

- 4.13 Secondly, the Council will seek to ensure that schemes incorporate diversity in the homes themselves through a genuine mix of sizes, forms and functions. For example, some groups of dwellings may be linked together, enclosing spaces with terraces and/or outbuildings, whilst others may be imposingly detached with generous gardens. Some may be taller to create a focal point, with others hidden behind walls and gates. This variety should extend to front boundary treatments where walls, railings and hedges can be used to emphasise and enclose spaces and introduce neighbourhood identity. This variety will assist in creating distinctive places, but will also contribute to developing diverse and sustainable communities, and will offer a choice of dwelling size and type (reflecting the fact that North Kesteven's community has a range of housing needs). The Council supports the 'homes for life' concept, and will welcome developments that include dwellings designed to meet the needs of their occupiers throughout their lifetime.
- 4.14 Proposals for individual phases of larger developments will normally only be considered in the context of an outline planning permission or a comprehensive appraisal or 'master-plan' which establishes the development principles for the wider site.
- 4.15 The requirements of this policy are amplified in the 'Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas', which has been prepared in consultation with local developers and amenity bodies and formally adopted by all of the Lincolnshire planning authorities as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Appendix B of the Guide requires that all residential developments consisting of five or more dwellings, or in sensitive locations, are accompanied by a Development Appraisal demonstrating how urban design principles have been addressed.

### **Policy H3 – Density**

**Planning permission will be granted for residential development, provided that it achieves an average net site density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dpha)**

**Densities above the minimum will be encouraged on sites with good public transport accessibility.**

**Lower site densities may be acceptable where dictated by site conditions.**

### **Justification**

- 4.16 Low residential densities lead to a high level of land-take, and also result in development that is less likely to sustain local services or public transport. As a consequence, development that makes inefficient use of land cannot be considered as sustainable. However, the Council considers that, in most of the District's settlements, development at an average net density of 30 dwellings to the hectare or more would be incompatible with their established rural character. Nonetheless, the Council considers that the densities that have been achieved in many recent developments make wasteful use of land, and will not generally grant planning permission for residential development at an average net density of less than 25 dwellings to the hectare. In the more central and accessible parts of these settlements, the Council will generally expect that densities in excess of 25 to the hectare will be achieved.
- 4.17 In the District's larger and more accessible settlements (where the Plan's locational strategy proposes to focus most new house building), development at an average net density of 30 dwellings to the hectare or more will be in character with the established built form. In the more central and accessible parts of these settlements, the Council will generally expect that densities in excess of 30 dwellings to the hectare will be achieved.



- 4.18 As policy H2 indicates, the Council wishes to see variety and diversity of house size and type within new residential estates. As a consequence, within a housing development that achieves an overall, average density of 30 dwellings to the hectare, the Council will expect different areas to be developed at different densities.
- 4.19 The Council accepts that not all sites will be suitable for development at the minimum densities sought by this policy – e.g. the capacity of some sites will be reduced by poor vehicular access, by physical or infrastructure constraints, by the need to protect or enhance local distinctiveness, or by the presence on the site of features that are desirable to retain. However, where no such factors restrict a site's capacity, the Council will expect development proposals to maximise the efficiency with which they use land.

#### **Policy H4 - Public open space provision in new residential developments**

**Planning permission will be granted for a new housing development provided that provision is made for public open space to at least the following standards:**

- 1. 5 square metres of amenity open space per person;**
- 2. 8 square metres of children's play space per person; and**
- 3. 16 square metres of outdoor sport facilities per person.**

**Lesser provision will be acceptable if it can be proved that the location, scale or nature of a particular housing development is such that it will not generate or contribute to additional demands for such space.**

#### **Justification**

- 4.20 Public open space is a valuable amenity, and part of the infrastructure necessary to support development. It provides a place where both children and adults can relax or play and it acts as a green lung within the built environment. New housing development will increase the demand for public open space and it is only right that developers should contribute to the provision of infrastructure that would not have been necessary but for their development, or which is necessary in order for their development to be acceptable. Three broad types of public open space can be identified:
- Amenity open space, which contributes towards giving the development a distinct sense of character. Such open space may provide some landscape interest (e.g. at the intersection of roads or footpaths), or may be positioned so as to safeguard the retention of important landscape features such as a pond or a group of trees.
  - Children's play space, which is specifically set aside to cater for the needs of the children who will live within, or visit, the development. Depending upon the role it is intended to fulfil, and the age group of children at which it is aimed, play space may or may not contain play equipment such as swings, slides, roundabouts, a multi-sport rebound wall, etc.
  - Outdoor sport facilities for youth and adult use, consisting of facilities such as pitches, greens, courts, etc.



- 4.21 The amount of open space that the Council will wish to be provided will depend primarily upon how many people will be expected to live on the development. This will be calculated by multiplying the number of dwellings proposed by an assumed number of people per dwelling. For most types of development, the assumed occupancy rate will be 2.37 persons per dwelling (the District average figure from the 2001 Census). For developments with unusually high proportions of particularly large or small dwellings, more appropriate occupancy figures will be decided in discussion with the applicant.
- 4.22 The Council will generally expect all developments to meet the standards set out in the policy. However, in some cases, a developer may be able to put forward evidence that suggests that it would not be necessary for their development to meet these standards, for example:
- A proposal for housing specifically for elderly people may not need to meet the standards for children's play space or for outdoor sports facilities.
  - Additional provision may not be needed if the area already contains sufficient, adequately-accessible public open space to meet the needs of the existing population, plus that which would be added by the development.
- 4.23 The Council will generally prefer provision to be made on-site, as part of the development, and will expect open space provision to be an integral part of the design and not an 'add-on' or a way of using awkward corners of a site. Where possible, new areas of open space should be located adjacent to any existing open space in order to maximise its amenity value. However, there are certain circumstances where it may be more appropriate for the developer to make a financial contribution towards provision in another location that will nevertheless serve the dwellings, for example where:
- The nature of the site would mean that any feasible location for children's play space would cause unacceptable disturbance to neighbours.
  - The nature of the site would mean that any feasible location for children's play space would not be safe – where it would have to border a busy road or a watercourse for example.
  - The size of the space would be so small that it would not fulfil any meaningful recreational role – generally less than 100 square metres in the case of children's play space. In the case of outdoor sports facilities, it will only be particularly large housing developments where on-site provision will be necessary.
- 4.24 Great care must be taken to ensure that the relationship between public open space and dwellings will be satisfactory. This will be particularly important in the case of children's play areas (especially those that are likely to be used by children in the older age groups), which may be a source of noise nuisance for neighbours, or which may lead to nuisance from ball games. To avoid such problems, play areas should always be separated from nearby dwellings by adequate buffer zones and (where appropriate) fencing.
- 4.25 It is essential that public open space is made available once a significant number of dwellings are completed and occupied. This is particularly important on large developments that may take a number of years to complete. Consequently, the Council will normally seek to enter into an agreement with a developer under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to provide for the completion of public open space within a defined period after the commencement of development, or will attach a suitable condition to a planning permission.



- 4.26 Once public open space is established, it will require on-going maintenance (e.g. the control of weeds, mowing of grass, carrying out of necessary works to trees, maintenance of play equipment, etc.). Applicants may wish to carry out these works 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.

### **Affordable housing**

- 4.27 Over recent years, house prices and rents across much of the District have risen more rapidly than wage levels, at the same time as the stock of Council housing has diminished. These factors have combined to make it increasingly difficult for some sections of the community to afford to buy or rent homes that are adequate for their needs.
- 4.28 Policy H2 seeks the provision of a range of housing types and sizes within new housing estate developments, and the Local Plan's provisions also allow for: the conversion of non-residential buildings to dwellings; the sub-division of existing larger dwellings to create smaller residential units; and the introduction of residential uses to existing commercial buildings (e.g. the creation of flats over shops or offices). It is considered that these types of development may contribute towards meeting the needs of those sections of the community who require a small and affordable dwelling. However, it is considered that the need for affordable housing is larger and more broadly-based than could be filled by contributions from these sources alone.
- 4.29 The two policies that follow set out two ways in which additional affordable housing can be achieved, to contribute further to meeting this need. The first policy seeks the provision of affordable housing on suitable allocated housing sites and the second allows for, in exceptional circumstances, the development of affordable housing on land that would not normally be regarded as suitable for housing development.
- 4.30 In both policies, "affordable housing" means housing which is accessible to people whose income does not enable them to afford to buy or rent market housing locally. It is non-market housing, provided to those whose needs are not met by the market. It includes social-rented and intermediate housing. Social-rented housing is rented housing provided by local authorities and registered social landlords and other persons or bodies, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Intermediate housing is housing at prices or rents above social-rent but below market prices or rents. This can include shared equity /shared ownership products and intermediate rent (i.e. rent above social-rented but below market rents). This definition excludes low cost market housing, which the Government does not consider, for planning purposes, to be affordable housing. Affordable housing secured through the planning system should include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

The Council defines Housing Need as those households who are in need of subsidised housing because the cost of appropriate housing (house prices or rents) is higher than 25% of the household's net income.



4.31 Where a registered social landlord is to manage any affordable homes that are provided by either policy, the Council will not need to seek to control the occupancy of the homes. In other cases however, the Council will need to be certain that the homes provided will be occupied by local people who need affordable accommodation. In these circumstances, the Council will either apply a condition on any planning permission, or seek to enter into an agreement with the applicant to limit occupancy to:

- Existing local residents needing separate accommodation in the area, and those living in sub-standard accommodation or requiring accommodation more suited to their particular requirements;
- People who are employed locally and who need to be close to their work;
- People with the offer of a job locally, who cannot take up the offer because of the lack of affordable housing;
- People who are not resident locally, but who have long-standing links with the locality.

The area that will be considered 'local' will normally be confined to the particular parish in which the affordable housing is located, and those that surround it. In exceptional cases of need, or where opportunities for more convenient affordable housing are restricted, this geographical limit may be extended.

4.32 The Council will also seek to enter into agreements with applicants, or will attach conditions to planning permissions to ensure that affordable housing generated by either of these policies remains affordable in perpetuity.

#### **Policy H5 – Affordable Housing**

**The Council will require the provision of 35% of dwelling units on new developments as affordable housing, where:**

**The development will create 5 or more dwellings or involves a site of 0.3 hectares or more; and**

- a. a local need for affordable housing has been identified in the Council's Housing Needs Study or through another survey, the format and findings of which the Council has agreed; and**
- b. the site is within reasonable distance of local services and facilities and public transport services; and**
- c. the provision of affordable housing will not prejudice the economic viability of the development, or the realisation of other planning objectives which would outweigh the provision of affordable housing.**

**For the purposes of this policy, affordable housing will include dwelling units provided at below market rents or prices, either as social-rented or intermediate housing.**

**The Council may consider a lower proportion of affordable dwellings on sites where the developer can demonstrate that there are exceptional development costs which affect the viability of the development.**

**Where the affordable housing is not to be managed by a registered social landlord, planning permission will be subject to conditions or legal agreements to ensure that priority is given to local people in occupying affordable housing, and to ensure that dwellings remain available in perpetuity for those in housing need.**



## Justification

4.33 Where a planning application is made for residential development in the District where a local need for affordable housing has been identified by the Council's Housing Need Study or through another survey, the Council will negotiate with the applicant to ensure that the development makes a reasonable contribution towards meeting that need. However, it will be inappropriate to seek affordable housing on some sites, namely:

- Those below the thresholds given in the policy;
- Those that are not in reasonable proximity to jobs, shops, schools, recreational facilities, etc., or which will not offer occupants opportunities to travel to such facilities by means other than the private car;
- Those that would be uneconomic to develop if affordable housing provision was sought (because there are particular exceptional development costs associated with the development of the site); or
- Those where the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site.

Where the District Council decides to pursue negotiations, the number of dwellings sought will depend upon the scale and type of the proposed development, and the requirements of the Policy.

4.34 The nature and extent of the need for affordable housing in the whole District has been examined by the North Kesteven Housing Needs Study. It was commissioned by the Council, published in March 2005 and adopted by the Council in March 2005. The North Kesteven Housing Needs Study surveyed and analysed the local housing market, local household income, and current supply of affordable housing. The main findings of the Housing Needs Study (a local housing needs assessment and survey in accordance with government guidance) identified the level of need for affordable housing in North Kesteven. It found that the widening gap between housing costs, particularly owner-occupation, and household income has resulted in fewer local households being able to afford housing in North Kesteven. It identified the local shortfall in affordable housing provision.

4.35 The Housing Needs Study 2005 Conclusions include the findings that:

- There is shortage of affordable housing - 462 new affordable housing units per annum are needed in North Kesteven for the period 2004-2014.
- This requirement represents over 100% of the projected housing build rate. It supports any affordable housing provision target applied to site thresholds set below the current government guidance minimum threshold levels.
- The largest shortage is for one-person affordable dwelling units for rent.
- The majority of the need can only be met by Social Rented housing. Although a maximum of 76% of households in housing need identified could afford some sort of Intermediate Housing (based on social rented costs), only a small fraction of households in need (9%) could afford such intermediate housing at the costs that are typically available.



- 4.36 An affordable housing target of 462 new affordable dwellings per year for North Kesteven cannot easily be achieved solely through the use of the planning system, to meet the identified shortfall. The Council will not therefore currently set a numerical planning target for the provision of new affordable housing units, as set out in PPG3, Circular 6/98 and PPS3. It will, however, seek to achieve the highest number of additional affordable housing units possible on development sites, by applying a percentage requirement to all proposed developments involving new private housing across the District, that meet the Policy requirements. The Council is striving to achieve as much affordable housing provision on site as is possible.
- 4.37 The Council considers that more affordable homes are likely to be needed in North Kesteven than could be provided by public investment and by the application of this policy's provisions to allocated housing sites only. Consequently, the Council will also expect planning applications for housing on windfall sites across the District that meet the terms of this policy to make a contribution to meeting affordable housing needs.
- 4.38 The Council will generally expect provision of affordable housing to be made within the development site itself. However, there may be occasions when the Council and developer agree that, on a particular site where a requirement for affordable housing would be appropriate, it is preferable that equivalent provision is made on another site or equivalent financial contribution should be made towards the provision of affordable housing on another site in the District. In such cases, the Council will seek to enter into an agreement with the applicant to ensure that an appropriate financial contribution is paid before the development with planning permission commences on site.

#### **Policy H6 – Affordable housing on rural exceptions sites**

**Planning permission will exceptionally be granted for development providing affordable housing for local people on sites within, or outside but closely related to, the curtilages of any settlement except Sleaford and North Hykeham (as shown on the Proposals Map), which would not otherwise be considered suitable for residential development, provided that:**

- 1. A local need for affordable housing has been identified in the Council's housing needs survey or through another survey, the format and findings of which the Council has agreed;**
- 2. The need cannot reasonably be met on sites with residential planning permission or through residential allocations in this Plan;**
- 3. The development will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area;**
- 4. The development is of a scale that is in keeping with the identified need, and the role, status and service base of the settlement; and**
- 5. The site is within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities and public transport services.**

**Unless the affordable housing is to be managed by a registered social landlord, any planning permission will be subject to conditions or agreements to ensure that local people in need of affordable homes will occupy the dwellings, and that all the benefits of low-cost provision will pass to the initial and to all subsequent occupants.**



## Justification

- 4.39 Affordable housing needs will best be met by the means set out in policy H5 (i.e. via the dedication of parts of allocated or windfall housing developments to affordable housing). However, where provision from this source could not meet needs, it is appropriate that other methods of provision should be explored. Exceptionally, in such circumstances, the Council will consider granting planning permission for the development of affordable housing on land that would not normally be considered an appropriate location for housing development (most commonly land outside of settlement curtilages).
- 4.40 Only sites that are clearly related to an existing settlement will be acceptable, and in most cases this will mean that suitable sites will directly abut a curtilage line. However, there may be instances where, because of e.g. topography or existing tree cover, an acceptable site directly adjacent to the curtilage cannot be identified, but where a development that is some distance from the curtilage would not create a visual intrusion into the countryside and would not appear as unrelated to the settlement. All development proposals must also conform to the requirements of other relevant policies of this Plan.
- 4.41 The scale of the need for affordable housing in any individual rural settlement is likely to be limited, and thus, it is expected that proposals will generally be small in scale. However, the Council will be concerned to ensure that proposals conform to the Plan's locational strategy and, consequently, permission will not be granted for large-scale proposals at settlements that have little in the way of a service base (jobs, schools, shops, recreational facilities) or pedestrian, cycle or public transport links to such facilities.

## Housing

- 4.42 There is significant demand for homes in the countryside. However, if this demand were catered for, the qualities that contribute much to the countryside's attractiveness (its openness and undeveloped character) would be very quickly eroded. The fact that the construction of a single dwelling on a particular site would cause little or no harm to the countryside's character is not a good argument in favour of it receiving planning permission. That argument could be repeated too often, with a cumulatively harmful impact upon the countryside.
- 4.43 Policy C2 establishes the principle that development in the countryside should be strictly controlled in order to protect its character and to prevent the creation of an unsustainable pattern of development. However, new housing in the countryside can be justified where it meets a clearly identified local need.



**Policy H7 - Residential development in settlements that do not have a curtilage line**

**Planning permission for the construction of a new dwelling in a settlement without a curtilage line will only be granted if it will meet a clearly identified local need and:**

- 1. The proposed site is closely associated with an existing cohesive group of dwellings;**
- 2. The proposal is for the construction of no more than a single dwelling or a pair of semi-detached dwellings;**
- 3. The proposed development represents the filling of a small gap within the group or, more rarely, a minor extension to the group;**
- 4. The proposed development will not create or extend ribbon or scattered development; and**
- 5. The development will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside, the group of dwellings, or the setting of the group within the landscape, and will not increase the pressure for similar development that would collectively cause adverse effects.**

**Justification**

- 4.44 The District contains many very small and sometimes isolated settlements, which often consist of just a few dwellings and other buildings. Some consist of a row of buildings (often all built at the same time), whilst others have a looser, more scattered character. Access to these settlements is often poor, and they frequently have very limited services. They are not locations where new development should be encouraged - because of their isolation and limited facilities, and because new development of any significant scale would be likely to harm their character, or that of their surroundings. Thus, they are not appropriate settlements for the drawing up of a curtilage line, or for the application of a policy that promoted their growth.
- 4.45 Nonetheless, some of these settlements are capable of absorbing one or two new homes without harm to their character or setting, or to the appearance of the countryside generally. Such homes can help to widen the choice available to homebuyers or tenants, and can contribute towards meeting the District's general need for new housing.
- The existing group of dwellings must have a unified and integrated appearance, i.e. development will not be permitted within a disjointed scatter of dwellings in the countryside, or in a location where only a very limited number of dwellings currently exists.
  - The proposed development will need to be very limited in scale, and must either:
    - o fill a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage (proposals to infill extensive gaps in a sparsely developed frontage will not be acceptable); or
    - o extend the group in a way that will not be repeated, e.g. by extending the group as far as a clear physical feature (such as a drain, road or hedgerow) that will act as a strong 'stop' to any possible future growth.
  - The development must not harm the character or appearance of the group, the group's setting within the countryside, nor the countryside in general.



### **Policy H8 – Residential development and environmental problems**

**Planning permission will be granted for new residential development provided that it will not be subject to adverse effects due to an established use that creates dust, smoke, fumes, noise, smell or vibration.**

#### **Justification**

- 4.46 Throughout the District there are a number of existing land uses which, by their nature, may make a poor neighbour for residential properties, e.g. an intensive livestock unit, a sewage treatment plant, or some types of employment. Residential development in proximity to such uses would be likely to suffer disturbance, to the point where occupiers may complain about the operation of the use.
- 4.47 Wherever possible, the best way to avoid such problems is to avoid new residential development in areas where it is likely that an existing land use will cause problems. Specific exclusion distances within which new residential development will not be permitted cannot be given, since each case will vary greatly depending upon the nature of the use, the type of disturbance caused, surrounding topography, prevailing wind directions, etc.

### **Policy H9 – Gypsy sites**

**Planning permission will be granted for the development of a gypsy caravan site, provided that:**

- 1. The site is within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities;**
- 2. The nature, scale, design, siting, and level of traffic generated will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area, nor the amenities of other land users; and**
- 3. Adequate site services and amenities will be provided.**

#### **Justification**

- 4.48 Gypsies (defined as “persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin”) make up a very small proportion of the District’s population, but their land use requirements need to be met. As of July 2001, there were 12 gypsy caravans within North Kesteven.
- 4.49 The Council would prefer to see most forms of development located within settlement curtilages, and the same principle applies to gypsy sites. However, because many gypsies run businesses from their homes, there may be the potential for a site within a settlement to conflict with the amenities of neighbouring land users. Thus, sites outside of settlement curtilages may be considered suitable. In all cases, however, sites must be within a reasonable distance of local services such as schools, shops and medical facilities. Remote locations will not, therefore, be appropriate.



- 4.50 Like any caravan site, a gypsy site can potentially have a significant impact upon the character and appearance of its surroundings, and the operation of businesses from a gypsy site can lead to even greater impact (although some impacts can often be lessened by the use of landscaping – see Policy C19). In considering any proposals for gypsy sites, the Council will be concerned to ensure that such impacts are acceptable and, in this context, sites in sensitive, and open locations where development is generally severely restricted are highly unlikely to be appropriate, e.g. the Area of Great Landscape Value, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, County Wildlife Sites or Local Nature Reserves.
- 4.51 All sites must include an adequate range of services and amenities, but the exact range will depend upon the purpose of the site. For example, sites intended for long-term occupation should offer electricity, drinking water supplies, washing facilities, sewage disposal, and regular refuse collections. Transit sites may not need such a comprehensive range but, at a minimum, should offer a refuse collection point, access to a drinking water supply and sewage disposal.



# The Economy

- 5.1 North Kesteven's economy is still heavily influenced by its traditional agricultural-sector industries although over recent decades its employment structure has changed considerably. The District has a high proportion of business uses that focus on public administration, education and health functions; distribution; and manufacturing, which represent 37.1%, 21.6% and 15.3% of all sectors respectively. There is also an expanding banking, finance and insurance sector (9.6%). The District is characterised by low unemployment rates, relatively good skills levels, and wage levels are below national average and amongst the lowest in the Country.
- 5.2 The Council is committed to strengthening the local economy of the District, increasing the range of job opportunities for local people, and supporting local businesses and services to maintain its 100 prosperous and thriving communities. In doing so, the Council seeks to ensure that development will enhance the local environment and will not detract from the quality of area.
- 5.3 It is proposed that most employment development will be concentrated in Sleaford and North Hykeham, and the 'service villages' in accordance with the locational strategy, which draws on the potential of these areas to provide employment opportunities. The whole of the District benefits from EU Objective 2, which provides assistance to support social and economic restructuring and EU Objective 3 status, which can help to finance training and employment programmes in areas of relatively low incomes.
- 5.4 A business park has been designated within the District for office, research and development or light industrial uses for the County of Lincolnshire. The site chosen at Decoy Farm, Skellingthorpe, takes into account factors that are likely to attract such developers to the area, including proximity to the strategic road network, an attractive working environment and a large supply of labour within reasonable travelling distance.
- 5.5 The Structure Plan indicates the provision of new employment land required for defined towns in Lincolnshire.
- 5.6 This chapter aims to guide development to suitable areas within North Kesteven to improve the quality of the environment by way of promoting the District as a place to live and work, and facilitate the broadening of the local economy to help stimulate new job opportunities by providing choice through flexibility and competition.
- 5.7 The Local Plan approach accords with North Kesteven's Economic Development Strategy, which sets out the Council's proposed schemes to address the economic needs and opportunities of the District, and provisions of its Local Agenda 21 strategy, contributing to all three of the Council's objectives:
- A good quality of life for all residents – Employment growth in the District will contribute towards the quality of life of residents, by way of employment provision and making locational decisions to increase social inclusion.
  - A thriving and prosperous economy – Ensuring the availability of land and premises will help to encourage inward investment and the growth of indigenous firms, contributing towards expansion of the District's economy.
  - A clean green and safe environment – The identification and management of the most suitable employment land will contribute towards safeguarding the character and quality of the local environment, through reducing the need to travel and directing development to more sustainable locations.



## **Policy E1 - Employment development sites**

**Planning permission will be granted for development falling within Classes B1 (b) and (c), B2 or B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 on Existing Employment Areas, Employment Allocations or Employment Sites with Planning Permission (as shown on the Proposals Map), subject to the phasing proposals for the Lincoln Policy Area set down in this Plan. Planning permission will be granted for retail development on these sites, provided that:**

- 1. The use proposed is minor in scale and caters primarily for the needs of the area's workforce; or**
- 2. They have satisfied the sequential approach set out in Policy R1 if considered to be bulky goods retail developments.**

### **Justification**

- 5.8 The District Council is committed to supporting the local economy and improving employment opportunities in North Kesteven. One of the ways it achieves this is by ensuring that there is adequate land available for both the expansion of existing employment generating development and the establishment of new businesses. The emerging County Structure Plan indicates that employment development should be concentrated at the defined towns. This Local Plan has adopted the time-scale 2001-2021 for employment land allocations, in line with the Structure Plan period.
- 5.9 For the Lincoln Policy Area, policy in the Structure Plan sets out a phased release provision of Employment land over two periods: 2001-2015 and 2016-2021. This mainly applies to sites over 5 hectares in size regarded as being of strategic significance. The allocated Employment Sites in the North Kesteven part of the Lincoln Policy Area that have been identified for release in these Two phases are set out in the Table in Appendix 2
- 5.10 For the Rest of the District (including Sleaford) as identified within the Local Plan's locational strategy, no phased provision of employment land is set out within the Structure Plan. However, in the Structure Plan, Sleaford is identified as a major settlement and Main Town suitable for the expansion and allocation of employment opportunities, and is therefore also identified as a sustainable location for new employment land allocations and development
- 5.11 A total of 144.68 ha (Sites Residual Capacity Area) has been designated specifically for employment development in the Local Plan for the period 2001-2021. This includes 99.44 ha allocated within the Lincoln Policy Area, which forms part of the land requirement for Lincoln and its surrounds, and 45.24 ha in Sleaford and the Rest of the District (see Appendix 2). The North Kesteven part of the Lincoln Policy Area is defined as that including the settlements as listed in Appendix 1. The remainder of the allocated employment land in those areas not located in the Lincoln Policy Area or Sleaford, is distributed to the villages that service local areas, in accordance with the locational strategy's defined tier of settlement structure. This takes into consideration the traditional rural structure of the District, and the sparse location of many of its settlements, with only limited access by public transport. The sites are also assessed against long-established key determinants of business location, which are influential in distinguishing between locations, including access to customer and supplier markets, availability of facilities and infrastructure, proximity to the strategic road transport network, availability of labour and the cost of land and servicing requirements.



- 5.12 Employment sites have been selected on merits of location and accessibility, varying in size, land type, service provision and environmental quality to cater for the differing requirements of businesses both indigenous and new. They are intended to guide development to accessible and serviced locations within the District and ensure that the Council continues to promote sustainable development and growth.
- 5.13 Where possible, employment allocations have been designated on land that has previously been developed. This seeks to bring about opportunities to recycle land and redundant buildings, and alleviate issues such as contamination on sites, which are considered favourable for employment uses. In releasing land for employment development, the Council will look to give priority to brownfield sites over greenfield locations.
- 5.14 Employment uses B1 (b) and (c), B2 and B8 identified in the policy, through the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as may be amended, refer to the following:

Use	Class	Description
B1	(b)	Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, High Tech
	(c)	Light industry
B2		General industry
B8		Wholesale warehouse, Distribution centres, Repositories

- 5.15 It is particularly important to direct uses that will attract a large number of journeys to areas that are accessible by cycle, foot or public transport. In considering the land allocations for employment development, sites have been sought where links to facilitate such movements and good service provisions are readily available, for example, those areas that benefit from good access to major roads and public transport networks. To ensure that employment land is safeguarded for its designated use, proposals for retail uses that will serve the area's workforce for example, sandwich outlets and newsagents will be considered. Bulky goods retail developments such as builder's merchants; plant hire; tyre and exhaust depots; furniture, carpet, and hardware retailers will also be considered against this policy. Before permitting such development, the Council will need to be satisfied that the sequential approach set out in Policy R1 has been adopted. Convenience, comparison or retail service use developments, which are likely to attract significant numbers of journeys, are considered to be more appropriately sited in or adjacent town centre locations, and will be considered against policy R1.
- 5.16 Proposals for development on existing and allocated employment sites located adjacent to existing residential areas or other sensitive land-uses are likely to be restricted to B1 uses only. This seeks to ensure that the development of employment operations that may create nuisances to the amenity of local residents is averted. B1 (a) office developments will be considered under Policy E3.

#### **Policy E2 – Decoy Farm Business Park**

**Planning permission will be granted for the development of office, research and development, studio and laboratory, high tech or light industrial uses, as defined by Use Class B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as may be amended, on the land defined as a Business Park on the Proposals Map.**

**Development of the land should accord with the Decoy and Fen Farms' Joint Development Brief (August 1996).**



## Justification

- 5.17 There has been an identified shortfall in the supply of high quality business parks, to accommodate the relocation or expansion of companies seeking prestigious sites within the East Midlands region. Such firms essentially desire attractive working environments with clean air and a parkland setting.
- 5.18 Business Parks are considered more appropriately sited within the cities or market towns of the region, in areas with good accessibility, particularly to existing or potential public transport routes, and where the impact of the environment would be minimal. The allocation of land at Decoy Farm, Skellingthorpe has been the chosen site for a business park to serve the County of Lincolnshire. The site has numerous locational advantages:
- It is adjacent to the A46 trunk road, with access to the strategic road network.
  - It is within the Lincoln Policy Area, and therefore in close proximity to a large workforce.
  - It does not take-up farmland of the best quality.
  - Existing wooded areas abut much of the site adding to the locational quality of the area.
  - The establishment of the University of Lincoln has created opportunities for the cross-fertilisation of research and business development.
  - It is directly adjacent to a major residential allocation within the City of Lincoln.
- 5.19 The broad principle of the way in which the Council considers the site should be developed is outlined in the development brief for the site – The Decoy and Fen Farms’ Joint Development Brief, which was adopted in August 1996.
- 5.20 Much of the site is low lying and it is likely that measures will be required to adequately safeguard buildings against the risk of flooding should flows exceed the capacity of the Foss Dyke Navigation, River Witham and Boultham Catchwater Drain flood defences (see Policy C10). There is a flood risk assessment being undertaken for the Lincoln Policy Area, which will help to clarify the situation. In addition, land at the centre of the site is identified as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and was formerly identified as being of wildlife interest (although it is not identified as a County Wildlife Site). The Council will seek to ensure that the interest of this land is not adversely affected by development proposals. Guidance on potential measures for the protection and enhancement of this important site is included within the Development Brief. The impact of any construction proposals on this site should be considered as part of an environmental assessment of the wider impacts of the business park development including effects on local residents, ecology, landscape, drainage and water systems.



### **Policy E3 – Major office development**

**Planning permission will be granted for new development or a change of use to office accommodation, provided that potential sites are selected in accordance with the following search sequence:**

- (a) locations in the existing town centres of North Hykeham and Sleaford or allocated employment development sites;**
- (b) edge-of-centre sites in those existing centres which are or will be well-connected to the centres;**
- (c) out-of-centre sites, with preference given to sites which are or will be well-served by a choice of means of transport and which are close to the centre and are likely to form links with the centre.**

**Preference will be given to proposals which make better use of previously-developed land and buildings, and to sites which are well served by public transport.**

### **Justification**

- 5.21 Office developments provide a good source of employment opportunities for the District. These predominantly cater for service sector industries, which are becoming increasingly important in light of the general decline in manufacturing and agriculture, on which the District's economy is heavily reliant. The Council seeks to ensure that these types of developments, which are likely to attract large numbers of journeys, are located close to areas that will encourage trips by cycle, foot and public transport or alternatively, accessibility can be improved to an acceptable standard as part of the development (see policy T1). 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 as much as is possible.
- 5.22 The applicant will be required to adopt a sequential approach in searching for suitable office locations, to minimise the impact on the amenities of the area and demonstrate that other areas within or adjacent settlements have been unsuccessfully explored. This approach should firstly consider town centre locations, then brownfield sites available for development or conversion, followed by allocated employment sites and areas that are readily accessible by cycle, foot and public transport.
- 5.23 Office developments will be directed where appropriate, close to centres of population and where they will be served by good public transport links, for example, near to the city of Lincoln, in and around town centres, including the use of upper floors, and within larger village settlements. Consideration will only be given for such developments in countryside locations and areas with poor accessibility where it can be proven that more sustainable areas have been unsuccessfully explored. The District Council may seek to enter into an agreement with applicants for a contribution towards improving the provision of cycle or public transport facilities in accordance with Policy T1, where there is likely to be a need to help ease accessibility.



- 5.24 To protect the rural character of its villages, the District Council will seek to ensure that the scale and design of the proposal are in keeping with neighbouring land-uses and that they do not reduce local distinctiveness. Although the Council welcomes development proposals to change the use of a premise to provide office accommodation, particular care will be taken to prevent the loss of existing facilities such as retail and residential uses. In considering 'change of use' applications, the District Council will assess levels of provision within the locality, and weigh up the loss of its associated use with the likelihood of replacement nearby.

#### **Policy E4 - Employment development in the countryside**

**Planning permission will be granted for new development, redevelopment, and/or expansion of development falling within Classes B1 (b) and (c), B2 or B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 in the countryside (as shown on the Proposals Map), only if a countryside location is essential and the development cannot be located in an existing employment area, on land allocated for employment use or on land within a settlement curtilage, and: -**

- (a) it is of a scale appropriate to meet identified local employment needs;**
- (b) there is safe access and sustainable accessibility to the site;**
- (c) it will contribute to the rural economy of the area;**
- (d) it will protect the quality and character of the countryside;**
- (e) where appropriate, it involves the replacement of suitably located existing buildings of permanent design and construction where this would result in a more acceptable and sustainable development than could be achieved through conversion.**

Previously-developed land, and sites adjacent to a settlement curtilage will be given preference, although sites elsewhere in the countryside will be considered where no other suitable location can be found.

Where appropriate, planning permission may be granted subject to a condition removing permitted development rights to change the nature of activities or use, or to extend the buildings.

#### **Justification**

- 5.25 It is recognised that the countryside is already home to a number of existing businesses, many of which can be expanded in their existing locations without detriment to their surroundings. Similarly, land or premises in the countryside that is presently used for one type of employment use can often be suitable to accommodate an alternative employment use.
- 5.26 Employment uses B1 (b) and (c), B2 and B8 identified in the policy, through the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as may be amended, refer to the following:

Use	Class	Description
B1	(b)	Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, High Tech
	(c)	Light industry
B2		General industry
B8		Wholesale warehouse, Distribution centres, Repositories



- 5.27 On the whole it is the Council's policy to direct new employment generating businesses to major employment areas and where possible within towns and larger settlements to protect rural areas from sporadic and intrusive development and reduce the need for people to travel. However, it is accepted that not all developments are suitable for such locations and may be located adjacent a settlement curtilage without harm to the countryside. There will also be certain employment uses that may not be reasonably carried out or suitably accommodated within or adjacent the curtilage of a settlement due to their potentially disturbing nature. In view of the optimum size of business that the local employment base can comfortably support, the Council will consider new proposals elsewhere in the countryside that are of a scale that will meet identified local needs, where the applicant can demonstrate that other areas within or adjacent to settlements have been unsuccessfully explored.
- 5.28 The Council is concerned to ensure that proposals are designed with consideration and can be acceptably accommodated without causing significant harm to the environment and the amenities of neighbouring residents (see policy C2). To ensure that the approved development will remain appropriate in scale to its given location, and the nature of its activities will not cause further disturbance to neighbouring land uses in the future, permitted development rights may be removed.
- 5.29 Proposals that will generate large numbers of visits should be located in areas where accessibility is good or could be made better. Where appropriate the Council may seek to enter into an agreement with applicants for a contribution towards improving the provision of cycle or public transport facilities to an acceptable standard in accordance with Policy T1. 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 dependence upon the private car as much as is possible.

#### **Policy E5 – Conversion of buildings in the countryside to non-residential use**

**Planning permission will be granted for the conversion of a building in the countryside to non-residential use, provided that:**

- 1. The existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, and is capable of conversion without major reconstruction; and**
- 2. Any extensions proposed are in keeping with the scale, character and setting of the original building.**

#### **Justification**

- 5.30 North Kesteven's countryside contains many non-residential buildings of traditional design and construction (such as barns, stables, chapels or schools) that give variety and character to the countryside. The countryside also contains many modern agricultural buildings that represent a significant economic asset. As the use of the countryside continues to change, many rural buildings are no longer needed for the purposes for which they were originally built. They can, however, be suitable for conversion to commercial or industrial uses, or for tourism, sport or recreation. Such conversions can help to: reduce demands for new buildings in the countryside; avoid wasting the economic resource that the buildings represent; prevent the deterioration of some buildings that contribute a great deal to the character of the countryside; sustain and diversify the rural economy; and provide new jobs.



5.31 In assessing proposals for conversions, the Council will look at:

- The building itself, and will examine:
  1. Whether the building will need substantial reconstruction to make it suitable for conversion either because it is in poor condition, or because it is of only temporary or insubstantial construction. If the building would require extensive rebuilding then it cannot be considered as suitable for re-use, because the proposal would not be a conversion. Consequently, applicants must provide information on the building's structural condition.
  2. Whether the building is in keeping with its countryside location in terms of its form, bulk and general design. If the existing building has a harmful effect upon the countryside in terms of visual amenity, the Council will be unlikely to grant permission for a proposal that will lead to its retention. The Council may, however, permit a proposal that will lead to an improvement in such a building's appearance, to the point where it will be in keeping with its rural surroundings.

- The use:

A countryside location will not be appropriate for all types of uses.

1. Uses that will generate large numbers of visits may overload the local road network, or may cause unacceptable disturbance to people living in the vicinity of the building or the access roads, such proposals should be located in areas where accessibility without the use of a car is good or alternatively, accessibility can be improved to an acceptable standard as part of the development (see policy T1). Where appropriate the District Council will seek to enter into an agreement with the applicants for a contribution towards improving cycle or public transport facilities, in accordance with Policy T1. 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 dependence upon the private car as much as is possible.
  2. A use that generates unacceptable levels of dust, noise, smell, vibration, smoke, etc. would be intrusive in the countryside and would also be inappropriate.
  3. Some uses (particularly most kinds of shops or entertainment facilities) are unlikely to be acceptable in a countryside location, because they will tend to compete with similar facilities in nearby towns or villages, where it is the Council's policy that such uses should be concentrated.
- The conversion proposed
    1. Alterations, extensions or demolitions should be kept to the minimum. Extensive changes to the fabric of a building will often erode its character, and increase its visual impact within the countryside. Any changes to the building must be respectful of the building's character and the rural nature of the surroundings. Similarly, the external storage of materials or finished products, and lorry or large-scale car parking will usually appear intrusive in a rural location and should be kept to a minimum or avoided altogether.
    2. Bats, barn owls, swallows and other birds often use rural buildings as roosting or breeding sites. It is the responsibility of the applicant to arrange for buildings to be surveyed to establish whether any such species will be affected by a proposed conversion, and to ensure that their proposal makes provision for the species (preferably within the building or alternatively elsewhere). An application that is not accompanied by an adequate wildlife survey will be rejected.



- 5.32 The Council has produced and adopted supplementary planning guidance, entitled 'The Re-Use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings' which provides detailed design and policy guidance on this subject.

### **Policy E6 – Farm Diversification**

**Planning permission will be granted for proposals to establish non-agricultural business uses on farm holdings, provided that the proposal will be of a scale consistent with its rural location, will not harm the viability of existing agricultural activity, and where feasible any necessary built facilities will be provided through the conversion of existing buildings.**

#### **Justification**

- 5.33 The Council welcomes the diversification of farm businesses into appropriate non-agricultural activities. Such diversification can be vital to the continuing viability of many farm businesses and also provides wider and more varied employment opportunities for the District's workforce. Common forms of diversified activities are farm-based food processing and packing, farm shops, rural sports, farm workshops, or the provision of services to other farms.
- 5.34 The Council wishes to encourage the broadening of the rural economy and will grant planning permission for diversification proposals that will not harm the viability of existing agricultural activity, and which are appropriate to a rural location. Uses that will generate large numbers of visits may overload the local road network, or may cause unacceptable disturbance to people living in the vicinity of the farm or the access roads, such proposals should be located in areas where accessibility without the use of a car is good or alternatively, accessibility can be improved to an acceptable standard as part of the development (see policy T1). 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 dependence upon the private car as much as is possible. Where appropriate the District Council will seek to enter into an agreement with the applicants for a contribution towards improving cycle or public transport facilities, in accordance with Policy T1. A use that generates unacceptable levels of dust, noise, smell, vibration, smoke, etc. would be intrusive in the countryside and would also be inappropriate.
- 5.35 Some uses (particularly most kinds of shops or entertainment facilities) are unlikely to be acceptable in a countryside location, because they will tend to compete with similar facilities in nearby towns or villages, where it is the Council's policy that such uses should be concentrated. Farm shops may be acceptable but, where necessary, the Council may use planning conditions to limit the range of produce that can be sold from a proposed farm shop. It should be noted that farm shops operating from existing buildings and selling produce only from the holding do not require planning permission.
- 5.36 Any necessary built facilities should be provided by means of the conversion of existing buildings, if this is feasible. Where new buildings are essential, the Council will be concerned to ensure that the character and appearance of the countryside is not adversely affected. Where possible, a new building should be sited amongst or adjacent to an existing group of buildings, and its scale, design and materials must be appropriate to its rural surroundings.



### **Policy E7 – Protection of existing employment sites or buildings**

**Planning permission will be granted for the establishment of a non-employment use on land or buildings that were last used for employment purposes, only if:**

- 1. The loss of the land or building will not adversely affect the employment opportunities both in the short term and over the remainder of the plan period, and also the immediate locality and wider area.**
- 2. Continued use of the site or building for employment purposes would adversely affect the character or appearance of its surroundings, amenities of neighbouring land-uses or traffic conditions, that would otherwise be significantly alleviated by the proposed use; or**
- 3. The existing site or building is no longer capable of providing an acceptable standard of accommodation for employment purposes**

#### **Justification**

- 5.37 It is necessary for the Council to ensure that there is an adequate range and supply of development sites and premises within the District to cater for the differing needs of employment generating uses that may arise over the Plan period. This policy accords with the provisions of Policy C8, which seeks to protect allocated sites from other types of development. To achieve this, the Council will generally seek to prevent the development of an allocated employment site for uses other than those falling within Classes B1, B2 or B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as may be amended. These refer to the following:

Use	Class	Description
B1	(a)	Offices, not within A2
B1	(b)	Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, High Tech
	(c)	Light industry
B2		General industry
B8		Wholesale warehouse, Distribution centres, Repositories

- 5.38 It is also intended that this Policy will help to safeguard local employment opportunities by ensuring that existing sites and buildings used for businesses purposes are protected.
- 5.39 There are certain circumstances where alternative uses for employment land or buildings may be acceptable, for example, where the use of a premise is unsatisfactory for its present location due to the proximity to residential areas or sensitive land uses and the impact it imposes on amenities and the local road network. It is also possible that some buildings may not provide suitable accommodation for the needs of modern industries and therefore an alternative use may be considered more appropriate.



## **Policy E8 – Transport depots / Haulage businesses**

**Planning permission will be granted for the establishment or expansion of a transport depot, haulage business or business that will generate significant amounts of freight movement, provided that: the site is well-related to the strategic road and/or rail network, and avoids routing through congested and residential areas or villages.**

**Potential sites should be selected in accordance with the following search sequence:**

- (a) Existing and allocated employment development sites.**
- (b) Previously-developed sites that are well related to the strategic road and/or rail network.**
- (c) Greenfield sites that are well related to the strategic road and/or rail network.**

### **Justification**

- 5.40 Transport depots, haulage businesses and businesses that are likely to generate significant amounts of freight movement demand large areas of land, and can potentially create substantial disturbance to the amenities of neighbouring uses. The nature of the development means that they will need to be located close to main transport networks both to support operations and avoid the need for heavy vehicles to travel on unsuitable minor roads. It should be noted that, as well as planning permission, the operation of a haulage business requires a licence from the Government. The Council would encourage applicants to apply for planning permission before they apply for their operator's licence.
- 5.41 Proposed sites should be chosen on merits of good accessibility, in a location that will cause least harm to the amenity, character and appearance of its surroundings. The disturbance from transport depots, or haulage and other freight generating businesses will generally be in the form of noise arising from the movement of vehicles travelling to, from and around the site, and associated repair and maintenance works. However, other nuisances that the development may contribute, such as dust, dirt, fumes and vibrations, will also need to be considered.
- 5.42 To minimise the impact of such development on local amenities, the District Council will require applicants to adopt a sequential approach in searching for a suitable location. This will involve firstly considering location on an existing or allocated employment site. Where the applicant can clearly demonstrate that these areas are not suitable for their needs, brownfield sites followed by greenfield sites that are well related to the strategic road and/or rail network can be secured, where there is evidence that areas explored in this sequence have been unsuitable.



## **Policy E9 – Telecommunications developments**

**Planning permission will be granted for the development of telecommunications equipment provided that;**

- 1. All reasonable measures to minimise adverse effects are incorporated; including siting, location, appearance and landscaping of apparatus designed to minimise impact on amenity in both the natural and built environment.**
- 2. The proposal would not, in both countryside and urban locations, be visually intrusive in or harm the character and appearance of sensitive landscape areas of particular environmental importance and areas and buildings of architectural or historical importance which have been statutorily designated as being important, such as: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Parks or Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Listed Buildings. In these locations, proposals should be sensitively designed and the developer must demonstrate there are no suitable alternative locations.**

**Consideration will be given to the technical and operational constraints of operators.**

**The Council will, as appropriate, consider proposals in accordance with national criteria and procedures, including:**

- (a) assessing where some minor telecommunications equipment may not constitute development requiring planning permission (“de minimis”);**
- (b) intervening, in certain circumstances, to seek relocation or removal of telecommunications apparatus installed under permitted development rights;**
- (c) before certain telecommunications apparatus is installed under permitted development rights, determine whether Prior Approval is required for the siting and appearance of the development, in response to an operator’s submission.**

### **Justification**

5.43 Much minor telecommunications development does not need planning permission (i.e. it is 'permitted development'). However, before installing some telecommunications apparatus under permitted development rights, developers need to apply to the Council for its determination as to whether prior approval will be required to the siting and appearance of the proposed development. The Council can decide: that prior approval is not required (in which case the development can proceed); that prior approval is needed, and give its approval to the siting and appearance of the proposed development (in which case the development can proceed); or that prior approval is needed, and refuse approval to the proposed siting and/or appearance (preventing the development). In determining whether approval of siting and appearance is required, and in considering planning applications, the Council will use the provisions of this policy and written justification.

5.44 The development of modern telecommunications is generally to be welcomed, as they can have significant social, economic and environmental benefits. However, telecommunications equipment can be large in size and may need to be located in prominent positions in order to operate effectively. As a consequence, they can have an adverse impact upon the character or appearance of their surroundings. Thus, although the Council wishes to facilitate the growth of telecommunications systems, it does not wish this to be achieved at the expense of the District's environment.



- 5.45 Some parts of the District may be particularly sensitive to harm from telecommunications developments – those buildings, structures and areas of land that have particular historic or landscape importance. Where development is proposed in a location affecting any of these assets, the Council will expect the applicant to provide evidence that the apparatus must be located there, and that an alternative (and less sensitive) location would not meet their operational requirements.
- 5.46 In all cases where a proposal will have adverse effects upon the character or appearance of its surroundings, the Council will expect the applicant to show that all reasonable measures to reduce the development's harmful impacts have been incorporated into the proposal (see policies C1 and C2). Applicants must show that:
- They have considered the option of sharing an existing mast, site or associated equipment, and can demonstrate that this solution is not reasonably achievable. [The Council has compiled a Telecommunications Site Register that identifies sites where planning permission has been granted for the development of telecommunications equipment].
  - They have considered locating apparatus on an existing building or structure, where its visual impact would be reduced, and can demonstrate that this solution is not reasonably achievable.
  - The proposed location for the equipment has been chosen so as to use natural features and local geography to minimise its impact upon its surroundings.
  - The equipment has been designed in order to minimise its visual impact.
  - Their proposal includes, where appropriate, an effective landscaping scheme designed to blend any structures into their surroundings.

#### **Policy E10 - Hazardous installations and substances**

**Planning permission will be granted for hazardous installations or proposals that involve the presence of hazardous substances, only if:**

- 1. The occupiers or users of other land are not exposed to unacceptable risk.**
- 2. The quality of water, air or soil resources will not be adversely affected; and**
- 3. Minimum separation distances (variable dependent upon the hazard concerned) from concentrations of population and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest are achieved.**

**Development proposals that may be sensitive to existing sources of hazard will be permitted only where the level of risk is considered acceptable and/or can be successfully mitigated.**



## **Justification**

- 5.47 Hazardous Substances Consent is required for the storage and use of certain toxic, inflammable or explosive substances at or above a controlled quantity. However, even after all possible measures have been taken to comply with health and safety legislation, there remains a residual risk of an accident that cannot be eliminated. This policy seeks to ensure that this residual risk is addressed by the land use planning system.
- 5.48 The policy seeks to ensure that adequate distances are maintained between hazardous installations and residential premises or areas where people congregate in large numbers – when considering applications both for hazardous installations and for other uses in the vicinity of existing hazardous installations. The Council will seek the advice of the Health and Safety Executive on all such developments.



## Retail, The Town Centre, Services and Entertainment

- 6.1 This chapter deals primarily with developments involving uses within the following classes of the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987:
- shops, services and offices within Use Classes A1 & A2;
  - food and drink outlets within Use Class A3;
  - community facilities within Use Class D1;
  - leisure facilities within Use Class D2.
- 6.2 The Plan's strategy is for most developments of these types to be concentrated in town or village centres, so some of the policies in this chapter also touch on other uses that are appropriate to such centres. The concentration and interaction of a variety of uses and activities is a crucial factor in the vitality, viability and sustainability of any centre.
- 6.3 Some types of development within Use Classes D1 and D2 may be more appropriately located outside town, village or district centres if they require large areas of land – for example playing fields or extensive sports facilities (see the policies of the Recreation, Sport & Tourism chapter). The policies in this chapter apply to the types of leisure use that are most appropriately located within town and village centres, according to the catchment areas they are intended to serve. Examples include, cinemas, fitness centres, bingo and gaming centres and bowling alleys.
- 6.4 A "Retail and Commercial Leisure Study" was produced for the District Council by consultants Drivers Jonas in September 2000. The results have informed the preparation of this Local Plan. The study provides useful economic and statistical information and analysis, and helpful insights into the economics of retail development. It reveals strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and it suggests ways in which planning policy and planning intervention may be used to best effect.
- 6.5 Key pointers emerging from the study include:
- There is some scope for further retail, service and entertainment development in the District;
  - Although it is possible to estimate the total amount of additional floorspace that could be supported by growth in the District's population and economy, such estimates must be treated with care;
  - Maintaining the viability and vitality (and, therefore, the commercial and physical attractiveness) of the existing centres will be crucial. Consequently new retail, service and entertainment developments should be concentrated mostly in Sleaford town centre and, to a lesser extent, the District's other smaller centres. Out-of-centre development proposals should be viewed with great caution.
- 6.6 This chapter's policies and proposals will contribute to all three of the Council's objectives:
- **A good quality of life for all residents** - Ease of access to shops, services, entertainments and other facilities makes an important contribution to a good quality of life. Concentration of such facilities in the District's centres helps to ensure that they are accessible to most members of the community. Town and village centres – and the shops, services and other facilities that they host – also play an important role in bringing people in to contact with each other, acting as focal points for a wide range of social interactions.



- **A thriving and prosperous economy** - With a large proportion of employment and economic activity being provided by businesses and other organisations in the retail, service, leisure and entertainment sectors, measures to support developments in these sectors and to guide them to the most appropriate locations will play a major part in promoting a thriving and prosperous economy. Many businesses and activities of these types benefit from close proximity to one another, promoting both co-operation and constructive competition and enabling customers and clients choice and ease of comparison. Concentration of these uses within centres assists those processes.
- **A clean, green and safe environment** - A strategy of promoting strong centres and discouraging dispersal of shops, services and the types of entertainment facilities that are best located in town and village centres, helps to protect the environment, locally and globally, by reducing the need to travel so far and so frequently, thus reducing transport-related pollution. Promoting investment in the District's town and village centres helps to ensure the upkeep of historic buildings and streets, whilst discouraging dispersal can help to protect the countryside from inappropriate development and protect the setting of historic settlements.

### **Policy R1 – Retail and Town Centre Development**

**Planning permission will be granted for retail, service, indoor sport and recreation, and entertainment developments within an existing town centre provided that it is of a type and scale that is appropriate to the role of the particular centre, in accordance with the following sequential approach to site selection: -**

- (i) development is directed firstly to existing centres where an identified need is to be met;**
- (ii) if no suitable sites are found in existing centres then edge-of-centre locations and finally out-of-centre sites will be considered.**

**The identified centres in North Kesteven are:**

- 1. Sleaford Town Centre (as defined on the Proposals Map);**
- 2. The established centres in North Hykeham (as defined on the Proposals Map); and**
- 3. The centres of the service villages (as defined on the Proposals Map).**

**Planning permission will be granted for such development outside these centres, only if:**

- a. A clear need for both the proposed development and the proposed form of development has been demonstrated;**
- b. It has been shown that there are no suitable sites within an appropriate centre;**
- c. The site proposed is the closest to an appropriate centre that is suitable and can reasonably be made available for the type of development proposed;**
- d. Adequate measures are to be taken to ensure that the development is accessible by public transport, foot and bicycle; and**
- e. The proposed development will not (either by itself or in conjunction with other proposals that have been permitted or can reasonably be anticipated) harm the vitality and viability of any of the District's established town or service village centres, or any centre in an adjacent District; or**
- f. The development proposed is minor in scale and caters exclusively for the locality, rather than depending on a wider catchment area for its viability.**



## Justification

- 6.7 Sleaford's town centre is the main centre within North Kesteven, directly serving a significant proportion of the District for shopping, schools, employment, services, entertainment and traffic mode interchanges. Maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centre and, where possible, enhancing its role as the District's primary centre is a key component of this Local Plan's strategy. It is considered that effective enhancement and promotion of features that make Sleaford a special place can help to "retain" customers and attract visitors. Key features include the town's historic streets and buildings; its pleasant environment; its market; and the river and riverside areas. Public transport accessibility is a key consideration and opportunities to achieve even better integration of the station and the town's shopping, services and entertainment centre should also be promoted and harnessed. Considerable potential for redevelopment and regeneration has been identified in the area close to the railway station. Preference will be given for proposals in this area to developments that will benefit particularly from close proximity to the District's main public transport node and/or will help to support the viability of public transport services or contribute to the improvement of public transport infrastructure (see policy T2). The Town Centre is supported and complemented by a number of smaller centres which, in the terminology of PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Developments) fall broadly within the categories of "district" and "local" centres. In this Local Plan, the service villages perform the role of "district centres" and many of the other villages contain the equivalent of "local centres". North Hykeham is unusual, in that by size and identity it is a town, but it does not have a single "town centre". Instead, its shops, services and entertainment facilities are grouped in three separate locations, each of which has some of the characteristics of a local or district centre.
- 6.8 The importance of the District's town and village centres should not be underestimated - they provide people with goods, services and entertainments relatively close to their homes (meaning that they do not have to travel so far, or so frequently, to larger centres). As the overall thrust of this Local Plan is to promote a more sustainable pattern of development and activity and to facilitate more sustainable life-style choices, maintaining the vitality, viability and diversity of the District's centres is an important goal.
- 6.9 Permitting a more dispersed pattern of development would be likely to undermine the vitality and viability of the centres, thereby diminishing their roles and encouraging less sustainable patterns of movement and transport.
- 6.10 Occasionally, it may be appropriate to permit retail development on the edge of a centre, if there is a clear need for the development and there is no scope for it to be accommodated (either as proposed or in a modified form) in the centre itself. There may also be some scope for accommodating retail developments on employment sites. These must be in locations where there is good accessibility by cycle, foot and public transport or alternatively, accessibility can be improved to an acceptable standard as part of the development (see policy T1). Nonetheless, the Council will wish to ensure that its decisions contribute to reducing dependence upon the private car as much as is possible. The Council will seek to direct retail proposals to these sites, if the development is one that will be more appropriately sited in an employment area and will not harm the viability of retail facilities in nearby settlements. Before permitting such development, the Council will need to be satisfied that the criteria set out in Policy R1 have been met and that satisfactory measures are to be taken to integrate the development with the centre – both physically and functionally. A full retail impact assessment will be required for all applications for retail developments over 2500 sq m gross floor space and smaller developments that are likely to have a large impact on a town or district centre.



- 6.11 Allowance has also been made for the establishment of small, locally-orientated shops to meet the needs of people living in smaller villages or in residential neighbourhoods. It should be noted, however, that the scale of such developments is envisaged to be modest, as the intention is to complement the facilities available within the main centres and not to compete with them in such a way as to threaten their viability and vitality.

### **Policy R2 - Mixing uses within Sleaford Town Centre**

**Planning permission will be granted within Sleaford Town Centre (as shown on the Proposals Map) for developments involving the following range of uses:**

- 1. Shops, services and offices within Use Class A1 and A2;**
- 2. Food and drink outlets within Use Class A3;**
- 3. Business uses within Use Class B1;**
- 4. Houses and flats within Use Class C3;**
- 5. Community facilities within Use Class D1;**
- 6. Leisure facilities within Use Class D2;**
- 7. Hotels within Use Class C1,**

**provided that:**

- a) The proposed development is compatible with the use of adjacent buildings and land; and,**
- b) In the Main Shopping Streets (as shown on the Proposals Map):**
  - i. uses other than those within Use Classes A1, A2 and A3 are not located or concentrated in such a way as to detract from the vitality and viability of the area as a focus for shopping and other retail-oriented activities;**
  - ii. appropriate display windows are retained or incorporated in buildings used for purposes within Use Classes A1 and A2.**

### **Justification**

- 6.12 One of the attractions of town centre shopping is the concentration of many shops within a relatively compact area, allowing comparisons to be made and goods to be bought without having to walk too far between shops. If too many other uses are allowed between the shops, the attractions and advantages of concentration will be lost and the overall vitality and viability of the centre may suffer. At the same time, however, it must be acknowledged that successful town centres are much more than just a concentration of shops. The fact that this chapter encompasses services and entertainments is itself recognition that there is a synergy between these activities which means that they are often best located close to each other. A notable development in recent years has been the growth of the evening economy adding further dimensions to the town centre's attractions, and supporting its overall viability and vitality.



- 6.13 It is equally important that people have the opportunity to live in the town centre, as this gives it a wider life and purpose, provides custom for town centre businesses and enables people to live in the most highly accessible areas, particularly in relation to walking, cycling or using public transport to move around. The intention of Policy R2 is, therefore, to promote a mixture of mutually compatible and mutually beneficial uses within Sleaford's town centre, whilst safeguarding its particular role as the District's main shopping and services centre.

### **Policy R3 - Safeguarding of existing facilities**

**Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will result in the loss of retail, social or community facilities that serve the local community, only if:**

- 1. There are adequate alternative facilities locally;**
- 2. Equivalent facilities have been, or are to be, provided elsewhere in the area; or**
- 3. The existing use is not viable in the longer term.**

### **Justification**

- 6.14 North Kesteven's predominantly rural nature means that there are numerous shops, pubs, Post Offices and other facilities serving the needs of particular local communities across the District. Sometimes these are in identifiable centres, sometimes they are in other locations. Often they are of great value to local people, particularly those without access to a car, or those with disabilities or limited mobility. Such existing facilities are considered to be a valuable and limited resource. Once lost they are likely to be difficult to reinstate or replace. Facilities of this type have a significant part to play in meeting this Local Plan's objective of reducing people's need to travel, by ensuring that homes, jobs and services are close to one another, so it is important that they are not lost to other uses unless in any particular case the need for such a facility has clearly gone and is not likely to re-emerge.
- 6.15 Where applications are received for planning permission to change the use of such premises, applicants will normally be expected to demonstrate that the business is no longer economically viable (and cannot be expected to return to viability in the foreseeable future) and that all reasonable efforts have been made to find a purchaser, tenant or operator willing to continue the business (or a business of similar value to the local community) without success.

### **Policy R4 - Advertisements**

**Consent will be granted for the display of appropriate signs and advertisements on shops and other commercial premises, provided that:**

- 1. The character or appearance of the building or the area will not be adversely affected;**
- 2. Public safety will not be compromised; and**
- 3. The amenities of the users or occupiers of nearby land or buildings will not be adversely affected.**



## Justification

- 6.16 Signs and other advertisements on shops and commercial premises play an important role because they allow businesses to advertise their presence and the goods and services they provide. They also contribute to the character and interest of shopping streets, provided they are well designed, of suitable scale and appropriately located. Policy R4 is intended to encourage advertising in forms that make a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and attractive character of the areas in which they are to be displayed, whilst preventing unduly obtrusive or poorly designed advertisements, and avoiding the creation of cluttered street-scenes.
- 6.17 See also policies HE11 and DC8, which also deal with advertisements.

### **Policy R5 - Security Grilles and Shutters**

**Planning permission will be granted for the installation of external security grilles or shutters on the display windows of shops or other commercial premises, only if:**

- 1. There is a clear and particular security risk;**
- 2. The design and materials are in keeping with the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings; and**
- 3. Wherever possible, visibility of the display window is maintained.**

## Justification

- 6.18 Whilst the security of shops and other commercial premises is important, shuttering of display windows can produce an unpleasant and intimidating street-scene and can detract from the perceived vitality of a centre. Such measures will, therefore, only be permitted where there is a particular security risk that cannot realistically be reduced in other ways. In such instances, the preference will normally be for see-through grilles, rather than solid shutters, as these help to maintain interest in the shopping street-scene and often provide a better level of security as there is a greater likelihood of any activity behind the grille being seen by passers-by.



7.1 The policies and proposals of this chapter are concerned specifically with the movement of people and goods within North Kesteven. However, in considering these issues, this chapter's provisions cannot be looked at in isolation from the rest of the Plan.

7.2 The Local Plan's locational strategy identifies four tiers of settlements within the District, taking account (amongst other factors) of their ability to act as focal points for wider hinterlands, and the opportunities they offer for travel by bicycle, public transport or on foot. The locational strategy seeks to concentrate most new development in existing settlements and, particularly, in the District's towns and service villages. By doing so, it is intended that:

- The service and employment role of the towns and service villages will be enhanced;
- Appropriate levels of local employment and services will be provided in other villages;
- The majority of new homes will be built in locations that are close to jobs and services; and
- Conditions will be created that will support and enhance the viability of public transport services.

In short, it is intended that the Plan's provisions will promote a pattern of development that should, over time, reduce the need to travel, improve the choice of travel modes and reduce the frequency and length of necessary journeys.

7.3 The Local Plan seeks to address North Kesteven's movement and transport requirements in ways that are appropriate to the District's particular characteristics and circumstances. In some parts of the District, there is scope for progress towards a more balanced, less car-dependent approach, but it must be recognised that North Kesteven is a predominantly rural District, within the more remote and sparsely populated parts of which opportunities to promote alternatives to the use of private cars are limited. It must also be recognised, however, that people living within those parts of the District who do not drive or have access to a car can be seriously disadvantaged in terms of access to facilities and services.

7.4 Transport policies must be viewed not only alongside the locational strategy and other policies in this Local Plan, but also alongside the Local Transport Plan for Lincolnshire, produced by the County Council and proposals set out in the Greater Lincoln Greenways and Quiet Roads Strategy, which has been endorsed by the District Council. The Greater Lincoln Greenways and Quiet Roads Strategy sets out schemes to develop a network of Greenways and Quiet roads within an 8 mile radius of Lincoln City Centre consisting of largely car free routes connecting town and countryside for shared use for people of all abilities on foot, cycle or horseback, and roads where vehicle flows and speeds are kept relatively low, enabling people to more safely share the road space with motor vehicles. The current 2nd Local Transport Plan for Lincolnshire was published in March 2006, to cover the period 2006/7 to 2010/11. It sets out both broad transport strategies and detailed proposals, and is used as a primary tool in the allocation of funding for transport projects. In drawing up this Local Plan, and particularly its Transport policies, the Local Transport Plan has been taken fully into account and measures and proposals in the two Plans are intended to complement and support each other. The mechanism for the on-going co-ordination of responsibilities for transport, highways and car parking matters is provided by the active participation and input by the District Council on consultation undertaken by Lincolnshire County Council, as local highway authority, on the development and progress of the Local



Transport Plan and its integrated transport strategy. A co-ordinating mechanism is also provided by the District Council participating in working groups and committees that consider transport and planning strategies and initiatives that specifically affect the Lincoln Policy Area.

7.5 The policies of this chapter aim to ensure that: the necessary transport infrastructure is provided; new development does not unnecessarily increase car use; and opportunities for journeys to be made by public transport, bicycle and on foot are maximised. This approach accords with the provisions of the Council's Local Agenda 21 strategy, and will contribute to all three of the Council's objectives:

- A good quality of life for all residents - Ease of access to services, facilities, employment, family, friends and other members of the community is a crucial contributor to a good quality of life. Being excluded from such facilities and contacts because they are too remote and adequate transport is either not available or not affordable, can be very damaging - both to individuals and to society as a whole. Coupled with the locational strategy and other policies, the transport policies of this Local Plan are intended to enhance accessibility across the District.
- A thriving and prosperous economy - Efficient transport systems and efficient distributions of land-uses are key contributors to economic efficiency. Policies that are designed to reduce the number and length of journeys that have to be undertaken (for instance by providing for a better range and choice of facilities closer to the places where people live), that enable more needs to be met through single, multi-purpose trips, and that promote the use of a wider range of travel modes should lead to reduced congestion and consequent savings in time and money.
- A clean green and safe environment - The policies in this Local Plan are designed to reduce the environmental impact of travel in North Kesteven, helping to protect both the local environment and contributing to the protection of the global environment.

#### **Policy T1 – Accessibility to developments**

**Planning permission will be granted for developments that will generate or attract significant numbers of journeys, only if:**

- 1. Adequate and effective measures are taken to facilitate access by all modes of transport, with particular emphasis on enabling and promoting safe and convenient access by public transport, walking and cycling; or**
- 2. The site's location and the infrastructure serving it are satisfactory, or can be made satisfactory, as part of the development.**

#### **Justification**

7.6 This policy applies to most substantial developments, including offices and other places of employment, shops, commercial leisure, and any other use that can be expected to attract significant numbers of users or visitors. In most cases, it will not be sufficient to demonstrate that the development will be accessible by car, as the overall objective is to reduce dependence on cars wherever possible and to promote and facilitate access by other modes of travel.



- 7.7 In considering accessibility issues, the Council will be mindful of the fact that the District is predominantly rural, that much of its population is dispersed, and that, in some parts, 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. In view of the rural nature of most of the District, the Council will normally need to be satisfied that safe provision will be made for accessing developments of the kind to which this policy applies by car, but developers will be expected to take suitable steps to ensure that their proposals do not increase car-dependency or require more journeys to be undertaken by car.
- 7.8 Prospective developers will be expected to prepare and submit Transport Assessments in conjunction with applications for planning permission, providing sufficient information for the Council to assess both the transport implications of the proposed development and the means by which it is proposed that the requirements of this policy will be met.
- 7.9 The location of the site proposed for development will greatly influence both the acceptability (or otherwise) of the proposal and the requirements for provision of access facilities and infrastructure. The District's towns and, at a smaller scale, its service villages will normally be the most appropriate locations for developments of this type. Where good public transport services already exist and people can already get to the site safely and conveniently by foot and bicycle, it may be that all that will be required is to ensure that suitable connections and access points are provided (see policy T3). However, where such accessibility is not adequate, developers will be expected to provide or contribute to the provision of suitable infrastructure improvements and facilities, where such contributions would be necessary, appropriate and properly related to the development.
- 7.10 Where, to achieve acceptable accessibility, improvements or new provision must be made outside the development site itself, developers will normally be expected to conclude adequate and appropriate agreements with relevant public authorities and/or private stakeholders prior to planning permission being granted.
- 7.11 It will often be appropriate to devise Travel Plans in connection with major new developments for such uses as employment, shopping, services, leisure, health and education, and uses from and above the following thresholds:
- Food and non food retail, cinemas and conference facilities, and D2 (other than stadia) - 1000 Sq m
  - B1 including higher and further education and office - 2500 sq m
  - Stadia - 1500 seats.
- Such plans draw together an integrated range of measures to deliver sustainable transport objectives, such as:
- reducing car use and promoting alternative modes of travel - e.g., through car-sharing schemes, dedicated bus services, making provision for pedestrians and cyclists (including secure bike parks (covered and adequately supervised), showers etc.);
  - reducing traffic speeds and improving road safety;
  - promoting more environment-friendly delivery and freight movements, home delivery services etc.
- 7.12 Where Travel Plans are appropriate, the Council will expect them to be submitted in conjunction with planning applications alongside the required Transport Assessment. The District Council also encourages existing businesses and organisations whose activities generate substantial numbers of journeys to prepare Travel Plans (regardless of whether they are proposing new development) and will be happy to provide advice and assistance (normally in conjunction with the County Council, as Highway Authority).



## **Policy T2 - Public Transport Facilities**

**Planning permission will be granted for developments that will support the provision of public transport services.**

### **Justification**

- 7.13 In Lincolnshire, public transport is provided mainly by buses and conventional trains. These are operated by private companies on a commercial basis, with public subsidy being allowed in only very limited circumstances. There are also a number of community transport schemes such as the Dial-a-ride services, which provides door-to-door transport. The provisions of this policy will enable direct infrastructure development and development that can be expected to underpin the viability of services by concentrating appropriate uses and activities in places with good (or potentially good) public transport connections. Viability of public transport depends largely on being able to attract sufficient passengers for each service and this is more easily achieved in larger, more densely populated urban areas, than in relatively sparsely populated rural areas. By concentrating most new development into the towns and service villages, this Local Plan's locational strategy should, over time, help to increase the potential for operating viable public transport services in North Kesteven and between North Kesteven and the larger urban centres beyond the District.
- 7.14 The Local Transport Plan includes a co-ordinated strategy for "widening travel choice across all public passenger transport modes", called "InterConnect". It encompasses:
- Local bus services;
  - Rail services;
  - Community transport schemes;
  - Public transport information;
  - Public transport interchange with other modes.
- 7.15 The InterConnect strategy aims to enable public transport to make effective contributions to the following policy areas:
- Sustainable alternatives to the car;
  - Social inclusion, particularly in rural areas;
  - Integration across modes;
  - Access for the disabled;
- and it is intended to link with other transport initiatives on:
- Community Travel Zones;
  - Rural Priority initiatives;
  - Walking and cycling; and,
  - Travel Plans.

Full details of the InterConnect strategy can be found in the Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan.



- 7.16 A notable feature of North Kesteven's public transport infrastructure is that rail has particular potential for development. Sleaford is located at a railway "crossroads", with lines leading to Lincoln, Grantham and Nottingham, Peterborough and Boston converging on the town. This gives potentially good connection to both the larger urban centres within the region and the national railway network. Just as significantly, in terms of this Local Plan's locational strategy, both North Hykeham and a number of the District's service villages - Metheringham, Ruskington and Heckington are also served by rail, and offer opportunities for improvement of their services. There may also be an opportunity for the opening of a new railway station at Washingborough or Heighington and such proposals would be strongly supported by the District Council. The Local Transport Plan notes that, of all Lincolnshire's large market towns, "Sleaford is the best served by rail, and well connected to local villages such as Ruskington and Heckington... Sleaford, together with Spalding, are key locations in the Rail Passenger Partnership project. Through the Partnership, the (County) Council will apply the InterConnect strategy to the interurban corridors of Lincoln-Sleaford, Sleaford-Spalding and Spalding-Peterborough, with intermediate hubs for connections with local bus services at Metheringham, Ruskington, and Donington". Although the basic track and station infrastructure is in place to provide good connections by train within the District and with neighbouring urban centres, it is considered that the potential of the network is not being realised at present, with services being rather infrequent and mostly under-used. A programme of facility and service improvements is set out in the Local Transport Plan and the targets for the period up to 2005 / 06 include:
- To increase rail ridership into Sleaford by 20%;
  - To increase rail ridership between Lincoln and Sleaford by 40%; and
  - To increase rail ridership between Sleaford and Spalding by 100%.
- 7.17 The emphasis given in this Local Plan's locational strategy to Sleaford, North Hykeham and the identified service villages – particularly those with rail connections - is intended to support and complement the Local Transport Plan's objective and proposals for public transport development based on the InterConnect strategy.

### **T3 - Maximizing travel choice**

**Planning permission will be granted for developments consisting of groups, complexes or estates of buildings sharing common access roads or drives, only if the layout and design of the development incorporates:**

- 1. Safe and convenient links with the surroundings for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; and**
  - 2. Safe and convenient provision within the site for walking and cycling (and for encouraging walking and cycling) and access by public transport, as well as travelling by car,**
- and, generally, the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are given priority over the needs of motor vehicles and their drivers within the development.**

### **Justification**

- 7.18 This policy relates to business/commercial, residential and mixed-use developments involving groups of buildings served by new roads, streets and/or drives. This includes, for example, employment or business parks, housing groups and estates and mixed-use streets and courts. Ensuring that access within such developments is convenient and safe for all users (catering for the needs of vehicles, but not at the expense of the needs of pedestrians and cyclists) is important if people are to be encouraged to choose non-car modes of transport when possible.



- 7.19 The layout and design of new residential developments is a matter that has generated particular concern (and is also dealt with in policy H2). The past decade has seen increasing realisation that what had become the conventional approach to the design and layout of new housing areas was not only producing bland, uniform estates of houses with little sense of local identity, but was also actively promoting car-dependency and, in the process, discouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport. The starting point for the design of most housing estates and groups was the laying out of roads to facilitate easy access by cars and service vehicles and the parking of at least two cars within the curtilage of each house. The needs of pedestrians and cyclists were very much a secondary consideration and using the layout and design of estates to actively encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport rarely received any thought at all.
- 7.20 As most daily journeys originate from home, the location of homes in relation to places of work, places of education, shops and other facilities obviously has a major influence on people's travel-mode choices. However, the way that the wider home environment either encourages or discourages one mode of travel over another is also significant; it effectively sets the context for subsequent decisions. Designing new housing areas so that walking and cycling is both safe and convenient and, where possible, public transport is readily accessible, can encourage people to choose those modes of travel for more of their journeys. This will often involve placing their needs and their convenience above the needs of car drivers and service vehicle operators - whilst still ensuring that vehicle movements are catered for safely (if more slowly and perhaps not quite so conveniently).
- 7.21 Both the government publication referred to as "Design Bulletin 32" and The Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas contain advice and guidance on these matters. Approaches are constantly evolving and improving, however, and other up-to-date sources of "best practice" should also be consulted when new developments are being planned. The Council will seek to work with developers and their designers and the Highway Authority to accommodate approaches that meet the appropriate requirements in new ways. Pre-application consultation with the Council's planning officers is strongly recommended.

#### **T4 – Safety**

**Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that will not adversely affect the safety of people using roads, cycleways, footpaths, bridleways or railways.**

#### **Justification**

- 7.22 The safety of people using transport infrastructure and networks is a paramount consideration, which needs to be taken properly into account in the location and design of development proposals. Nearly all developments require safe access to a public highway, and consequently, it is important that the nature and volume of the traffic that will be generated is understood and catered for adequately. The generation of traffic of a type or volume that would adversely affect safety on the wider highway network must be avoided (either by refusing permission for the development or, if appropriate, ensuring that adequate alterations and improvements are provided for).



## **T5 – Parking provision**

**Planning permission will be granted for proposals that include provision for the off-street parking of cars, bicycles and motorbikes in accordance with the Council's adopted maximum parking standards, set out in Appendix 4. Provisions which exceed the maximum standards will be permitted only in cases where retail and leisure developments within or on the edge of a town centre will provide parking facilities that will serve the town centre as a whole.**

### **Justification**

- 7.23 It is often desirable to provide off-street space for parking cars and other vehicles that may be associated with the use and operation of new buildings and other developments. Standards for such provision have been prepared by Lincolnshire County Council and adopted by the District Council, and these should be used as a guide to the provision to be made in association with particular development proposals. The provision of parking for disabled people will be additional to the adopted maximum parking standards set out in Appendix 4.
- 7.24 The Council will expect applicants to demonstrate that their proposed car parking provision strikes an appropriate balance between highway safety, the promotion of sustainable travel modes and choices, convenience, security, amenity, design quality and townscape/landscape impact. As a general rule, the Council will expect car parking provision for individual developments to be minimal where access by other modes of transport is good and/or there is adequate public parking provision in the vicinity. Where it would be more appropriate to improve accessibility by public transport or other modes, or to increase the supply of public car parking in the vicinity (or improve its quality), the Council may seek developer contributions to such provision or improvements in lieu of on-site parking provision (see policy C4).

## **T6 – Roadside services**

**Planning permission will be granted for the development of roadside services, provided that the development proposed:**

- 1. Will be limited primarily to serving the needs for fuel, refreshment or accommodation of people travelling on primary routes across the District;**
- 2. Will not provide facilities that are likely to attract additional journeys;**
- 3. Will not adversely affect the safety or convenience of road users; and**
- 4. Will not adversely affect the character or appearance of its surroundings.**

### **Justification**

- 7.25 Roadside services include filling stations, cafes, restaurants, and hotels/motels catering specifically for people on journeys, and which consequently require a roadside location. There are many other uses (such as shops or entertainment facilities) that could gain commercial advantage from a roadside location, simply because they would be located alongside routes used by large numbers of people. However, such uses normally depend on additional journeys being made, rather than simply serving the needs of people who are already travelling. Uses of that type are, therefore, more appropriate to town and service village centres (see policy R1), where a single trip can often fulfil several purposes. This policy does not, therefore, allow for that type of development.



- 7.26 In considering planning applications for roadside services developments, the Council will be concerned to protect the countryside from unnecessary or poorly located/designed development, and to avoid impeding the free-flow of traffic through the proliferation of such facilities. The provisions of the Landscape & Wildlife and Historic Environment chapters, and of many Core Policies (particularly C3, C11, C13, C17, C18, C19, C20 and C21) may also be important in determining such applications

#### **T7 – Safeguarding land for transport infrastructure**

**Planning permission will be granted for developments that would not prevent or hinder the planned provision or improvement of desirable transport infrastructure. In particular, land required in connection with the construction and operation of the proposed Lincoln Eastern By-pass (as shown on the Proposals Map) will be safeguarded from any development that would prejudice the provision of that road.**

#### **Justification**

- 7.27 This policy applies to transport infrastructure (including the construction and/or improvement of roads, footpaths, cycle facilities, bus routes and railways, car parking and modal interchanges) planned and programmed for commencement during the period of this Local Plan or within a reasonable period thereafter. It is in the public interest (see policies T1 and T2) that such provision should be made and it is, therefore, inappropriate to permit development that would prevent or hinder the completion of such schemes.
- 7.28 The safeguarding of the proposed Lincoln Eastern By-pass merits specific reference as this road scheme is considered to be of crucial importance to the resolution of transport problems in the Lincoln area.



## Recreation, Sport and Tourism

- 8.1 This chapter deals with policies and proposals concerning the development or use of land for recreation, sports activities and tourist related developments. These are important topics, given that people generally have increasing amounts of leisure time, and are increasingly demanding access to a wider range of better quality facilities. The Council will aim to ensure that the on-going development of the District includes adequate recreational facilities to meet the community's needs, and that the benefits of tourism are maximised.
- 8.2 The Chapter's policies seek to:
- Ensure that existing rights of way, open spaces and other land with recreational value are not lost to new development;
  - Encourage the provision of additional open space, recreational facilities, and access to the countryside; and
  - Promote the development of the tourism industry.
- 8.3 The Chapter's policies will contribute to all three of the Council's objectives:
- **A good quality of life for all residents** - Participation in sport and recreational activities can help improve health, quality of life and sense of well being, and the provision of easily accessible facilities can help to ensure that these benefits can be enjoyed by all sections of the community.
  - **A thriving and prosperous economy** - The development of the District's recreational and tourism potential will increase visitor numbers, with obvious economic benefits. The availability of adequate play and sporting facilities is also a positive factor in encouraging inward-investment.
  - **A clean, green and safe environment** - Play and sports space contributes greatly to the character of settlements. The availability of local facilities for sport and recreation can reduce both the need to travel and distances travelled.

### **Policy RST1 - Protecting existing recreational open space and built sports facilities**

**Planning permission will be granted for development on an existing recreational open space, or built sports facility only if:**

- 1. The proposal would enhance or improve the recreational use of the site;**
- 2. A replacement recreational site of equivalent or better facilities has been or shall be provided elsewhere in the area, (the replacement site would have to be equally accessible to the communities it serves);**
- 3. Redevelopment of part of an existing site would protect and enhance the recreational value of the remainder; or**
- 4. The applicant can demonstrate that there is evidence that there is no current need, nor any predicted future need for the facility.**