is committed in planning permissions and Local Plan allocations, and in what locations?
- How much employment development has been provided by the development of windfall sites?

2.27 Other issues will also be monitored:

- Outcome and nature of planning appeals and enforcement procedures
- Departures from the Plan.
- Population, household, car ownership and labour force data from Censuses.
- Traffic and travel to work data.
- The availability of open space, children's' play space, and outdoor sports space.
- The type, size and location of retail, service and entertainment developments.
- Car parking provision and use.
- The District's environmental assets - its landscape diversity, biodiversity, tree cover, protected species, archaeology, listed buildings, conservation areas and Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

2.28 This monitoring will allow the Council to assess the success and effectiveness of the Plan's policies and proposals, and will help to indicate the need for future reviews.

Core Policies

- 3.1 Any planning application will be judged against all of the policies of this Local Plan. Clearly, for any given proposal, the majority of the Plan's policies will not be of relevance, e.g. policies concerned with development in a Conservation Area will be of no importance in determining applications that are neither within nor adjacent to a Conservation Area.
- 3.2 However, the policies of this chapter are concerned with matters that will be of fundamental importance to most applications, e.g. what the development will look like, whether it will be safe, whether the existing infrastructure can accommodate it, what impact it will have upon other people, and how people will be able to use it. The chapter's policies are also centrally concerned with achieving the main elements of the objectives and locational strategy set out in the previous chapter. For example: they seek to focus new development into existing settlements; they seek to prevent allocated sites being developed for other purposes; and they seek to ensure that new development will not inhibit or prevent the future development of the District. Lastly, they are also concerned with protecting the community and the environment against the possible harmful effects of development – effects that may be only felt locally, or which may have wider importance (e.g. the influence that energy use may have on global climate change). Where appropriate, the Council will require applicants to undertake Environmental Impact Assessment of their proposals in accordance with national guidance, and to submit an Environmental Statement in support of the application.
- 3.3 This chapter's policies will contribute to all three of the Council's objectives:
- **A good quality of life for all residents** - The chapter's policies seek to protect people against flooding and pollution, and to ensure that new development will not harm (and where possible will improve) the quality of life enjoyed by the District's residents.
 - **A thriving and prosperous economy** - The chapter's policies seek to ensure that new development will not harm (and where possible will improve) the District's character and appearance, and the quality of life enjoyed by residents, benefiting the image that the District projects to visitors, tourists and potential inward investors. Furthermore, they seek to ensure that longer-term flexibility in development and land-use is not compromised by new development, which will allow the District's economy to respond effectively to change.
 - **A clean, green and safe environment** - The chapter's policies seek to protect the District's key environmental assets and to ensure that new development will not harm (and where possible will improve) the character or appearance of the District's countryside and settlements. They also seek to ensure that energy, materials and water resources are harnessed and used in a sustainable manner.

Policy C1 – Development within settlement curtilages

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals within settlement curtilages (as shown on the Proposals Map), provided that they:

1. **Will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area;**
2. **Will not increase the pressure for similar development that would collectively cause adverse effects; and**
3. **Are in keeping with the provisions of the locational strategy.**

Justification

- 3.4 Each of the District's larger settlements has a settlement curtilage drawn around it. These settlement curtilages identify those parts of the District where most forms of development will, in principle, normally be acceptable. The Council considers that the use of curtilages gives certainty to developers, landowners and the public by indicating where development will usually be considered acceptable, subject to meeting detailed criteria. It also ensures that, whilst provision is made for growth, the form of the settlement is taken into account.
- 3.5 Curtilage lines are intended to reflect the boundary between a settlement and the countryside that surrounds it. Thus, land with a 'village' or 'town' character should be shown within the curtilage, whilst that outside the developed area should be shown as countryside. Wherever possible and appropriate, curtilage lines follow clear natural or man-made boundaries on the ground.
- 3.6 Although, in principle, development within curtilages is acceptable, all uses will not be appropriate in all settlements. Some settlements have small populations, have little or no public transport services, and are relatively inaccessible (in a North Kesteven context) by any means other than the private car. In accordance with the locational strategy set out in the previous chapter, such settlements would be inappropriate locations for development that will attract significant numbers of journeys by employees, customers or visitors. Developments of this sort should either be located close to centres of population, or be linked to them by adequate pedestrian, cycle or public transport routes. Alternatively, accessibility can be improved to an acceptable standard as part of the development (see policy T1). Similarly, residential development (other than that required to meet local needs – such as affordable housing) would be inappropriate in a settlement that lacks a meaningful service base (employment, schools, shops, recreational facilities, etc.), or pedestrian, cycle or public transport links to such facilities, since it would tend to encourage longer (and predominantly car-borne) journeys. In considering accessibility issues, the Council will be mindful of the fact that the District is predominantly rural, that its population is dispersed, and that opportunities for people to travel by means other than the private car can be limited. Consequently, all judgements of whether a location is relatively accessible or not will be made in the context of the overall levels of accessibility throughout the District. Nonetheless, the Council will wish to ensure that its decisions contribute to reducing overall dependence upon the private car.
- 3.7 The locational strategy (set out in the previous chapter) also dictates that the Council will wish to ensure that the nature and scale of any proposed development is appropriate to the settlement's scale, role and service base. For example:
- Some developments may place major demands upon infrastructure (either due to their nature or simply their scale). Such uses would not be appropriate in a small settlement, but would be better located in larger settlements where existing infrastructure is more likely to be able to accommodate it, or where the costs of upgrading infrastructure to the required level is likely to be less.
 - Some developments may be so large in scale that they would dominate the character or visual appearance of a smaller settlement. A larger settlement would generally be better able to accommodate such a development without harm.

- 3.8 Lastly, not all land within a settlement curtilage will be suitable for development, since its development may harm the settlement's character or appearance. For example:
- Some settlements have an extensive, open character that would be eroded by the development of undeveloped land within the curtilage.
 - Some sites are simply too small to successfully accommodate certain types of development.
 - The development potential of some sites will be constrained by the fact that they have wildlife, recreational, historic, or landscape value (covered in detail in policies in later chapters).

Policy C2 – Development in the countryside

Planning permission will be granted for development in the countryside (as shown on the Proposals Map), provided that it:

- 1. Will maintain or enhance the environmental, economic and social value of the countryside;**
- 2. Will protect and, where possible, enhance the character of the countryside;**
- 3. Cannot be located within or adjacent to a settlement; and**
- 4. Will not attract or generate a large number of journeys, and is located to provide opportunities for access by public transport, walking or cycling.**

Justification

- 3.9 The Council considers that the countryside is one of the District's most important assets, which must be safeguarded for its own sake. As a consequence, the Council considers that development in the countryside must be strictly controlled, in order to avoid:
- Changing the countryside's open and uncluttered nature;
 - Creating a pattern of development that is not accessible to all sections of the community;
 - Creating a pattern of development where journeys will be of greater length, and where people will have little choice about how they travel; and
 - Creating a pattern of development that cannot be serviced efficiently.
- 3.10 However, it is recognised that there are some types of development that need a countryside location – such as agricultural, horticultural or forestry buildings, or uses that have extensive land requirements. In other cases it may be desirable to allow development that will diversify the rural economy, provide for the recreational or housing needs of local communities, or provide for the needs of people travelling through the countryside. Policies elsewhere in this Local Plan set out the circumstances in which planning permission will be granted for some types of development within the countryside.

- 3.11 In addition to the specific types of development covered by the above policies, other proposals will be assessed against the criteria set down in this policy. In considering accessibility issues, the Council will be mindful of the fact that the District is predominantly rural, that its population is dispersed, and that opportunities for travel by means other than the private car can be limited. However, the Council will seek to reduce dependence on the private car by ensuring that new development in the countryside will be located to provide opportunities for access by public transport, walking and cycling, or accessibility will be improved as part of the development. Similarly, the Council will seek to ensure that development is located, designed and landscaped to respect the established character of the area, reinforces local distinctiveness, and makes a positive contribution to its surroundings.

Policy C3 – Agricultural land quality

Planning permission will be granted for the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, only if:

- 1. Previously-developed land, or land of a lower agricultural grade is not available to accommodate the proposed development;**
- 2. Land of a lower agricultural grade, which is available to accommodate the proposed development, is subject to other sustainability considerations, including biodiversity, landscape, amenity or heritage interest, etc, which outweigh agricultural considerations; and**
- 3. The development is proposed on land of the lowest possible grade.**

Justification

- 3.12 Agricultural land is classified into six grades depending upon its quality (1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4 and 5), with grade 1 land being the very best in quality. In North Kesteven, the majority of agricultural land falls within grade 3, although grade 2 land is common in the eastern fenland parts of the District. The poorest land within the District is on the slope of the Lincoln Cliff, and is of grade 4.
- 3.13 Land in grades 1 to 3a is the best and most versatile agricultural land in the country, and should be protected from development, because it is a national resource for future generations. However, agricultural quality is only one factor to be taken into consideration, and decisions will take account of the overall value of the land, including landscape quality, wildlife and habitats, recreational amenity, and cultural and historic heritage. This approach accords with the principles of sustainable development.
- 3.14 Although a central plank of this Local Plan's strategy is to minimise new development away from settlements, it nonetheless allows for certain types of development in the countryside, provided they need a countryside location. Even so, it is important that development is directed towards lower grade agricultural land wherever possible, in order to preserve the maximum flexibility for the agricultural industry.

Policy C4 – Infrastructure provision by developers

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that generate a need for additional facilities, services or infrastructure which are related directly to the development, provided that

- i) the proposals are on allocated sites or are acceptable under other policies in the Plan;**
- ii) the necessary additional facilities, services or infrastructure are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, and will be provided as part of the development proposals or through financial contributions from the developers for the fair and reasonable costs of that provision, negotiated by way of a planning obligation.**

In appropriate circumstances, the Council will accept financial contributions in the form of lump-sum payments, endowments, or phased payments over a period of time.

Justification

- 3.15 Most developments will increase the demand for facilities, services and infrastructure, to some extent. In cases where the existing services, facilities or infrastructure can accommodate the new demand caused by the proposed development, it will be unnecessary for the developer to make any provision to improve them. This would also be the case where existing infrastructure, facilities or services could not accommodate the new demand, but the necessary additional capacity is already planned to be in place by the time the development will be implemented. In cases such as this, the Council may place a condition upon any planning permission to prevent the implementation of the development until the necessary improvements have been made.
- 3.16 However, the Council will seek the provision of, or contributions to the provision of, any facilities, services, or infrastructure that would not have been necessary but for the development, or are necessary in order for the development to be acceptable. Such provision must be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms, relevant to planning, directly-related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, and reasonable in all other respects. Infrastructure investment may confer wider benefits, but contributions from developers will be directly-related in scale to the benefit which the proposed development will derive.

Developers will not be expected to pay for facilities which are needed solely to resolve existing deficiencies, but an obligation will be sought where it would overcome an existing constraint which would be materially exacerbated by their proposal.

Such expenditure is effectively an integral part of the overall development costs. Policies elsewhere in the Local Plan deal with developers' responsibilities with respect to e.g. flood defences (policy C10), water supply (policy C14), and open space and/or recreational facilities (policy H4). Where appropriate to the proposed development this policy's provisions could relate to, for example community facilities and amenities, highway/public transport/cycle/footway improvements, healthcare facilities, educational facilities, etc.

- 3.17 Where a particular need for new infrastructure is known to exist, this is set out in Appendix 2 concerned with employment sites. However, it must be noted that the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate new development is not static. Consequently, developers must not assume that no contributions will be sought, simply because the Appendices do not specifically mention a weakness in infrastructure in a locality where they are considering developing. The Council will consult with the local town or parish council to seek advice on the type of community facilities needed and may, where appropriate, also seek advice from, for example the primary care trusts, highway authority, education authority, etc. Evidence of the need for additional infrastructure will be provided in every case where a contribution is sought.

Policy C5 – Effects upon amenities

Planning permission will be granted for proposals, provided that they will not adversely affect the amenities enjoyed by other land users to an unacceptable degree.

Justification

- 3.18 All development will have some form of impact upon nearby people, premises and land. For example, development may: reduce the privacy enjoyed by the occupiers of an existing home; reduce the amount of natural light reaching the rooms of an existing home or workplace; create dust, heat, smoke, fumes, noise, smell or vibration that may be incompatible with nearby homes, or other uses that are sensitive to such effects; or generate a level of traffic that causes disturbance to others.
- 3.19 It is not the role of the planning system to protect the private interests of one person against the activities of another, and thus minor impacts will not normally provide a justification for planning permission to be refused. However, good neighbourliness and fairness are among the yardsticks against which development proposals can be measured, and some potential impacts may be considered unreasonable or unacceptable. In these circumstances it would not be in the public interest for development to be permitted.
- 3.20 Applicants should consider what impact their proposal will have upon neighbouring land uses (and potentially uses some distance away in the case of some types of development) and should seek to reduce harmful effects as much as possible. Where the Council considers that a proposal will have undesirably harmful effects, it will seek to negotiate with the applicant to reduce impacts to an acceptable level, or will apply conditions to mitigate harm. In circumstances where impacts upon amenities cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, planning permission will be refused.

Policy C6 – Community safety

Planning permission will be granted for proposals, provided that the proposed land use and/or design will not result in an unacceptable risk of criminal or anti-social behaviour.

Justification

- 3.21 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires development proposals to adequately address community safety issues. People's well-being and quality of life can be greatly affected by crime or the fear of crime. In the case of most planning applications, community safety issues will need to be addressed only in terms of the layout and design of the development – in that well-conceived and designed development can help to prevent crime, and can reduce the fear of crime. Conversely, poorly designed development can create an environment which increases opportunities for criminal activity, and which can be perceived as 'threatening' by the people who use it. However, there may be rare occasions where evidence is clear that a proposed development is intrinsically likely to increase crime or disorder's effects upon the community (as can sometimes be the case with licensed premises). In such circumstances, where unacceptable community safety impacts cannot be 'designed out', planning permission will be refused. Generally, however, the Council will seek to negotiate with applicants to ensure that their proposals maximise security for their users and for the community in general.
- 3.22 All new developments must take account of the safety of people and the security of property, but people's safety must always be the first priority. The design must clearly define which parts of a development are public, semi-private or private (by the use of fencing, walls, railings, planting, or changes in surfacing materials), and should maximise the amount of space that is perceived as private or semi-private. Opportunities should be taken to make it difficult to gain unauthorised access to private areas, and public access routes should always be short and direct.
- 3.23 Public areas such as footpaths, car parks or open space (especially children's play areas) should be overlooked from nearby buildings and roads in order to give natural surveillance. This will help to cut down on casual crime and will increase the sense of security enjoyed by people using these spaces. Hidden or deeply shaded areas should be avoided, since the benefits of natural surveillance will not be available or will be diminished - the use of lighting can help to extend the benefits of natural surveillance after dark.
- 3.24 The Council will seek the advice of the Police and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in considering these issues.

Policy C7 – Comprehensive development

Planning permission will be granted for proposals, provided that they will not prejudice the future development of other land identified for development in the Local Plan, in a planning application, or in a proposal which is under active consideration by the Council, by:

- 1. Preventing or hindering access to other land; or**
- 2. Introducing a new use to an area that would be incompatible with the use intended for the wider area.**

Justification

- 3.25 When considering a planning application for development in an area where further development is either proposed in the Local Plan, or is otherwise likely and desirable (where, for example, it is part of the known proposals of other stakeholders which the Council supports), the Council will need to establish whether the proposal will prejudice the intended development of the wider area.

- 3.26 Thus, even if a development proposal is acceptable in itself, the Council will not grant planning permission if it will lessen the likelihood of a Local Plan proposal being implemented, or any other desirable development taking place. The Council will take such matters into account only in circumstances where there is a reasonable likelihood that the development of the wider area will occur in the foreseeable future – not simply because a development might conflict with a scheme that the Council or other stakeholder might adopt in the future.

Policy C8 – Safeguarding allocated sites

Planning permission will be granted for a proposal to develop an allocated site for any use other than that for which it is allocated, provided that the benefits of the proposal to the community outweigh the importance of the allocated use.

Justification

- 3.27 The Local Plan identifies areas of land to be developed for various uses (for example to provide new homes or jobs). The amount of land allocated for each specific purpose is derived from an assessment of the District's development needs (often at least partly determined at regional or countywide level), and the allocated sites are selected to fit in with the Local Plan's overall locational strategy. This ensures that the development strategies of neighbouring planning authorities are co-ordinated, and that landowners, developers and the public have some certainty about what type of development will take place in what locations.
- 3.28 If the Local Plan's development strategy (and co-ordination with neighbouring authorities' strategies) is not to be compromised, it is generally vital that sites should not be developed for uses other than the one for which they were allocated. However, there may be rare circumstances in which the Local Plan's objectives are best served by allowing an alternative, more appropriate use on an allocated site (most likely in an area like a town centre, where the mix of land uses may change over time). The fact that there is no current demand for a particular allocated use is not, in itself, a reason for permitting another use – inevitably market forces will vary over the Plan period.

Policy C9 – Washlands

Planning permission will only be granted for proposals within washlands (as shown on the Proposals Map) if the development is for:

- 1. Essential transport or utilities infrastructure that is designed and constructed to remain operational at times of flood; or**
- 2. Appropriate recreation, sport, amenity or conservation uses (provided adequate warning and evacuation procedures are in place),**

And will not:

- 3. Reduce the storage capacity of the washlands;**
- 4. Impede water flows; or**
- 5. Increase flood risk elsewhere.**

Justification

- 3.29 The land shown on the proposals map as washlands is agricultural land that may be used to hold back storm waters at times when there is a risk that the River Witham might flood the City of Lincoln. As a consequence, this land is not generally suitable for built development – only essential transport and utilities infrastructure will be permitted. Such infrastructure must be designed and constructed to ensure that it remains operational at times of flooding. Thus, the Council envisages that this land will remain undeveloped, but accepts that some recreational, sport, amenity or conservation uses that do not involve any built development may be appropriate, provided that adequate warning and evacuation procedures are in place.
- 3.30 To ensure that the washland remains effective, it is important that any development or land-use does not reduce the capacity of the land to hold floodwaters, does not impede floodwaters, and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 3.31 All applications must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment. The assessment must examine the scale and nature of flood risk that the development would face, and must also examine whether the proposed development will either reduce the effectiveness of the washland or generally increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The level of detail appropriate for the assessment will depend upon the scale and nature of the development and the risk. The cost of an evaluation will be borne by the applicant, and should be regarded as a part of normal development costs.

Policy C10 - Flood risk

Planning permission will be granted for proposals, only if they will not:

- 1. Be at an unacceptable risk of flooding**
- 2. Unacceptably increase flood risk elsewhere**
- 3. Affect the integrity of existing flood defences to the level where they would not provide an acceptable standard of safety over the lifetime of the development.**

Priority will be given in permitting sites for development in descending order of the following flood zones:-

- Flood Zone 1 – little or no risk – annual probability of flooding less than 0.1%;**
- Flood Zone 2 – low to medium risk – annual probability of river flooding 0.1% to 1.0%;**
- Flood Zone 3 – high risk – annual probability of river flooding 1.0% or greater.**

Where possible, new developments should result in the overall reduction of flood risk. All relevant planning applications must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment.

Justification

- 3.32 In North Kesteven, although groundwater or local flooding could theoretically take place anywhere, the main source of flood risk comes from rivers. Predicting where and when flooding will take place even in the relatively near future is an uncertain process, and the reliability of predictions becomes even more questionable as one looks further into the future (given that climate change is likely to have an impact upon flood events, but the exact nature of that impact is not known). Given this uncertainty and the potentially serious consequences of flooding for people and property, the District Council will take a precautionary approach towards development and flood risk.
- 3.33 Thus, the Council has generally avoided allocating land for development in parts of the District that have been identified by the Environment Agency as being at particular risk of flooding. However, given that flooding can take place anywhere, all applicants must consider the flood risk to which their proposal may be exposed, and whether their development will increase flood risk elsewhere.

Consequently, all relevant planning applications must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment. For the vast majority of applications, this assessment will be very brief – simply showing that flood risk issues have been investigated (through contact with the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Boards as appropriate) and have been shown to be acceptably low. For applications in areas that are identified as being at significant flood risk or where the development will create risk elsewhere, the assessment will need to go into greater detail. It must examine the scale and nature of the risk and its implications for the development over its whole lifetime – the level of detail appropriate for the assessment will depend upon the scale and nature of the development and the risk. The cost of an assessment will be borne by the applicant, and should be regarded as a part of normal development costs.

- 3.34 The assessment must assess the degree to which the development would be exposed to flood risk. Thus it should include as a minimum:
- The source of the potential flooding;
 - The condition of any existing flood alleviation measures;
 - The likelihood of flooding taking place;
 - The likely rate of inundation or speed of flooding taking place, and the likely depth and duration of flooding; and
 - The impact upon the proposed development and impact to others that flooding would have.
 - The effects of climate change over the life-time of the development.
- 3.35 It must also consider whether the proposal would be likely to have an impact upon flood risk elsewhere.

- 3.36 The assessment's findings may indicate that risks are acceptable, and that flooding issues are not therefore important in the determination of an application. On the other hand they may indicate that risks are unacceptable and cannot be reasonably mitigated. In such circumstances, planning permission will be refused. Alternatively, flood resistant design measures may need to be adopted, or flood defence and mitigation works may be needed to ensure that the development will be safe. Appropriate mitigation measures should be in place before a development is completed in order to control surface water run-off. Works may also be needed to ensure that risks elsewhere will not be worsened. The construction and maintenance of any flood defence or mitigation works required because of the proposed development should be funded by the developer. Where such works would provide a wider public benefit, the funding provided by the developer may be proportional to the benefits to him. The Council will consider the use of conditions or will seek to enter into agreements with the applicant to ensure that any necessary works are carried out.
- 3.37 Planning permission will not be granted for development that would adversely affect the integrity of existing or future flood defences, or which would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding in the event of an overtopping or breaching of such defences. The Council is concerned that people and property in close proximity to embanked watercourses would be extremely vulnerable in the (unlikely) event of the failure of such defences. It believes a precautionary approach should be adopted and development in such areas restricted. When considering planning applications, the Council will apply the guidance set out in PPG25 (and any subsequent advice which replaces it) and, in particular, will apply the sequential test in Table 1.

Policy C11 – Pollution

Planning permission will be granted for developments that may be liable to pollute groundwater, a water body, a watercourse, air or soil, only if:

- 1. The occupiers or users of the development and the occupiers or users of other land are not exposed to unacceptable risk.**
- 2. The area's flora or fauna will not be adversely affected; and**
- 3. The quality of water, air or soil resources will not be adversely affected.**
- 4. The general amenity of the area would not be unacceptably harmed.**

Justification

- 3.38 Some developments have the potential to cause pollution by the release of substances into the air, ground or water. In some cases such pollution may cause only short-term harm to the environment, but in others may lead to longer-term contamination that constrains the future uses to which the site and its surroundings can be put. [It should be noted that issues of neighbours' amenities are covered in Policy C5, and issues concerning 'light pollution' are dealt with in Policy C22].

- 3.39 When considering a potentially polluting development proposal, the Council will not grant planning permission unless measures are proposed that will reduce harmful emissions of all types to acceptable levels. The Council's concerns will be threefold: firstly, to ensure that people's health and safety is not compromised; secondly, to ensure that harm is not caused to the area's plant and animal populations; and lastly, to ensure that the area's key environmental assets (its water, soil and air resources) are not harmed. In dealing with applications for potentially polluting developments, the Council will take into account the matters identified in Appendix A to PPS23, including the environmental, economic and wider social benefits that the development might bring.

Policy C12 – Contaminated land

Planning permission will be granted for proposals affecting a contaminated site, provided that effective measures are to be taken to treat, control or contain any contamination in order that:

- 1. The occupiers or users of the development and the occupiers or users of other land are not exposed to unacceptable risk;**
- 2. The District's flora or fauna will not be adversely affected; and**
- 3. The contamination of other land or any watercourse, water body or aquifer does not occur.**

Justification

- 3.40 The re-use of previously developed land is generally to be encouraged, as it can contribute to making more efficient use of existing built-up areas, and reducing the need for greenfield land to be developed. However, some previously developed land may have been contaminated by earlier uses and, more rarely, some sites that have never been developed may also have suffered contamination. Such sites will seldom be restored unless as part of a scheme for their redevelopment or re-use. Consequently, provided the proposed development will not adversely affect the environment or threaten safety, proposals affecting contaminated sites are to be welcomed in principle.
- 3.41 The Council has a responsibility to regulate contaminated land, and can provide advice on whether any given area of land is either known, or is suspected to be contaminated. Any planning application concerning such land will need to be accompanied by a site assessment that establishes the nature and extent of the contamination. The assessment's findings must allow the Council to evaluate whether the proposed use or development could give rise to unacceptable risks to health, safety or the environment and, if so, what measures should be taken to reduce those risks to acceptable levels. Care must be taken when development is proposed in close proximity to existing or former landfill sites and the Council will not normally grant permission for such development where there is considered to be a substantial risk to the development.
- 3.42 The assessment's findings may indicate that risks are acceptable, and that contamination issues are not therefore important in the determination of the application. On the other hand, they may indicate that risks are unacceptable and cannot be reasonably mitigated, and in these circumstances, planning permission will be refused. [Although very few sites are so badly contaminated that they cannot be re-used at all, some new uses may be inappropriate depending upon the contamination and the cost of dealing with it.]

- 3.43 Alternatively, the assessment's findings may show that, although the site is contaminated, development can be permitted as long as remedial measures are implemented to: ensure that people's health and safety is not compromised; and secondly, to ensure that the District's land and water assets, and plants and animals are not harmed. The Council will consider the use of conditions or will seek to enter into agreements with the applicant to ensure that any necessary works are carried out as the first step in the implementation of the development.

Policy C13 – Unstable land

Planning permission will be granted for development involving the erection of buildings or other structures on unstable, or potentially unstable, land, provided that practicable measures are to be taken to introduce sufficient load-bearing capacity to make the land capable of supporting the development without risk of damage to buildings on the site or nearby land, or injury to their occupiers. The measures proposed must be completed before building development begins.

Justification

- 3.44 Any planning application submitted for development involving building operations on land that is known to be, or suspected to be, unstable must be accompanied by a report which explains the works necessary to carry out the development in a manner which will ensure the safety of the future occupiers and neighbours. The report's findings will stem from appropriate site investigation and geotechnical appraisal. The development will be required to be undertaken in accordance with the works identified in the report, and planning permission will not be granted in the absence of satisfactory details and assurances.

Policy C14 – Surface water disposal

Planning permission will be granted for development, provided that it includes measures designed to safely manage surface water run-off and, where feasible, minimise the increase in surface water run-off.

Justification

- 3.45 Development, particularly of greenfield sites, usually results in a significant increase in the area of impermeable surfaces such as roofs, roads and car parking. Rainwater that would otherwise have percolated into the ground is instead normally carried directly to watercourses via drains. This has three possible adverse effects:
- It can increase the likelihood of flooding elsewhere, by carrying water very swiftly into watercourses
 - It can increase the risk of compromising water quality by carrying pollutants untreated into watercourses (see also policy C11). For developments where there is particular potential for oil or chemical spills, traps are usually built into surface drainage systems. However, most roads, drives and industrial yards are contaminated with oil, rubber and other materials from vehicles, as well as spillages of goods and chemicals, mud, refuse and organic matter, and these substances are often carried directly to watercourses by traditional drainage systems.
 - It wastes valuable water resources that could otherwise be used to irrigate gardens, landscaping, etc.

- 3.46 New development must be designed to ensure that, wherever feasible, surface water is managed locally to reduce wastage and to prevent problems being caused away from the site. A variety of measures can be used as alternatives to traditional piped drainage systems (known as sustainable drainage systems), for example:
- The area of impermeable hard surfaces can be minimised, and permeable and porous hard surfaces can be used.
 - Basins and ponds can be used to hold water.
 - Infiltration devices such as soakaways can be used to drain water directly into the ground, rather than piping it away.
 - Landscape areas can include filter strips and swales (shallow and relatively wide ditches which lead surface water overland from the drained surface to a storage or discharge system) that mimic natural drainage patterns.
 - Facilities can be provided for collecting and storing rainwater.
- 3.47 Some sustainable drainage solutions (e.g. basins, ponds and swales) will require on-going maintenance. Applicants may wish to carry out this maintenance themselves, or they may prefer to contract it to another party. Either way, the Council will need to be certain that proper maintenance will be carried out, and will assure this either by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of an agreement between the developer and the competent Water Authority/Internal Drainage Board.

Policy C15 – Water supply

Planning permission will be granted for development, provided that:

- 1. The applicant can show that every reasonable effort has been made to maximise the efficient use of water; and**
- 2. The development does not result in a demand for water that will unacceptably deplete water resources.**

Justification

- 3.48 We use water in our homes and gardens, in schools, hospitals, commerce, industry, and in agriculture. Most new development also needs water, whether from a mains supply or direct from rivers, streams or water-bearing rocks below the ground (aquifers). Although water is a renewable resource, it cannot be taken for granted, because the abstraction of water has a direct impact upon the natural environment - water in streams, rivers and wetlands allows plants to grow, and keeps fish, insects and mammals healthy. It also gives people pleasure in many ways – we enjoy the appearance of rivers and streams in the landscape, and many of us enjoy fishing, boating, canoeing or just walking by rivers. Thus, planning permission will not be granted for any development that would demand a water supply that would be detrimental to existing abstractions, river flows, water quality, fisheries, amenity or nature conservation.
- 3.49 The efficient use of water is a crucial part of sustainability, and has benefits for the occupiers of the building (in that bills will be reduced), as well as helping to protect the water environment generally. Efficiency can be pursued in two main ways:
- By collecting rainwater, to supplement mains water supply
 - By recycling waste water for lower grade uses

- 3.50 The Council accepts that water-efficient design solutions will not be appropriate for all developments. Furthermore, it acknowledges that other planning, design and financial issues may militate against water-efficient design in some cases. However, it is considered that there is the potential for the majority of new developments to incorporate some design features that will contribute to reducing the water used during their operation. Consequently, the Council will refuse proposals where it is satisfied that greater water efficiency could reasonably be designed into a proposal, but has been ignored in the design submitted for consideration.

Policy C16 – Sewage disposal

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will give rise to foul sewage discharge, provided they include adequate provision for its collection, treatment and disposal. Wherever the opportunity exists, new development shall be served by mains foul sewers and sewage treatment works. Where it is impractical to provide mains foul sewerage, development shall be served by a package sewage treatment plant. Where it is impractical to provide mains foul sewerage or a package treatment plant, planning permission will be granted for proposals served by a septic tank or cesspool, provided that:

- 1. Ground conditions are shown to be suitable; and**
- 2. The development site is of sufficient size to provide adequate land for the subsoil drainage system.**

Justification

- 3.51 Foul and trade effluents are generated by many types of developments, and these wastes can pollute groundwater and lead to unpleasant smells if they are not properly dealt with. In areas where sewerage and sewage treatment facilities are available, it is preferable for waste waters to be discharged into these systems, as this is the most reliable method of treatment and disposal.
- 3.52 If it can be shown (taking account of cost and/or practicality) that connection to a public sewer is not feasible, a package sewage treatment plant (effectively a mini-sewage treatment works serving an individual property or group of properties) should be considered. Any application that includes a package treatment plant must be accompanied by information concerning the standards of the discharge that will be produced, and demonstrating that the plant's operation and maintenance will be satisfactory for its life.
- 3.53 Only if it can be clearly demonstrated that neither mains sewer connection nor the use of a package treatment plant would be feasible, should a system incorporating a septic tank or cesspool be considered. Any application that includes a septic tank or cesspool must be accompanied by an assessment that provides information concerning soil characteristics, ground water and rates of permeability, and focuses on the likely effects on the environment, amenity and public health. In addition the size of the development plot must be adequate to enable the necessary sub-soil drainage system to be installed and to operate effectively. It should be noted that particular difficulties have been experienced with septic tank use in Skellingthorpe Old Wood, Swaton, Threekingham and Doddington Road, Whisby. The Council has produced a guidance note concerning the 'Use of Septic Tanks', which provides additional advice.

- 3.54 [N.B. A properly constructed and maintained cesspool should not lead to environmental, amenity or public health problems, since it produces no discharges. However, in practice, problems often occur due to poor maintenance, irregular emptying or inadequate capacity. Consequently, the Council will require an assessment to be submitted to enable it to consider the possibility of significant problems arising.]

Policy C17 – Renewable energy

Planning permission will be granted for development providing for, or associated with, the generation and distribution of energy from renewable sources provided that:

- 1. the environmental, economic and social impacts can be addressed satisfactorily;**
- 2. the proposal minimises the landscape and visual effects of the development through appropriate siting, design and landscaping schemes;**
- 3. where the proposal would have an adverse effect on a site of international importance for nature and heritage conservation, there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest;**
- 4. where the proposal is in a nationally designated area, the objectives of the designation of the area will not be compromised, and any adverse effects on the qualities of the area are outweighed by the environmental, social and economic benefits.**

Justification

- 3.55 Supplies of oil, gas, and coal are limited, and there is increasing evidence that our use of fossil fuels is contributing to climate change, and is responsible for emitting acid gases. Harnessing renewable energy sources has little, if any, of these harmful effects, and helps to reduce reliance upon declining fossil fuel stocks. It also accords well with the Plan's travel-based aims to generally reduce energy consumption.
- 3.56 Renewable energy comes in many forms, but the main types likely to be exploited in North Kesteven are:
- Wind power, where turbines (either singly, in small clusters, or in large 'wind farms') are used to generate electricity.
 - Solar energy, which can be 'actively' collected to heat air, water or another fluid, or converted to electricity using photovoltaic cells.
 - Biomass, where material from agricultural or forestry operations is used to produce solid, liquid or gaseous fuel.
 - Industrial, commercial, agricultural or domestic waste, which can be treated thermally or biologically to produce energy.
- 3.57 The potential impacts of the different forms of renewable energy use vary greatly. For example, the development of wind turbines has a significant visual impact (and consequently applicants should undertake an assessment of landscape impacts), and may generate noise disturbance and electro-magnetic interference, may be incompatible with the District's RAF bases, and may have an impact upon wildlife. The active harnessing of solar energy is generally achieved by the mounting of photovoltaic cells or absorber plates upon the roofs or walls of buildings and, as a consequence, significant impacts are likely to be limited to effects upon the visual character of listed buildings or conservation areas. Plants

to exploit biomass energy will usually generate traffic, may be noisy, and may have a visual impact. The production of energy from waste may involve the generation of odour and dust, and may involve the erection of buildings that have a harmful impact upon the character or appearance of their surroundings.

- 3.58 Despite these potentially harmful effects upon the District's environment, development that will lead to increased exploitation of renewable energy sources is to be welcomed in principle. Such developments offer the hope of increasing the diversity and security of energy supply, and of reducing harmful emissions into the environment. The Council will encourage applicants for major developments to consider generating energy from renewable resources, and to seek to maximise energy efficiency generally. In determining any application to develop renewable energy resources, the Council will weigh the immediate impact upon the local environment against the wider contribution that would be made to reducing wider environmental damage. The Council will also bear in mind that many renewable resources can only be harnessed where they occur and that, as a consequence, developments to exploit them will frequently be constrained in their locational choices. The Council will require an assessment of the environmental, social and economic impact of proposals to accompany applications in appropriate cases.

Design

- 3.59 The importance of good design in new development and alterations cannot be over-emphasised. All applications, from the smallest house extension to major development schemes will be expected to achieve high standards of design. The Council considers that good design is not purely a matter of external appearance, but must be concerned with:

Function How a development works, and how people can use it.

Form Its appearance and relationship with the surrounding environment.

- 3.60 The remaining policies of this chapter are concerned with design – the first two dealing with issues of form. They are followed by a series of policies that deal with functional issues. Policies in other chapters of the Plan deal with design issues that are relevant to specific types of development.

Policy C18 – Design

Planning permission will be granted for development, only if it will:

1. Reinforce local identity and

2. Not adversely affect the character or appearance of its surroundings;

And

3. Existing site features that contribute positively to the character or appearance of the area are retained, and satisfactorily incorporated into the design;

4. The proposal responds satisfactorily to its context in terms of its layout, scale, massing, height, density, detailing, external appearance, and the use of materials, and

5. The proposal has a cohesive character, and adds interest and vitality to its surroundings.

Justification

3.61 The Council will expect proposals to provide positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design. Proposals will therefore be expected to be appropriate for their context and to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. All new developments should:

- be sustainable, durable and adaptable;
- optimise the potential of the site;
- respond to their local context;
- create safe and accessible environments;
- address the needs of all in society;
- be visually attractive

The Council expects all new developments to be integrated successfully with the townscape or landscape of their surroundings. If applicants are to achieve this, they must ensure that they understand the context within which their proposal will sit, and that their proposal is designed with that context in mind. In certain parts of the District, such considerations will be even more important (see the Historic Environment and Landscape and Wildlife chapters).

- 3.62 Firstly, applicants must ensure that they have assessed and understood the character of their site - what positive qualities it possesses (such as existing buildings, trees, hedgerows, water features, topography, or views into, out of, or across the site). They must ensure that their design takes full account of existing site features and incorporates them into the development, where this is possible and desirable.
- 3.63 Secondly, applicants must assess and understand the immediate surroundings of their site, and the wider area in which their development will be located. All parts of the District have their own particular visual character, which is established by factors as diverse as the height and scale of existing buildings, the materials used, the ratio of buildings to undeveloped space, the orientation of buildings and the degree to which they are set back from the highway, the layout of roads and paths, boundary treatments, the level and type of tree cover, the design of particular landmark buildings, etc. These factors give each area its own distinctive appearance, i.e. they make it somewhere identifiable. It is essential that this distinctive context is understood, and that any new development respects and adds to the 'sense of place' of its surroundings. New development does not need to mimic what already exists, but must not undermine or reduce the existing 'sense of place' and must, where possible and desirable, make its own contribution to the character of its surroundings.
- 3.64 Lastly, new development must be of interest in itself and buildings or structures must appear properly resolved (i.e. they must appear as a coherent whole). Developments should be of interest from a range of viewing distances, and buildings and the space that surrounds them should be considered as a single entity. It is important that buildings avoid presenting blank walls to the public realm, as windows and doors and articulated facades (bays, porches, etc.) are a principle source of interest, life and vitality. The proportions and positions of window and door openings must also be carefully considered, as must the locations of external pipes, meter boxes and balanced flues, to ensure that facades have a pleasing and uncluttered 'rhythm'. Detailed design elements, such as embellishment of eaves and verges can also play a great part in increasing the interest of a building.
- 3.65 All planning applications need to be supported by a Design and Access statement. The level of assessment will depend to some extent on the character of the local area. More detailed assessments will need to be provided for developments which affect Conservation Areas, Landscape Character Areas, Green Wedges and the setting of a Listed Building.

Policy C19 - Landscaping

Planning permission will be granted for development provided that appropriate provision is made for high-quality landscaping which will:-

- a) protect and enhance the existing landscape and townscape character;**
- b) satisfactorily integrate the development with its surroundings;**
- c) protect the amenities of occupiers of the development and nearby occupiers;**
- d) retain and incorporate key landscape features on the site;**
- e) provide appropriate levels of open space within the development.**

Justification

- 3.66 The provision of high quality landscaping as part of a new development can play three broad, important roles. Firstly, it can enrich the District's environment both in terms of visual quality and the diversity of habitat. Secondly, it can improve a development as experienced by its occupiers, by for example providing privacy or reducing exposure to the weather. Finally, it can help to assimilate a development into the surrounding townscape or landscape, and can make the difference between an unacceptable development proposal, and one that receives planning permission.
- 3.67 Despite the potential benefits listed above, the provision of a landscaping scheme will not be necessary as part of all developments. Smaller developments, or developments involving sites that are already well treed may not need to make any landscaping provision. However, in some locations and for some types of development, the provision of a good landscaping scheme may be highly important, e.g.
- Sensitive locations (such as within a conservation area, a Green Wedge or on sites adjacent to the countryside).
 - Sites that are visually prominent (either due to their location, or size).
- 3.68 Where a landscaping scheme is appropriate, the District Council would prefer that it should be designed as an integral part of the development as a whole, and that landscaping details should be submitted as part of the planning application. However, where applicants would prefer to submit their landscaping schemes later, the Council may be willing to place a condition upon a planning permission to require the submission of an acceptable landscaping scheme before the approved development can begin. Even in these circumstances however, the Council will examine proposals carefully to ensure that sufficient land is available as part of the development proposals to accommodate a satisfactory landscaping scheme.
- 3.69 Landscaping schemes should be accompanied by a brief that looks at the site as a whole and takes account of adjacent development and landform, and which sets out the principles and aims of the scheme. What is appropriate for inclusion within any given landscaping scheme will depend upon the nature of the site and the intentions of the scheme, but may include ground modelling, shrub and tree planting, the creation of grassed and hard-surfaced areas, or the inclusion of formal landscape features such as seating, fences, railings, walls, arches or other ornamental structures. In all cases, however, the scheme should complement the design of the development as a whole, and adequate room should always be given for the growth of proposed trees and shrubs (particularly to ensure that there will be no potential for later conflict between trees or shrubs and buildings).

- 3.70 Where new tree and shrub planting is proposed, the Council will prefer the species selected to be native to the area and to be of local provenance – native plants will tend to establish more successfully, will fit better into the District's landscape, and will make a better contribution to providing habitat for the area's wildlife. Any scheme should enhance the landscape character of the District, as set out in The Countryside Agency's Character Areas and any Landscape Character Assessment prepared for the District. Proposed landscape schemes should also seek to improve biodiversity in accordance with the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan. Even the potential of grassed areas to provide valuable habitat can be enhanced if a native grass and wildflower mix (from a local source) is used in place of the standard rye grass. Plants should also be selected to minimise the need for the landscaping to be irrigated. Hard landscaping materials must also be chosen with care, to ensure that they are appropriate for the locality, that they enhance the surrounding buildings, and that they are durable. The use of sustainable sources, where possible, is encouraged.
- 3.71 Once a landscaping scheme is established, it will require on-going maintenance (e.g. the control of weeds, mowing of grass, or carrying out of necessary works to trees). Applicants may wish to carry out this maintenance themselves, or they may prefer to contract it to another party. Either way, the Council will need to be certain that proper maintenance will be carried out, and will assure this either by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of a condition on the permission.

Policy C20 – Accessibility

Planning permission will be granted for developments that will create publicly accessible open areas, provided that satisfactory provision is made within those areas for circulation and access to any relevant buildings by disabled people and other people whose mobility is impaired or in any other way restricted.

Justification

- 3.72 The District Council aims to create an environment where all members of society can comfortably gain access to buildings that are open to the public. This policy seeks to ensure that such new developments take proper account of the needs of wheelchair users, other people with disabilities, elderly or frail people, and those with young children. Thus, the Council will expect that attention should be paid to the following issues, to ensure that unnecessary obstacles are not placed in the way of maximum mobility for all sections of the community: the design and location of street furniture; the surfacing of footways and pedestrian areas; the possible need for tactile signs; the provision of safe crossing places over highways; gradients of paths; and the provision of toilets suitable for use by disabled people. All such proposals will accord with the requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. N.B. The provision of parking spaces for the use of disabled people is dealt with in Appendix 4
- 3.73 It should be noted that this policy is concerned only with access issues relating to the wider area around buildings since, generally, matters of internal access to buildings fall within the provisions of the Building Regulations.

Policy C21 – Energy efficiency

Planning permission will be granted for the development of new residential, office, retail, community, commercial, industrial, leisure, recreational or entertainment buildings, provided that the applicant can show that every reasonable effort has been made to maximise energy efficiency.

Justification

3.74 The efficient use of energy is a crucial part of sustainability, and has benefits for the occupiers of the building (in that fuel bills will be reduced), as well as helping to reduce the greenhouse effect and global climate change. Efficiency can be pursued in three main ways.

1. Site layout

- Orienting the main glazed elevations of buildings within 30° of due south will maximise the potential for passive solar gain (directly harnessing the energy of the sun to heat, light or ventilate a building).
- Over-shadowing by trees, slopes or other buildings (especially from the south) will greatly reduce the potential for passive solar gain - high density development will often involve more over-shadowing.
- If buildings can be protected from prevailing winds, draughts and cooling can be reduced. Walls, slopes, other buildings, or trees/shrubs can provide shelter.
- If buildings are linked together they will tend to be more thermally efficient, because they will have less external wall area per unit of volume. Thus, although high densities can lead to lower passive solar gain, in compensation, they tend to offer lower heat loss.

2. Building design

- The amount of energy used in the manufacture, transportation and use of different building materials can be very significant, and varies greatly. Attention should be paid to reducing this energy consumption by using locally sourced and 'lower energy' materials. The use of recycled and natural materials is generally preferable, as is the use of materials that are themselves recyclable at the end of the building's life.
- The inclusion of a larger glazed area in south-facing elevations can help to maximise passive solar gain. Similarly, minimising the glazed area in northern elevations will help to reduce unwanted heat loss.
- In domestic buildings, solar gain can be maximised by orienting living rooms to the south, and kitchens, bathrooms, stairs, etc. to the north. In commercial buildings, storage, toilets, etc. should be oriented to the north of the building.

3. Energy supply

- Combined Heat and Power and District Heating are suitable for larger and denser developments, and can meet energy requirements far more efficiently than conventional energy supply.
- The production of renewable energy on or near the site, e.g. by active solar gain (for water heating or electricity generation), or biofuels can allow the use of conventionally generated energy to be reduced or eliminated (see Policy C17).

- 3.75 This policy does not apply to applications to build e.g. storage buildings where energy expenditure on heating and lighting will be minimal, nor to minor extensions to existing buildings or proposals for conversions (since the scope for incorporating energy-efficient design will be very limited). However, the Council expects all applicants intending to develop new buildings (including major extensions) of the types listed in the policy to give proper consideration to minimising energy consumption. Consequently, applications should include a survey of the site, and an assessment of the opportunities and constraints that it presents in terms of designing for energy efficiency. Applications must also explain how the design of the proposed building seeks to maximise energy efficiency, and minimise energy use. Without the submission of such information, the Council cannot make an informed and reasonable planning decision, and applications that are supported by inadequate evidence will be refused.
- 3.76 The Council accepts that energy-efficient design solutions will not be appropriate for all developments. Furthermore, it acknowledges that other planning, design and financial issues may militate against energy-efficient design in some cases. However, it is considered that there is the potential for the majority of new buildings to incorporate some design features that will contribute to reducing the energy used in their construction and during their operation. Consequently, the Council will refuse proposals where it is satisfied that greater energy efficiency could reasonably be designed into a proposal, but has been ignored in the design submitted for consideration.

Policy C22 – External lighting schemes

Planning permission will be granted for proposals which include a scheme of external lighting, only if the proposed lighting scheme:

- 1. Will not compromise highway safety;**
- 2. Will not adversely affect the amenities of nearby land-users; and**
- 3. Will not adversely affect the character of the area.**

Where it is necessary to safeguard amenity or to prevent the wasteful use of energy resources, conditions will be attached to planning permissions requiring lights not required for safety or security to be extinguished at an appropriate curfew time.

Justification

- 3.77 Whilst external lighting is an essential part of many developments (for safety or security reasons, or to enhance the night-time character of the development) it can also have negative impacts. Badly designed schemes can erode the character of their surroundings, affect the amenities of those living in the area, or can dazzle or distract road-users on nearby highways.

- 3.78 There are a number of guidelines which, if followed, can help to ensure that a proposed lighting scheme will be acceptable.
1. A scheme should be designed to prevent the spread of light outside the site.
 2. The lighting equipment proposed should minimise the spread of light near to or above the horizontal, and should ensure that the main beams of light directed towards any potential observer are kept below 70° from the vertical.
 3. Proposed lighting schemes must take account of the fact that different areas have different characters. A scheme that may be acceptable in a town centre location (which are generally brightly-lit) might not be appropriate in a residential area, where it would be likely to harm both residential amenity, and the character of the area. Similarly, a scheme which would be acceptable in an urban location may not be acceptable on a countryside or edge-of-curtilage site. The District Council will be particularly concerned to ensure that proposals for lighting schemes will not erode the night-time character of the countryside.
- 3.79 It may be appropriate, to safeguard amenity or to prevent the wasteful use of energy resources, to ensure that some lighting schemes (or some elements of a lighting scheme) are turned off at a particular time. Where this is an issue, the Council will place an appropriate condition on the planning permission.

Housing

- 4.1 The policies and proposals of this chapter are intended to meet the District's need for new homes. In quantitative terms, meeting this objective will require continued growth in the District's housing stock (at a rate set by regional and strategic planning guidance) - North Kesteven's population grew from 80,251 in 1991 to 94,024 in 2001, and further population increase is predicted for the future. However, growth should not be unfettered – it is important that the Plan's policies and allocations have due regard to the provisions of strategic planning documents such as Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan, to ensure that North Kesteven's growth is properly co-ordinated with that of its neighbouring districts.
- 4.2 In qualitative terms, meeting the District's housing needs will require that a variety of new homes is provided (in terms of sizes, types and prices) in order to reflect the fact that the District's community has a range of needs. The policies of this chapter seek such variety within appropriate new housing developments, and the residential development of windfall sites, the sub-division of large dwellings, the residential conversion of non-residential buildings, and extensions and alterations to existing dwellings (which will be judged against the provisions of the Core Policies) will all help to contribute further to providing a diverse new housing stock. It will also be important that new housing developments should make the maximum possible contribution to the character of their surroundings, and should help to provide the people who will occupy them with the open space they will need.
- 4.3 Lastly, the policies and proposals of this chapter can make a major contribution towards the implementation of the locational strategy set out in the Objectives and Strategy chapter. They can also assist in making the best use of the District's existing built-up areas. In considering future planning applications, the Council will give priority to the development of previously-developed land which is in a sustainable location, and will seek to ensure that a minimum of 15% of new housing developments approved during the plan period will be on such land. In both these ways they will contribute to the creation of a more sustainable land use distribution.
- 4.4 This chapter's policies and proposals will contribute to all three of the Council's objectives:
- **A good quality of life for all residents** – The chapter's policies and proposals seek to ensure that new housing development meets the needs of all sections of the community – in terms of providing a choice and range of accommodation, and in terms of contributing towards meeting recreational needs.
 - **A thriving and prosperous economy** – New housing development contributes positively to the District's economy. Furthermore, the chapter's policies seek to ensure that the character and appearance of the District, and the quality of life enjoyed by residents are enhanced. This will benefit the image that the District projects to visitors, tourists and potential inward-investors.
 - **A clean, green and safe environment** – The chapter's policies and proposals will help to contribute to a sustainable pattern of settlement, by making the best use of the District's land resources, by reducing people's need to travel and by facilitating walking, cycling and public transport use. They will also ensure that new housing development makes the maximum possible contribution to the quality of its surroundings.

Policy H1 – Housing

The Local Plan provides for the development of 8000 dwellings in the period 2001-2021. They will be distributed throughout the district in the following way:-

Lincoln Policy Area - 5300 dwellings

Sleaford - 1700 dwellings

Rest of District - 1000 dwellings

Planning permission will be granted for the residential development of land only if:-

- a) the site is allocated for housing development in the local plan: or**
- b) it is proposed on previously-developed land, or the applicant can demonstrate that no suitable alternative site is available on previously-developed land; and**
- c) it complies with the criteria identified in the locational strategy set out in the local plan; and**
- d) it complies with the housing requirements set out in the table in paragraph 4.10**

Justification

- 4.5 One of the roles of a Local Plan is to ensure that sufficient well-located land for housing development is available to meet the area's need for new homes. The starting point for determining how many dwellings should be built is the Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands (RPG8), issued by the then Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions in January 2002, which covers the period 2001 to 2021. This document indicates that provision should be made for new housebuilding at an annual average rate of 2,750 dwellings in Lincolnshire. It is then the role of the Lincolnshire Structure Plan to divide this County-wide total between the seven district council areas. Local Plans' housing allocations are then arrived at within the framework set out by the Structure Plan. This Local Plan covers the period from 2001 to 2021.
- 4.6 A County Structure Plan for Lincolnshire was formally adopted by Lincolnshire County Council on 27 September 2006. The adopted Structure Plan proposals form part of the development plan for the areas of Lincolnshire County Council including North Kesteven District Council. The development plan forms the basis for decisions on land use planning affecting the area. The Local Plan must generally conform with the Structure Plan. The adopted Lincolnshire Structure Plan 2006 sets out the requirements for housing provision to be made by the Districts over the period 2001 to 2021. The adopted Structure Plan's Policy H1(Housing Provision) and Appendix 1 set out the housing allocation figures in detail for 2001 to 2021, including the average annual additions to the housing stock to be made per year over that period.
- 4.7 These figures indicate that provision should be made for the construction of 8000 dwellings in North Kesteven between 1st January 2001 and 31st December 2021. Of these, 1,700 should be in Sleaford, 5,300 should be in the Lincoln Policy Area and 1000 should be in the remaining predominantly rural parts of the District.

- 4.8 Taking account of dwellings built between 1st April 2001 and 31st March 2004, and planning permissions and housing allocations as at 31st March 2004, the adopted Local Plan (1996) provided for the development of approximately 15,000 dwellings (approximately 5,800 more than the then Structure Plan required):
- Approximately 4,000 dwellings in Sleaford (approximately 1,600 more than Structure Plan requirements)
 - Approximately 7,000 dwellings in the Lincoln Policy Area (approximately 1,700 more than Structure Plan requirements)
 - Approximately 4,000 dwellings in the rest of the District (approximately 2,500 more than Structure Plan requirements)
- 4.9 One of the tasks in the production of this Local Plan has been to reduce the degree of over-supply of housing land, and this requires that some areas of housing land should be de-allocated. In considering sites for de-allocation, the Council has taken account of:
- Whether the site's development has begun (and the permission appears to be exercisable) – the Council can see little purpose in de-allocating sites where it is almost certain that the development will go ahead anyway;
 - Whether the settlement is an appropriate location for new residential development – judged against the provisions of the locational strategy;
 - Whether there is a need for further residential development in a settlement (e.g. to help to retain existing local services and facilities);
 - Whether the site includes previously-developed land;
 - The likely impact of a site's development upon the character of its surroundings; and
 - Whether the site's development would be likely to be constrained by issues such as flood risk, or infrastructure limitations.
- 4.10 After undertaking this de-allocation process through the revised deposit Local Plan, the Structure Plan was revised to accord with Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands (RPG8) which was adopted in 2002. The revised adopted Structure Plan (September 2006), set a housing requirement of 400 dwellings per annum for the period 2001 to 2021, a total of 8000 houses. Of these houses 5,300 were to be in the Lincoln Policy Area, 1,700 in Sleaford and 1000 in the Rest of the District. At 31 March 2004, however, the total supply of dwellings for the plan period, including completions from 2001 to 2004, extant planning consents and windfall allowance was 9,373, or 1,373 more than the Structure Plan requirement. Consequently all housing allocations have been deleted from the Local Plan.

Housing Requirements

	Sleaford	Lincoln Policy Area	Rest of the District	Total
Structure Plan Requirements (1/1/2001 - 31/12/2021)	1,700	5,300	1,000	8,000
Deduct Number of Dwellings Completed (1/4/2001 - 31/3/2004)	583	1,103	586	2,272
Deduct Windfall Allowance (i)	241	232	100	573
Gives: The Residual Requirement	876	3,965	314	5155

Housing Supply

	Sleaford	Lincoln Policy Area	Rest of the District	Total
Number of Dwellings with Planning Permission (31/3/2004)	1,181	3,732	1,268	6,268
Add: Capacity of allocated sites	000	347	000	347
Gives: The total supply	1,181	4.079	1,268	6,528

Balance

	Sleaford	Lincoln Policy Area	Rest of the District	Total
Total Supply	1,181	4,079	1,268	6,528
Deduct: Residual Requirement	876	3,965	314	5155
Gives: Over-provision of	305	114	954	1,373

Notes

- (i) The Council undertook a Housing Capacity Study which found that windfall redevelopments of buildings, and the development of significantly-sized areas of previously-developed land might be expected to contribute 189 dwellings in Sleaford, 116 in the Lincoln Policy Area and 57 in the Rest of the District (362 in total). However, the Plan's locational strategy indicates that windfall developments will not be permitted in third tier settlements, and thus the Housing Capacity Study's findings for third tier settlements must be excluded. Thus, the development of significantly-sized areas of previously-developed land might be expected to contribute 189 dwellings in Sleaford, 102 in the Lincoln Policy Area and 57 in the Rest of the District (348 in total).

However, the Study did not include individual gardens or private car parks of less than 0.2 hectares in size, and the Plan's calculations must include an additional estimate of the contribution that such sites will make. Historical data concerning completions on such sites is available only for the years 1999/00, 2000/01 and 2001/02. Assuming that completions in first and second tier settlements from such sources will come forward at the same rate as they have in the past gives the following numbers for the period up to 31st March 2021: Sleaford – 52; Lincoln Policy Area – 130; Rest of the District – 130; Total – 312.

The total windfall allowance is derived from the figures from the Housing Capacity Study and the above projections for small sites.

Policy H2 – Design and layout of residential development

Planning permission will be granted for a new housing development, that:

- 1. Creates a clear spatial structure of contrasting and clearly defined public spaces, building groups, streets and vistas; and**
- 2. Includes a range and mix of housing types and sizes, building forms, plot sizes, heights, materials and development densities.**

Justification

- 4.11 In all cases, new residential development will be expected to take account of the character of North Kesteven's towns and villages, to protect and enhance local distinctiveness, and create sustainable, vital, interesting and safe new places to live. These issues are covered by the Plan's general design policies (C18 to C22 and C6), and all new residential development will be judged against their provisions. However, in the case of larger residential proposals, the Council will also expect development schemes to deliver variety and contrast within their design and layout.
- 4.12 Firstly, the Council recognises the importance that roads and footpaths have in relation to the successful design of a development. Highways that are rigidly standardised and dominated by culs-de-sac have defined many recent housing estates. Such layouts rarely give a distinctive shape or form to a development and tend to favour car users rather than pedestrians (see also policy T3). The Council wishes to see new developments that make full use of the highway network as public spaces in their own right - to create a range of avenues, squares, crescents, mews and courtyards, lanes, alleys and greens, reflecting the complexity of traditional settlements.