

North Kesteven Local Plan

North Kesteven District Council
Adopted 2007



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Introduction

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

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

The form of the Plan

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

Objectives, Strategy, Monitoring and Review

2.1 It is important that the Local Plan should clearly explain the objectives it intends to achieve. This has a number of benefits:

- it allows the Plan's relationship to the Council's overall strategy and to the strategies of other organisations to be understood;
- it gives the Plan's policies and proposals a context;
- it allows the Council and other interested parties to examine whether the Plan achieves what it is supposed to; and
- it will help to make the Plan more understandable.

The Local Plan's objectives – Sustainable development

2.2 North Kesteven District Council has set out its aim for North Kesteven to be a District of 100 flourishing communities, and has the following three objectives:

- A good quality of life for all residents
- A thriving and prosperous economy and
- A clean, green and safe environment

2.3 The Local Plan is intended to make the maximum possible contribution towards the achievement of the Council's general aim and objectives, and is intended to ensure that the on-going development of the District is sustainable – i.e. having a proper balance between economic, social and environmental factors.

2.4 The Plan's aim is to ensure that residents' quality of life is not reduced and, indeed, is improved wherever possible. At the same time, the Plan aims to ensure that development during the Plan period does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs and to enjoy a high quality environment.

2.5 In more detail, the Plan's objectives are:

- To ensure that the District's economy will grow and become more diverse.
- To meet the District's need for more and better paid jobs.
- To promote rural enterprise and diversification.
- To protect the District's air, soil, and water resources.
- To ensure that new development is safe (in terms of highway safety, flood risk, risk of crime, etc.).
- To maximise access throughout the District for everyone, including people with disabilities.
- To safeguard and enhance the District's historic, landscape, cultural and wildlife assets.
- To ensure that new development preserves the individual character of the District's different settlements and different landscape areas, and makes the maximum possible contribution to the District's visual quality.
- To make the best use of the District's existing built-up areas.
- To reduce people's need to travel, by ensuring that homes, jobs, and services are close to one another.
- To facilitate walking, cycling and public transport use.

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

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

Locational strategy

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

Lincoln Policy Area

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

2.9 First tier - Lincoln's built-up area

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

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

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

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

2.11 Second tier - Service villages

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

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

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

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

2.13 **Third tier - Villages**

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

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

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

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

2.15 Fourth tier - Hamlets

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

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

Rest of the District

2.16 First tier - Town

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

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

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

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

2.18 Second tier - Service villages

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

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

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

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

2.20 **Third tier - villages**

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

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

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

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

2.22 Fourth tier - Hamlets

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

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

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

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

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

Monitoring and review

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

2.25 Housing

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

2.26 Economy

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

2.27 Other issues will also be monitored:

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

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

Core Policies

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

Policy C1 – Development within settlement curtilages

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C2 – Development in the countryside

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C3 – Agricultural land quality

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

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

Justification

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

Policy C4 – Infrastructure provision by developers

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

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

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

Justification

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

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

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

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

Policy C5 – Effects upon amenities

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

Justification

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

Policy C6 – Community safety

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

Justification

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

Policy C7 – Comprehensive development

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C8 – Safeguarding allocated sites

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

Justification

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

Policy C9 – Washlands

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

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

And will not:

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

Justification

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

Policy C10 - Flood risk

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

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

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

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

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

Justification

3.32 In North Kesteven, although groundwater or local flooding could theoretically take place anywhere, the main source of flood risk comes from rivers. Predicting where and when flooding will take place even in the relatively near future is an uncertain process, and the reliability of predictions becomes even more questionable as one looks further into the future (given that climate change is likely to have an impact upon flood events, but the exact nature of that impact is not known). Given this uncertainty and the potentially serious consequences of flooding for people and property, the District Council will take a precautionary approach towards development and flood risk.

3.33 Thus, the Council has generally avoided allocating land for development in parts of the District that have been identified by the Environment Agency as being at particular risk of flooding. However, given that flooding can take place anywhere, all applicants must consider the flood risk to which their proposal may be exposed, and whether their development will increase flood risk elsewhere.

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

3.34 The assessment must assess the degree to which the development would be exposed to flood risk. Thus it should include as a minimum:

- The source of the potential flooding;
- The condition of any existing flood alleviation measures;
- The likelihood of flooding taking place;
- The likely rate of inundation or speed of flooding taking place, and the likely depth and duration of flooding; and
- The impact upon the proposed development and impact to others that flooding would have.
- The effects of climate change over the life-time of the development.

3.35 It must also consider whether the proposal would be likely to have an impact upon flood risk elsewhere.

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

Policy C11 – Pollution

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C12 – Contaminated land

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C13 – Unstable land

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

Justification

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

Policy C14 – Surface water disposal

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

Justification

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

3.46 New development must be designed to ensure that, wherever feasible, surface water is managed locally to reduce wastage and to prevent problems being caused away from the site. A variety of measures can be used as alternatives to traditional piped drainage systems (known as sustainable drainage systems), for example:

- The area of impermeable hard surfaces can be minimised, and permeable and porous hard surfaces can be used.
- Basins and ponds can be used to hold water.
- Infiltration devices such as soakaways can be used to drain water directly into the ground, rather than piping it away.
- Landscape areas can include filter strips and swales (shallow and relatively wide ditches which lead surface water overland from the drained surface to a storage or discharge system) that mimic natural drainage patterns.
- Facilities can be provided for collecting and storing rainwater.

3.47 Some sustainable drainage solutions (e.g. basins, ponds and swales) will require on-going maintenance. Applicants may wish to carry out this maintenance themselves, or they may prefer to contract it to another party. Either way, the Council will need to be certain that proper maintenance will be carried out, and will assure this either by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of an agreement between the developer and the competent Water Authority/Internal Drainage Board.

Policy C15 – Water supply

Planning permission will be granted for development, provided that:

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

Justification

3.48 We use water in our homes and gardens, in schools, hospitals, commerce, industry, and in agriculture. Most new development also needs water, whether from a mains supply or direct from rivers, streams or water-bearing rocks below the ground (aquifers). Although water is a renewable resource, it cannot be taken for granted, because the abstraction of water has a direct impact upon the natural environment - water in streams, rivers and wetlands allows plants to grow, and keeps fish, insects and mammals healthy. It also gives people pleasure in many ways – we enjoy the appearance of rivers and streams in the landscape, and many of us enjoy fishing, boating, canoeing or just walking by rivers. Thus, planning permission will not be granted for any development that would demand a water supply that would be detrimental to existing abstractions, river flows, water quality, fisheries, amenity or nature conservation.

3.49 The efficient use of water is a crucial part of sustainability, and has benefits for the occupiers of the building (in that bills will be reduced), as well as helping to protect the water environment generally. Efficiency can be pursued in two main ways:

- By collecting rainwater, to supplement mains water supply
- By recycling waste water for lower grade uses

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

Policy C16 – Sewage disposal

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C17 – Renewable energy

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

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

Justification

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

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

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

Design

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

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

Form Its appearance and relationship with the surrounding environment.

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

Policy C18 – Design

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

1. Reinforce local identity and

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

And

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

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

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

Justification

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

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

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

3.62 Firstly, applicants must ensure that they have assessed and understood the character of their site - what positive qualities it possesses (such as existing buildings, trees, hedgerows, water features, topography, or views into, out of, or across the site). They must ensure that their design takes full account of existing site features and incorporates them into the development, where this is possible and desirable.

3.63 Secondly, applicants must assess and understand the immediate surroundings of their site, and the wider area in which their development will be located. All parts of the District have their own particular visual character, which is established by factors as diverse as the height and scale of existing buildings, the materials used, the ratio of buildings to undeveloped space, the orientation of buildings and the degree to which they are set back from the highway, the layout of roads and paths, boundary treatments, the level and type of tree cover, the design of particular landmark buildings, etc. These factors give each area its own distinctive appearance, i.e. they make it somewhere identifiable. It is essential that this distinctive context is understood, and that any new development respects and adds to the 'sense of place' of its surroundings. New development does not need to mimic what already exists, but must not undermine or reduce the existing 'sense of place' and must, where possible and desirable, make its own contribution to the character of its surroundings.

3.64 Lastly, new development must be of interest in itself and buildings or structures must appear properly resolved (i.e. they must appear as a coherent whole). Developments should be of interest from a range of viewing distances, and buildings and the space that surrounds them should be considered as a single entity. It is important that buildings avoid presenting blank walls to the public realm, as windows and doors and articulated facades (bays, porches, etc.) are a principle source of interest, life and vitality. The proportions and positions of window and door openings must also be carefully considered, as must the locations of external pipes, meter boxes and balanced flues, to ensure that facades have a pleasing and uncluttered 'rhythm'. Detailed design elements, such as embellishment of eaves and verges can also play a great part in increasing the interest of a building.

3.65 All planning applications need to be supported by a Design and Access statement. The level of assessment will depend to some extent on the character of the local area. More detailed assessments will need to be provided for developments which affect Conservation Areas, Landscape Character Areas, Green Wedges and the setting of a Listed Building.

Policy C19 - Landscaping

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

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

Justification

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

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

Policy C20 – Accessibility

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

Justification

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

Policy C21 – Energy efficiency

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

Justification

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

1. Site layout

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

2. Building design

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

3. Energy supply

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

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

Policy C22 – External lighting schemes

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

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

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

Justification

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

3.78 There are a number of guidelines which, if followed, can help to ensure that a proposed lighting scheme will be acceptable.

1. A scheme should be designed to prevent the spread of light outside the site.
2. The lighting equipment proposed should minimise the spread of light near to or above the horizontal, and should ensure that the main beams of light directed towards any potential observer are kept below 70° from the vertical.
3. Proposed lighting schemes must take account of the fact that different areas have different characters. A scheme that may be acceptable in a town centre location (which are generally brightly-lit) might not be appropriate in a residential area, where it would be likely to harm both residential amenity, and the character of the area. Similarly, a scheme which would be acceptable in an urban location may not be acceptable on a countryside or edge-of-curtilage site. The District Council will be particularly concerned to ensure that proposals for lighting schemes will not erode the night-time character of the countryside.

3.79 It may be appropriate, to safeguard amenity or to prevent the wasteful use of energy resources, to ensure that some lighting schemes (or some elements of a lighting scheme) are turned off at a particular time. Where this is an issue, the Council will place an appropriate condition on the planning permission.

Housing

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

Policy H1 – Housing

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

Lincoln Policy Area - 5300 dwellings

Sleaford - 1700 dwellings

Rest of District - 1000 dwellings

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

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

Justification

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

4.8 Taking account of dwellings built between 1st April 2001 and 31st March 2004, and planning permissions and housing allocations as at 31st March 2004, the adopted Local Plan (1996) provided for the development of approximately 15,000 dwellings (approximately 5,800 more than the then Structure Plan required):

- Approximately 4,000 dwellings in Sleaford (approximately 1,600 more than Structure Plan requirements)
- Approximately 7,000 dwellings in the Lincoln Policy Area (approximately 1,700 more than Structure Plan requirements)
- Approximately 4,000 dwellings in the rest of the District (approximately 2,500 more than Structure Plan requirements)

4.9 One of the tasks in the production of this Local Plan has been to reduce the degree of over-supply of housing land, and this requires that some areas of housing land should be de-allocated. In considering sites for de-allocation, the Council has taken account of:

- Whether the site's development has begun (and the permission appears to be exercisable) – the Council can see little purpose in de-allocating sites where it is almost certain that the development will go ahead anyway;
- Whether the settlement is an appropriate location for new residential development – judged against the provisions of the locational strategy;
- Whether there is a need for further residential development in a settlement (e.g. to help to retain existing local services and facilities);
- Whether the site includes previously-developed land;
- The likely impact of a site's development upon the character of its surroundings; and
- Whether the site's development would be likely to be constrained by issues such as flood risk, or infrastructure limitations.

4.10 After undertaking this de-allocation process through the revised deposit Local Plan, the Structure Plan was revised to accord with Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands (RPG8) which was adopted in 2002. The revised adopted Structure Plan (September 2006), set a housing requirement of 400 dwellings per annum for the period 2001 to 2021, a total of 8000 houses. Of these houses 5,300 were to be in the Lincoln Policy Area, 1,700 in Sleaford and 1000 in the Rest of the District. At 31 March 2004, however, the total supply of dwellings for the plan period, including completions from 2001 to 2004, extant planning consents and windfall allowance was 9,373, or 1,373 more than the Structure Plan requirement. Consequently all housing allocations have been deleted from the Local Plan.

Housing Requirements

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

Housing Supply

	Sleaford	Lincoln Policy Area	Rest of the District	Total
Number of Dwellings with Planning Permission (31/3/2004)	1,181	3,732	1,268	6,268
Add: Capacity of allocated sites	000	347	000	347
Gives: The total supply	1,181	4,079	1,268	6,528

Balance

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

Notes

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

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

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

Policy H2 – Design and layout of residential development

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

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

Justification

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

- 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.

Transport

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.

Justification

- 8.4 It is important to protect land used for leisure and recreational purposes to ensure that adequate local provision remains available for residents. With increased leisure time, demand in the leisure sector has increased, and active participation in sport and recreational activities is beneficial to the health of local residents. Recreational areas also contribute to the character of settlements (providing undeveloped space within their built-up areas).
- 8.5 Proposals for development on existing recreational sites will be permitted in the following circumstances:
- Where a proposal will enhance the recreational use or enjoyment of the site, e.g. a proposal to develop facilities such as changing rooms or shower blocks on an existing playing field.
 - Where a replacement recreational site has been provided, or is to be provided as part of a Section 106 Obligation. The replacement site would have to be equally accessible to the community it serves and would have to be of equal or better quality than the site lost to development.
 - Where the Council is satisfied that the existing provision will be best retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site; or
 - Where the applicant can demonstrate that there is no longer a need for the recreational facility either now or in the future. In this context, the Council considers that (in accordance with the National Playing Field Association's '6 acre standard'), to meet the community's need for recreational open space:
 - o At least 1.6 hectares of land per thousand people is required for outdoor sport (pitches, greens, courts, athletic tracks, etc.); and
 - o At least 0.8 hectares of land per thousand people is required for children's play (both formal playgrounds designed to provide focussed opportunities for outdoor play, and informal or casual play spaces within housing areas).
- 8.6 In a few settlements, considerably more recreational open space is available than would be required by the application of the above standards (for example if a small village has a large playing field). However, the majority of settlements do not offer their residents recreational open space at the minimum standards desirable. This dichotomy is to be expected in a predominantly rural District, with a dispersed settlement pattern, where the residents of one settlement without play or sports space may use that provided in another nearby settlement. Thus, in applying standards at a local level, it is important that proper account is taken of the ways in which the community accesses the play and sports space it needs. Taking the District as a whole, the land available for children's play space just meets the minimum required, but space available for outdoor sport falls 11 hectares short of that required.
- 8.6a Certain leisure uses have a wider catchment than the local area and can be considered in some cases to be appropriate uses for a town centre. The Council considers that in such cases these uses would fall into the category of intensive sport and recreation uses and as such would be required to meet the policy requirements of Policy R1.

Policy RST2 – Protection of existing public rights of way

Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that will adversely affect an existing public right of way.

Justification

- 8.7 The existing network of public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) within settlements and within the countryside, is a vital asset. These public rights of way link settlements with the surrounding countryside, and provide opportunities for the community to take part in many popular informal recreational pursuits – walking, cycling and horse-riding – and allow people to enjoy the District's countryside. Consequently, the Council will not grant planning permission for a development that will lead to the loss of an existing public right of way, or that will make an existing public right of way less attractive or convenient for users. The Council will seek to improve and enhance accessibility for people with disabilities to existing public rights of way, and to provide access to all new rights of way.

Policy RST3 – Local recreational facilities

Planning permission will be granted for the development of new recreational open space or indoor sports facilities within, or outside but well-related to, the curtilage of any settlement (as shown on the Proposals Map), provided that the development will serve the recreational needs of the immediate area only.

Justification

- 8.8 The justification to Policy RST1 indicates that, taking the District as a whole, land available for children's play space is only just adequate to meet the community's needs; and land available for outdoor sport falls short of that required. Furthermore, these overall figures hide the fact that, in many individual settlements, the availability of play or sports space falls well short of that required to meet the local community's needs. In addition, there is the potential for participation in sport to be increased by the development of indoor facilities - which can provide opportunities to participate in a wider range of activities, and which allow for more intensive use.
- 8.9 The Council will generally welcome proposals that will lead to the provision of new children's play space (formal or casual), outdoor sports space (pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks, etc.), or indoor sports or play facilities. As a consequence, planning permission will be granted for such developments within settlements' curtilages, or in locations within the countryside, provided that the development would not create a visual intrusion into the countryside, would not appear unrelated to the settlement, and would not be so far from the settlement it will serve that it could not be conveniently accessed by the people who will use it. Furthermore, in considering such proposals the Council will be concerned to ensure that the nature and scale of the proposed development is appropriate for the settlement concerned. For example, the development of a new bowling green, tennis court or other sports pitch might be appropriate in a small, isolated, rural settlement, in that it would serve the needs of the residents of the village itself and perhaps those of other nearby settlements. However, the development of a major sports facility (such as a bowling alley) would not be appropriate in such a settlement, in that it would attract users from a significant hinterland. A facility of this sort would be better sited in a larger settlement (conforming with the Plan's objective to reduce people's need to travel) and where opportunities for all sections of the community to access the facility will be greatest (where it is most likely to be accessible on foot, and by bicycle or public transport). Policy R1 deals with developments of this sort.

- 8.10 In considering proposals for new recreational open space or indoor sports facilities, the Council will also take account of the provisions of the Local Plan's other policies, as appropriate. The Core Policies, and the policies of the Transport, Landscape and Wildlife, and Historic Environment chapters will be of particular relevance.

Sport and recreation in the countryside

- 8.11 The District's countryside is its greatest recreational asset, with a network of rights of ways giving access for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. Policy RST2 seeks to ensure that existing rights of way are not unnecessarily extinguished, but it is equally important that all opportunities are taken to extend the community's opportunities to enjoy informal access to the countryside. Policy RST4 deals with these issues.
- 8.12 In accordance with the Local Plan's locational strategy, the Council will wish to see most formal sport and recreational land uses located within or adjacent to existing settlements. However, the Council acknowledges that some activities need a countryside location, because of the amount of land they require or because of the nature of the activity. In general, proposals for sport and recreational developments in the countryside will be judged against the provisions of policy C2, but Policies RST5 and RST6 deal with the particular issues that arise with some specific countryside recreational and sporting activities. [It should also be noted that proposals for development involving horses are dealt with under policy DC8].

Policy RST4 – Public access to the countryside

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will increase public access to the countryside.

Justification

- 8.13 Many people enjoy informal recreational pursuits in North Kesteven's countryside (walking, cycling or horse-riding, for example). However the amount of land that is publicly accessible is limited and the network of footpaths, bridleways and byways is somewhat restricted, particularly in eastern parts of the District. Proposals that will increase access routes, in line with the Lincoln Greenways Strategy, will be welcomed.
- 8.14 Consequently, the Council will welcome proposals that will allow the public to have greater access to the countryside for informal recreation. In considering applications for development in the countryside, the Council will (where appropriate) seek to negotiate with applicants for the provision of public access to suitable areas of land, designed to meet the needs of disabled access, wherever practicable.

Policy RST5 - Golf courses

Planning permission will be granted for the development of a golf course, provided that:

- 1. New buildings are kept to the minimum necessary for the functioning of the golf course, and are designed and located to minimise their visual impact; and**
- 2. The proposed development will not make it impractical to return the land to its former agricultural quality in the future.**

Justification

- 8.15 As golf courses require large areas of land they will usually require a countryside location. However, they will inevitably attract many visitors, and proposals that will result in traffic generation on unsuitable rural roads will not be permitted. Furthermore, it is preferable if golf courses are located where they will be accessible by a range of transport modes. In considering such 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.
- 8.16 As a consequence of the large amounts of land required and the fact that they will normally involve extensive earth movements, tree planting, etc., golf courses can have substantial effects on the character of the countryside – potentially affecting landscape, wildlife, and historical assets. Applicants must submit an assessment of their development's likely impacts with their planning application. In all cases, assessments of landscape and wildlife impacts will be needed but, where a site will also affect a listed building, archaeological deposits, etc., these issues will also need to be addressed. Applicants will need to show that the design of their proposal has been informed by the findings of their assessment and that the design has been drawn up to protect the quality and diversity of landscape, wildlife and historical assets and, wherever possible, to enhance them.
- 8.17 In order to minimise visual intrusion into the countryside, built development should be kept to the minimum, and the reuse of existing rural buildings will generally be preferred. Only buildings that are essential to the function of a golf course will be permitted. The development of ancillary facilities such as hotels and health spas will not normally be permitted, in accordance with other policies of the Plan. Any new buildings must be designed and located to minimise visual intrusion and respect the rural character of the area.
- 8.18 The design of a challenging golf course requires the establishment of bunkers and water hazards, and it is important that such features are designed to be in keeping with the natural landscape character of the area. However, if land that has been subject to earth movements of this sort were to be considered for a return to agricultural use, its agricultural quality could be compromised. The Council will wish to avoid any development that will unnecessarily reduce flexibility to return land to agricultural production.
- 8.19 Golf driving ranges may be acceptable in the countryside as a subsidiary to a full golf course proposal. However, a golf driving range will not normally be permitted by itself, unless it is located on the edge of a suitable settlement. Golf driving ranges are building-dominated facilities, with more intensive use than a golf course, and they attract larger numbers of visitors. They do not require extensive land area and are therefore best suited to edge of settlement locations.

Policy RST6 - Noisy sports

Planning permission will be granted for the development of noisy sports or recreation activities only if the proposal would not increase background noise levels to an unacceptable degree. A noise impact assessment will be required with the submission of a planning application.

Justification

- 8.20 Recreational activities that generate unusual levels of noise (e.g. motor sports, pistol and rifle ranges, target and clay pigeon shooting or war games) will generally be inappropriate within settlements, where they would be very likely to have unsatisfactory effects on neighbouring land users. They also require considerable amounts of land. On both these counts, therefore, such developments may be considered more appropriate in a countryside location. However, even in the countryside, such uses can have significant impacts and this policy is intended to apply adequate control over such uses, in particular to provide adequate protection for surrounding land users.
- 8.21 Applicants must submit a noise impact assessment with their planning application, providing information on existing noise levels, the additional noise that will be generated by their proposal, and the impact that their proposal will have on other nearby noise-sensitive land uses. If an area is already subject to significant noise, or if a site's topography will tend to effectively contain the noise generated by the proposed use, it is possible that a proposal may generate very little additional noise. However, in many cases, a proposal to establish a noisy sport or recreational activity would generate additional noise at a level that would unacceptably interfere with other nearby land uses, or would undermine the character of the countryside. In such cases, planning permission will not be granted unless the proposal includes noise attenuation measures that will limit the increase in noise levels to acceptable levels.
- 8.22 Where appropriate, conditions may be applied to control such things as the hours of operation, or to limit the number of people, vehicles, etc. taking part in the activity at any one time. Where appropriate, the Council may also consider granting planning permission initially for a limited period only, to assess the impact of the use for a trial period.

Tourism

- 8.23 North Kesteven provides some 7% of Lincolnshire's holiday accommodation establishments, and tourism is an important economic asset that brings significant employment opportunities and income to the District. In 1999 tourists spent 732,000 nights in the District, and there were 1,635,000 tourism day visits. These visitors spent an estimated £20.5 million, generating 1,278 full time equivalent jobs.
- 8.24 As a consequence of the importance of tourism to North Kesteven's economy, the Council will generally welcome proposals that will broaden the range of attractions, or will provide additional tourist accommodation. In considering such proposals, the Council will take account of the provisions of the Local Plan's other policies, as appropriate. The policies that follow seek to maximise the tourism potential of the River Slea Navigation, and deal with the particular issues that arise from proposals to develop caravan and camping sites.

Policy RST7 - River Slea Navigation Corridor

The River Slea Navigation Corridor (as shown on the Proposals Map) will be safeguarded from development which would prevent restoration of the canal to a navigable state, or adversely affect public access.

Justification

- 8.25 The River Slea Navigation was completed in 1794 and is a 13-mile long, non-tidal waterway, with seven locks. Presently only the 8 ½ mile stretch from Chapel Hill to Cobblers Lock, Anwick is navigable by pleasure craft, but the whole length of the Corridor is navigable by canoe and the full length is laid out with a towpath giving access to the whole of the Corridor to walkers.

- 8.26 The Navigation Corridor has great potential as a tourism and recreational facility and the Sleaford Navigation Trust, in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Waterways Project are working towards its full restoration. Restoration would enable pleasure craft to continue up to Sleaford, further promoting the town as a tourist destination.
- 8.27 This policy seeks to ensure that development likely to hinder future restoration work will not be permitted, e.g. the development of a bridge across the canal, which would not give enough headroom for boats to pass freely. Furthermore, this policy seeks to maintain and improve public access to one of the District's major recreational and tourism assets.

Policy RST8 - Holiday caravan and camping sites

Planning permission will be granted for the development of a holiday caravan or camping site provided that:

- 1. The traffic generated by the proposal can be safely accommodated on the local highway network;**
- 2. Ancillary buildings are limited to those needed to service the site; and**
- 3. Any necessary built facilities will be provided by the re-use of existing buildings; or**
- 4. Where the re-use of existing buildings is not feasible, new buildings are located and designed to minimise their impact upon the character or appearance of their surroundings.**

Justification

- 8.28 Camping sites, and sites for holiday caravans (whether static or touring) provide important variety to the District's tourist accommodation, and the development of new sites is generally to be welcomed. This policy is intended to guide the development of new sites and extensions to existing sites as well as the intensified use of existing sites.
- 8.29 Although, in principle, caravan and camping sites are welcomed, they can have a major impact upon the character or appearance of their surroundings - caravans can be brightly coloured with a reflective finish, while many tents also come in bright colours. Consequently, great care must be taken in selecting the location for a site, and sensitive locations, or visually prominent locations will seldom be appropriate. Sites with existing natural screening will be most appropriate since, although proposals may be accompanied by a landscaping scheme, screening effects may take some time to develop.
- 8.30 Proposed sites should also be selected to ensure that the local highway network will not be overloaded by the volume or nature of the traffic generated. Consequently, sites should generally be selected to avoid routing caravans along narrow rural lanes.
- 8.31 Built development must be restricted to the minimum needed for the functioning of the site - facilities such as toilets or shower blocks would be expected to accompany most proposals, but the development of shops, entertainment facilities or leisure suites are unlikely to receive planning permission. In order to minimise the visual impact of proposals, the re-use of existing buildings will be preferred and, where this is not possible, new buildings must be of a scale suitable to the location, with their design and materials being sensitive to the local character of the area.

8.32 It should be noted that some types of touring caravan sites do not require planning permission.

- Certificated sites - those with 5 or less caravans, which are granted a certificate by an exempted organisation. These sites are exempt from planning control, although the Council is usually consulted. The District Council will generally support proposals for certificated sites where they are carefully sited and do not adversely affect the surrounding landscape, since they add to the diversity of provision of tourist accommodation.
- Other sites with permitted development rights include the use of a single caravan for no more than 28 days per year, or three caravans on sites of over 5 acres.

Development in the Countryside

- 9.1 North Kesteven is a predominantly rural District, and the majority of its land area is open and undeveloped in character and is used for activities which are generally of low intensity. This countryside is attractive in appearance, and its visual quality is strongly related to/influenced by its uncluttered nature. This character can be eroded very quickly by unnecessary development.
- 9.2 The Council considers that the countryside is one of the District's most important assets which deserves to be safeguarded for its own sake. In order to preserve the countryside's openness, new development will generally need to be strictly controlled, and this principle is established in policy C2 of the Core Policies chapter. Restricting new development in the countryside will also ensure that development is consolidated in the District's towns and villages, where it will best contribute to the achievement of a sustainable pattern of settlement, in accordance with the locational strategy set out in the Objectives and Strategy chapter.
- 9.3 However, the District's countryside is a living and working place and, as a result, it is inevitably subject to pressure for change and development. The policies of other chapters allow for a variety of uses to be established in the countryside - generally uses that need a rural location because of their extensive land requirements, uses that will assist in diversifying the rural economy or, exceptionally, uses that will bring such substantial benefits to the District that the normal presumption against development in the countryside should be relaxed.
- 9.4 The policies of this chapter look at developments associated with agricultural uses, and housing in the countryside. In all cases the policies seek to protect the open, undeveloped and attractive character of North Kesteven's countryside. 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** - The countryside represents a very significant recreational resource, which is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. It is also a cultural asset, which, for many local people, plays a very major part in defining the identity and character of the District as a whole. In both these ways, the countryside makes a major contribution to the quality of life in North Kesteven.
 - **A thriving and prosperous economy** - The countryside is the agricultural and tourism industry's workplace, and they both contribute greatly to North Kesteven's economy. Furthermore, the countryside's attractive character benefits the image that the District projects to visitors, tourists and potential inward-investors.
 - **A clean, green and safe environment** - The countryside represents the majority of the District's land area and, as such, is a major environmental resource. The character of the District as a whole depends very significantly upon the countryside, and it is therefore vital to maintain and improve the rural environment.

Agriculture

- 9.5 The majority of North Kesteven's countryside is in use for agriculture and, although the agricultural industry is now a relatively minor source of employment in the District (2.4% of those in work in 1997 worked in agriculture), well over one fifth of the District's VAT registered businesses in 1998 were in the agricultural and fishing sector. Consequently, its economic importance to the District remains significant.

- 9.6 Most farm and forestry buildings and operations are not within the control of the planning system. However, in many cases, developments cannot be carried out until the Council has been given 28 days notice in which to decide whether the proposed development will have a harmful impact upon historic, wildlife, or landscape assets (known as the Agricultural Notification Procedure). If the Council decides that the proposed development may affect any of these assets, it may require the applicant to submit the details of the siting, design and external appearance of their proposal. If the Council considers that the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact, it can refuse approval of the details.
- 9.7 Larger agricultural buildings and structures, livestock units close to residential and similar buildings, and development on smaller agricultural units will need planning permission. The policy and written justification that follow set out some of the considerations that the Council will take into account in determining planning applications, or in deciding whether or not to give its approval to details submitted under the determination procedure. However, the Council will also take account of the provisions of policies elsewhere in the Local Plan – most notably those in the Core Policies, Historic Environment, and Landscape and Wildlife chapters.

Policy DC1 – Agricultural or forestry development

Planning permission will be granted for agricultural or forestry development, requiring planning permission, provided that the proposal:

- 1. Will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside; and**
- 2. Will not create noise, smell, dust or other disturbance that will adversely affect protected buildings to an unacceptable degree.**

Justification

- 9.8 Modern agricultural buildings and structures are often substantial in scale, and functional in design, and they seldom make a significantly positive contribution to their surroundings. However, if proper attention is paid to basic principles concerning location and design, impacts can be kept to the minimum, and the chances are greatly increased of producing an attractive building that blends in with its surroundings.
- **Location** – Applicants may arrive at the proposed site for a new agricultural building or structure based perhaps upon financial considerations, the job that the building or structure is intended to do, and considerations of the space available on the holding. However, the Council will expect applicants to demonstrate that their locational decisions also take account of the impact that the building or structure will have upon the countryside. Locating the proposed building or structure amongst or next to existing buildings will tend to greatly reduce its visual impact, and can help to produce a visually pleasing and cohesive group. Consequently, grouping will almost always be preferred, unless the applicant can show that a more isolated location is essential to meet the needs of the holding. Other locational considerations will include the avoidance of prominent sites (e.g. on the skyline), and taking advantage of existing natural features (trees, hedges, slopes or embankments) that may help to assimilate the proposed development into the landscape. Trees and slopes can also be a very useful backdrop to a development, as they will help to reduce its apparent scale. Lastly, consideration should also be given to ensuring that important public views are not extinguished or diminished in value.

- Design - Modern farm buildings are often very large, but their apparent bulk can be reduced by careful siting (see above), and by sensitive design such as emphasising the roof overhang, and the use of different materials for the walls and roof, or even using two different wall materials. The use of dark colours will generally tend to make a development less conspicuous, and in particular it is important that roof colours should be darker than those used for walls. The visual impact of a proposal can also be reduced by the construction of two smaller buildings rather than one large one. Although farm and forestry buildings are functional objects, good design can ensure that they make as positive contribution as possible to their surroundings. Consideration should be given to the building or structure's form to maximise its interest, and to ensure that details such as the location and proportions of door, window and ventilation openings, and rainwater goods all contribute to an attractive end-result.

- 9.9 An additional criterion needs to be met where a proposal involves a building to house livestock. Intensive livestock units can create dust, noise and particularly smell and, as a consequence, great care needs to be exercised in choosing their location. Applicants will need to provide information concerning the development's likely impact upon the amenities of others, taking account of e.g. the number of animals to be kept, the species of animal to be kept, the distance of the site from settlements, dwellings and other potentially sensitive buildings, the prevailing wind direction, and the proposed unit's management regime. Based upon this information, the Council will assess what impact the proposal is likely to have upon the amenities of any nearby 'protected buildings'. Applicants may also need to provide information on proposed measures for the retention, treatment and disposal of waste.
- 9.10 N.B. A protected building is defined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) as a permanent building which is normally occupied by people, but excludes dwellings or other buildings which are used for agricultural purposes on an agricultural holding.

Policy DC2 - Agricultural and forestry workers' dwellings and dwellings associated with rural based enterprises

Planning permission will be granted for the construction of a new dwelling in the countryside only where:

- 1. It is proven to be necessary for the proper functioning of a farm, forestry or rural based enterprise for a full-time worker to live close to his or her place of work;**
- 2. The unit and enterprise have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so;**
- 3. No other housing accommodation is available locally to meet the need;**
- 4. The necessary accommodation cannot be provided by the conversion of a building on the holding;**
- 5. The holding has not recently disposed of a dwelling or building suitable for conversion that could have met the identified need.**
- 6. The proposed new dwelling is sited in a location that meets the identified need, and will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside; and**
- 7. The new dwelling is no larger than is justified by the needs of the unit, or more expensive to construct than the income of the enterprise can sustain.**

Where planning permission is granted, a condition on the permission will require the occupation of the dwelling to be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture, forestry or a rural based business, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants.

Justification

- 9.11 Policy C2 of the Local Plan indicates that the Council will seek to keep new development in the countryside to the minimum. However, this restrictive strategy must not unnecessarily constrain the agricultural industry (which contribute greatly to the District's economy). Thus, the Council will allow the construction of a new dwelling in the countryside if it is essential to the operation of a farm or forestry business.
- 9.12 The Council will examine all proposals according to the following criteria.
- Applicants will need to provide evidence that their farm, forestry or rural based enterprise could not function properly without one or more full-time workers being readily available at most times, for example to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause loss of crops, or to attend to animals or agricultural processes at short notice.
 - Applicants must show that their enterprise is financially viable. The unit must therefore be well established (in operation for at least three years), and evidence must show that it is on a sound financial footing, and appears likely to continue to be profitable into the future. In the case of newly established enterprises, permission may be granted for the provision of temporary accommodation (for perhaps 2 or 3 years) until it becomes clear whether or not a permanent dwelling can be justified.
 - Applicants must demonstrate that there are no existing and available dwellings on the unit or elsewhere in the area, or non-residential building on the holding that would be suitable for conversion for occupation by the worker(s) concerned. The Council will also check to see whether the holding has recently disposed of a dwelling or building suitable for conversion, which may be evidence of abuse of the system.
 - Finally, the Council will look at the proposed dwelling itself. Applicants must demonstrate that the dwelling will be sited in a location that will meet the needs of the enterprise, but will also minimise the building's visual impact. In general, the Council will wish to see that the new dwelling is well related to existing buildings or other dwellings, so that it blends into the countryside as well as possible. Furthermore the Council will look at the size of the dwelling to make certain that: it will not be more expensive to build than the holding could actually support; and it is not larger than is justified by the holding's functional requirements (i.e. the appropriate size for the dwelling will be determined by reference to the holding's needs, and not the demands of the person who is intended to occupy it).
- 9.13 To ensure that the dwelling remains available to meet agricultural, forestry or rural based enterprise needs, the Council will attach a condition to the planning permission to limit occupation to farm workers and their family.

Policy DC3 - Removal of an occupancy condition

Planning permission will be granted for the removal of an occupancy condition where it is clear that there is no longer a need in the locality for a dwelling to accommodate someone solely, mainly or last working in agriculture, forestry or another rural based enterprise.

Justification

- 9.14 Over time, the activities carried out on an agricultural holding, will change as the demands of consumers change, as farming practices develop, as the financial framework of farming changes, or as the holding changes hands. It is possible, therefore, that the need for a dwelling to house an agricultural worker can disappear, and there would be no benefit in unnecessarily keeping such a house vacant, or requiring the present occupants to remain in the dwelling, by continuing to enforce a planning condition that has outlived its usefulness.
- 9.15 However, it is important to ensure that conditions that restrict the occupation of a dwelling to agricultural workers and their families are removed only when it is clear that the dwelling no longer has a potential role to play in meeting the needs of agricultural holdings in the area as a whole. Otherwise, there could be a proliferation of dwellings in the countryside, which would tend to undermine the countryside's character, and would not contribute towards the achievement of a sustainable pattern of development.
- 9.16 The applicant will need to provide evidence that the dwelling:
- Is no longer needed to meet the essential functional needs of the holding or business to which it relates. Thus it will be necessary to show that the holding is now being farmed in a way that means that it is no longer necessary to have a worker on-site at most times; and
 - Is not required to meet the needs of another holding or business in the area. The Council will look at whether there have been recent applications for agricultural dwellings in the area. If there have been significant numbers of applications, the Council will need to consider whether this shows that there is a continuing need for agricultural dwellings that the house could help to meet. The Council will also expect the applicant to show that the dwelling has been offered for sale or rent at a realistic discounted price that reflects the existence of the occupancy condition. The advice of an independent valuer may be sought to determine whether the property has been marketed at a reasonable price.

Policy DC4 - New housing in the countryside

Housing development in the countryside will be strictly controlled, and planning permission will only exceptionally be granted for the construction of a new dwelling where:

- 1. The design of the proposed dwelling is of exceptional quality and innovative in nature;**
- 2. The proposed dwelling allows for the significant enhancement of its immediate setting and the wider environment;**
- 3. The proposal will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside.**

Justification

- 9.17 There is a long tradition of the building of Country Houses, which have made a major contribution to the quality of the English countryside. In North Kesteven, there are a number of examples of such Country Houses, such as Coleby, Culverthorpe, Doddington and South Rauceby Halls. These four properties are listed buildings, set in very significant grounds (of as much as 50 hectares). Their grounds often contain outbuildings and other structures that are also listed. They make a major contribution to the character of their immediate surroundings and the District in general.

- 9.18 This policy recognises that, very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house in the countryside may provide special justification for granting planning permission. Any such design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking, for example, in its use of materials, methods of construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment. This in turn will assist in raising standards of design more generally in rural areas.
- 9.19 In order to be acceptable, the design of a new Country House must reflect the highest standards in contemporary architecture, must significantly enhance its immediate setting and must be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. Unless the building and landscape design reflect these principles, planning permission will not be granted. The Council will seek advice on designs from the Royal Fine Art Commission or similar body. Designs do not need to imitate existing Country Houses and their grounds, but they must take proper account of the District's character. It is expected that proposals will come forward only very exceptionally under the terms of this policy.

Policy DC5 – Replacement dwellings in the countryside

Planning permission will be granted for the demolition of an existing dwelling in the countryside and the construction of a replacement dwelling, provided that:

- 1. The existing dwelling is not a temporary or mobile structure;**
- 2. The residential use of the existing dwelling has not been abandoned;**
- 3. The existing dwelling cannot be repaired or reinstated at reasonable cost;**
- 4. The new dwelling is similar in size and scale to that which it replaces; and**
- 5. The new dwelling will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside.**

Where appropriate, planning permission will be granted subject to a condition removing permitted development rights to build extensions, or erect separate structures within the curtilage.

Justification

- 9.20 In cases where a dwelling already exists in the countryside it will, in some circumstances, be appropriate to allow for its demolition and replacement with a new dwelling. There are three broad issues.
- 9.21 Firstly, applicants must demonstrate that the building that is proposed to be replaced is of permanent construction (because it would be inappropriate to allow the construction of a new dwelling in replacement of a caravan or other non-permanent building) and that it is actually a residential property. If a building is being lawfully used as a dwelling at the time of the planning application, it is very clear that the residential use is current. However, if a property is empty, the Council will look at the following issues in determining whether residential use has been abandoned: the use to which the building was last put; whether it has ever been used as anything other than a home; how long it has been empty; and what condition it is in (the residential use of a completely derelict dwelling is likely to be considered to have been abandoned). If residential use has been abandoned, a proposal to replace a dwelling will be looked at as akin to the construction of a brand new dwelling in the countryside.

- 9.22 Secondly, applicants must provide information on the building's structural condition. If the existing dwelling is in good condition, the Council will generally prefer for it to be retained than for a new home to be built in its place. The existing dwelling will be an accepted feature in the countryside, and is therefore likely to have less visual impact than a new property. Furthermore, the construction of a new building will be a less sustainable option than the retention of an existing structure, since the construction process involves the expenditure of significant amounts of energy and the consumption of non-renewable resources. Permission will therefore normally be granted for a replacement dwelling only where the condition of the existing building is such that its repair is not feasible.
- 9.23 Lastly, the Council will consider the impact that the proposed new dwelling will have upon the appearance and character of the countryside. Permission is unlikely to be granted for the construction of a new dwelling that will have a greater visual impact than that which it replaces. One crucial consideration will be the size of the proposed replacement dwelling, and permission will not be granted for a proposed replacement that is significantly larger than the original dwelling (generally no more than 15% larger than the original in terms of its cubic content). [In this context, it is likely that the Council will wish to bring possible future extensions to the new dwelling within its control, by removing permitted development rights]. Issues such as the location of the proposed dwelling on the plot, its design and materials, boundary treatments, and the design of access roads will also be important in determining its impact upon the character and appearance of its surroundings. The overall aim must be to produce a dwelling that has a character and appearance that is in keeping with its rural surroundings.

Policy DC6 – Conversion of buildings in the countryside to residential use

The conversion of a building in the countryside to a dwelling or dwelling units will be approved only where:

- 1. The applicant can show that every reasonable effort has been made to secure suitable business re-use; or**
- 2. Residential conversion is part of a larger scheme for business re-use;**

And all of the following criteria are met:

- 1. The existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, and is capable of conversion without major reconstruction or extension;**
- 2. The existing building is in keeping with its surroundings;**
- 3. The proposal will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the building itself, nor the countryside.**

Where appropriate, planning permission will be granted subject to a condition removing permitted development rights to make extensions.

Justification

- 9.24 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. 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 (see Policy E5). More exceptionally, they may also be suitable for conversion to residential use. Such conversions can help to: reduce demands for new buildings in the countryside; avoid wasting the economic resource that the buildings represent; and prevent the deterioration of buildings that contribute a great deal to the character of the countryside.

- 9.25 The Council will give preference to conversions to commercial use rather than to residential use, because conversions to residential use contribute little to the rural economy and are more likely to have harmful impacts upon the appearance and character of traditional buildings and the countryside. Consequently, the Council will look favourably upon residential conversions in only two circumstances. The first is where residential conversion is a subordinate part of a scheme to re-use a building or buildings for business use. The second is where an applicant can show that they have unsuccessfully explored all possible non-residential uses for the building. In this latter case, the applicant would have to show that the building had been advertised for sale or rent at a reasonable price for business purposes for a period of at least 6 months, and that no reasonable offers had been received.
- 9.26 If either of the above circumstances apply, the Council may grant planning permission for a residential conversion. 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. Applicants must provide information on the building's structural condition and, if the building would require extensive rebuilding, it cannot be considered as suitable for re-use, because the proposal would not be a conversion. Thus, portal-framed and prefabricated buildings will not be considered as suitable candidates for residential conversion. The Council considers that only buildings of a permanent nature, constructed by traditional techniques and of traditional materials (comprising foundations, brick or stone walls and tile/slate or similar roofs) will normally be suitable to convert to dwellings.
 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 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. [In this context, it is likely that the Council will wish to remove permitted development rights to extend the new dwelling, or erect separate structures within the curtilage] Any changes to the building must be respectful of the building's character and the rural nature of the surroundings. Furthermore, great care must be taken in the introduction of a domestic curtilage to a rural building – fences, walls, garages, ornamental planting, etc. can all appear alien in a rural landscape.
 2. Bats, barn owls, swallows and other birds often use rural buildings as roosting or breeding sites (see policy LW8). 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.
- 9.27 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.

Other uses in the countryside

Policy DC7 – Development involving horses

Planning permission will be granted for development involving the keeping and riding of horses for recreational and/or commercial purposes in the countryside, provided that:

- 1. Adequate safe riding routes are available off-road (on public rights of way or by private agreement) or on quiet, minor roads, and there will be no adverse effects upon road safety; and**
- 2. Any necessary built facilities will be provided by the re-use of existing buildings; or**
- 3. Where the re-use of existing buildings is not feasible, new buildings are located and designed to minimise their impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.**

Justification

- 9.28 Keeping and riding horses is increasingly popular, and planning permission is normally needed for the use of land for keeping horses and for equestrian activities. The exceptions to this rule are: keeping horses as pets within the curtilage of a dwelling; keeping horses as 'livestock' (i.e. for agricultural purposes); or using land purely for the grazing of horses.
- 9.29 Keeping and riding horses generally requires a significant amount of land, and is therefore an appropriate activity for the countryside. Furthermore, it can have a beneficial impact upon the economy of rural parts of the District. However, both recreational and commercial horse-keeping usually involves the erection of buildings and other structures (such as jumps), and these can have an impact upon the open and undeveloped character of the countryside. Furthermore, if agricultural fields are sub-divided and sold off as paddocks, a more intensive use can be introduced to the countryside which can appear at odds with the generally low-intensity use of rural parts of the District. Nonetheless, the Council will normally welcome horse-based developments, provided that they will not have a harmful effect upon the countryside (see policy C2).
- 9.30 A commercial equestrian facility that will attract large numbers of visitors may create large numbers of car journeys. Commercial equestrian facilities should therefore be located close to significant centres of population, or in locations that are accessible by means other than the private car (See policy T1). However, 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.
- 9.31 Horse-based development will normally require buildings, such as shelters, stabling and stores. It will generally be preferable for such built facilities to be provided by the re-use of existing buildings, which will already be accepted features in the countryside, and which will therefore be likely to have less visual impact than a new building. Furthermore, the construction of a new building will be a less sustainable option than the re-use of an existing structure, since the construction process involves the expenditure of significant amounts of energy and the consumption of non-renewable resources. Where the construction of new buildings is essential, the Council will expect them to be located and designed so as to blend into the landscape, to have a rural character and appearance, and to reflect local tradition.

- 9.32 Commercial equestrian facilities in particular may result in large numbers of horse rides being taken in the locality. It is important, for the safety of animals, riders and other users of the highway, that the potential for conflict between horses and vehicles is minimised. The applicant will need to demonstrate that the amount of horse riding that will take place on public roads will not be unsafe.

Policy DC8 – Advertisements and advance directional signs in the countryside

Consent will be granted for advertisements and advance directional signs to be displayed within the countryside only where:

- 1. An advertisement which relates to, and is displayed on existing commercial or industrial premises; or**
- 2. An advance directional sign required to direct traffic to a business or activity located a short distance off the road along which the sign is proposed to be displayed; and where**
- 3. Public safety will not be compromised; and**
- 4. The character or appearance of the countryside will not be adversely affected.**

Justification

- 9.33 The countryside is not an appropriate location for the general display of advertisements and signs. The character of the countryside is open and undeveloped, and advertisements and signs will normally appear out of place, and undermine the area's natural beauty.
- 9.34 However, businesses located within the countryside should be allowed to advertise their whereabouts, especially to visitors. Thus advertisements relating to a business located in the countryside will be acceptable, in principle at least, provided they are displayed upon the commercial or industrial premises themselves. Advance directional signs (which direct visitors to a rural business or to a temporary activity such as a construction site) may also be acceptable in principle because they can help to contribute to road safety. However, only advance signs that are necessary will be permitted – e.g. an advance sign is not required to direct visitors to a business located within a village, when the visitors could find their way equally well by relying on the road signs to the village itself.
- 9.35 Nonetheless, advertisements and signs must not harm the appearance or character of the countryside. Advertisements must be carefully designed within the context of their site and wider surroundings, and should be located on or near to buildings wherever possible. Materials should be carefully chosen to minimise the advertisement's impact upon the amenities of the countryside, and illumination should be treated with caution, as it will frequently appear alien in a rural context. Advance directional signs should be modest in size, and should be mounted upon an existing means of support wherever possible. Illumination will very seldom be acceptable and, where practical, businesses in the same general location should combine their essential advertising in one sign, so as to avoid a proliferation of advance signs.
- 9.36 As is the case with all advertisements and signs, public safety must not be reduced. Thus, advertisements and signs must not distract drivers, obscure visibility or be potentially confused with existing traffic signs.
- 9.37 It should be noted that the majority of the district's countryside lies within an Area of Special Control of Advertisements, where stricter advertisement controls apply. For advertisements displayed with 'deemed consent', there is a lower maximum height limit, and smaller maximum size of letters or characters. Some classes of advertisement, most notably general poster hoardings, may not be displayed at all.

Landscape and Wildlife

- 10.1 The Local Plan identifies those parts of the District that are of particular landscape or wildlife importance, and seeks to ensure that their quality will not be harmed by inappropriate development. However, the Council recognises that an approach to landscape and wildlife protection focused only on certain parts of the District would be inadequate. It therefore seeks to avoid any development that would diminish the diversity or abundance of the District's flora and fauna (or the habitats on which they depend), or that would erode the distinctiveness or diversity of the area's landscape character. Conversely, the Council encourages and welcomes development proposals that will contribute to broadening the District's habitat diversity, or that will reinforce local landscape character.
- 10.2 This approach accords with the provisions of the Council's Local Agenda 21 strategy and the Biodiversity Action Plan, and will contribute to all three of the Council's corporate objectives:
- A good quality of life for all residents – The landscape and wildlife of the District are a cultural asset, and are very important in defining the character of the area as a whole. They provide a source of enjoyment and inspiration, contribute to the overall quality of life, and are strongly identified by local people with their community's identity.
 - A thriving and prosperous economy – North Kesteven's landscape and wildlife are very significant assets which contribute positively to the area's attractive character. In this respect, they play a major role in establishing the image that the District projects to visitors, tourists, and potential inward-investors.
 - A clean, green and safe environment – The District's landscape and wildlife are critical environmental resources. The abundance and diversity of an area's wildlife are a good general indicator of the health of the environment. The distinctiveness and diversity of an area's landscape is a fundamental determinant of its visual quality and identity. Preserving and enhancing landscape and wildlife are important aspects of ensuring that the future development of the District is sustainable.

Landscape

- 10.3 The landscape of North Kesteven has been adapted from its natural state as successive generations of people have cleared natural woodland, farmed the land, defined field boundaries with hedges, walls, fences and ditches, planted and managed new trees, copses and woods, drained land, controlled watercourses and constructed roads, paths, buildings and settlements. The underlying geology, hydrology and soils continue to exert their influence upon the District's character, but the landscape as we see it today is, to a significant extent, the product of the influences of each of these generations of people.
- 10.4 Each generation inherited a landscape that had been modified by its predecessors, and retained what it valued or what was still useful, but changed what was no longer useful or valuable. This process continues today, and one of the roles of this Local Plan is to balance the on-going need for change with the need to protect and enhance the beauty and particular character of the District's five broad areas of landscape character.
- 10.5 The landscape character areas described below are based upon the Countryside Agency's 'Countryside Character Approach', which identifies four Character Areas within North Kesteven District. The District Council supports the Agency's approach, and the areas described below depart from the Countryside Agency's assessment only in terms of identifying separate character areas for the Lincoln Cliff scarp and dip slopes (the Agency identifies a single character area - the Southern Lincolnshire Edge). This departure from the Agency's assessment reflects the particular importance that the District Council gives to the Lincoln Cliff, as the most physically dominant landscape feature in the District.

The Fens

- 10.6 Eastern-most parts of the District have a fenland character, i.e. they are very low-lying and very flat. The land is almost exclusively farmed for vegetable crops and grains, and fields are typically large and divided from one another by drainage channels. Tree and woodland cover is scarce (with the only significant area of woodland being to the north of South Kyme). The landscape is dominated by straight roads raised above the surrounding land, linear drainage channels, and embanked watercourses. The lack of trees, hedges and slopes means that views are very extensive and open, and this part of the District generally has an isolated character. The fenland part of the District contains very few villages, and settlements are generally small in size and linear in pattern, with buildings constructed in brick, slate and pantiles.

Dip slope

- 10.7 From the fenland, the dip slope of the Lincoln Cliff rises gently westwards, and the landscape character of the District changes. In more northern parts of the District there is a very sharp visual transition from fenland to dip slope, but in southern parts the switch is less clearly defined. In all parts, however, the change from fenland to dip slope is marked by a line of settlements, some of which are substantial in size (such as Billingham or Heckington). Indeed, the dip slope contains many more settlements than the fenland area, and these settlements are generally much larger and more nucleated, although the predominant building materials remain brick, slate and pantile. The dip slope's character is still very open and views remain extensive, since fields are large in size and often lack strong boundary definition - although there is a marked increase in hedgerows and (further to the west) stone walls. Tree cover is generally greater and woodland areas become more common and larger, and conversely the intensity of the agricultural use is lower than in the fenland. The dip slope has a gently rolling topography and, in some northern parts of the District, has an elevated character where settlement is very limited. In southern parts of the District, the dip slope's character is somewhat more intimate and enclosed, with greater tree cover and a greater number of settlements.

Lincoln Cliff

- 10.8 The gentle rise of the dip slope ends as the short but steep scarp slope of the Lincoln Cliff falls to the west, and this change in landscape character is marked by a line of settlements at the Cliff top, where limestone is the predominant building material. The Cliff is a prominent and strongly linear feature but is not uniform, as it varies both in height and in the severity of its slope. The majority of the scarp is farmed for the production of arable crops or for the grazing of livestock and is divided up into relatively small fields, most commonly by thorn hedges. The top of the slope is comparatively well wooded, and this contributes further to the Cliff's visual prominence.

Trent and Witham Vales

- 10.9 From the foot of the scarp slope westwards, the Trent and Witham valleys dominate the District's landscape character. The landform is relatively flat, though more undulating than fenland areas. It remains a relatively open landscape with large predominantly arable fields, and long views are available. Nonetheless, field boundaries in this part of the District are generally more clearly defined than elsewhere, usually by trimmed thorn hedges. Levels of woodland and tree cover are similar to those on the dip slope, with the exception of those parts of the District immediately to the west of Lincoln, where substantial woods are found. Settlements in this part of the District are generally small and nucleated, with the exception of those in direct proximity to Lincoln.

Kesteven Uplands

- 10.10 The very southern-most parts of the District, around Walcot and Stow, are characterised as being part of the Kesteven Uplands. The transition from Lincoln Cliff Dip Slope to Kesteven Uplands is very gradual, and is not generally sharply defined. Nonetheless, the topography of the Uplands is generally more undulating (particularly towards Walcot) and, although arable farming predominates and field sizes remain large, boundaries are more strongly defined – usually by well-maintained thorn hedges. Consequently extensive views are not as common, and the area's character is generally more intimate and enclosed. Particularly characteristic of this part of the District are the wide verges between the highway edge and the hedgerows that define field boundaries.

Policy LW1 – Landscape Conservation

The Council will seek to protect the distinctive landscapes of the identified Landscape Character Areas and any special features which contribute to that character. Where development is acceptable, it will be required to contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area, be well integrated into the local landscape character, protect any features of importance to the local scene, and respect any important views.

Justification

- 10.11 The landscape of North Kesteven is not uniform, and at least five broad areas of different landscape character can be identified (as described in the preceding paragraphs). These separate characters are, to a significant degree 'man-made', but there is a risk that future human activities could undermine the landscape's appearance, or erode its present level of diversity. The District Council does not expect the area's landscape to remain unchanged, because there must be some evolution in response to on-going changes in the use and management of land. However, the Council considers that all countryside is valuable, and is concerned to ensure that new development does not harm landscape quality, reduce the variation in landscape across the District, or interrupt important views and, where possible, the Council will expect development to generate improvements.
- 10.12 Applicants must consider the character and appearance of their site and the landscape that surrounds it. The Council is committed to undertaking a full Landscape Character Assessment. Applicants should consider the effect that their proposal will have upon the particular character, quality or interest of the area. Valuable individual landscape features must be retained, where possible, and proposals should seek to add to or otherwise enhance individual features where feasible. Similarly, it is important that significant views should not be extinguished or diminished in quality by new development. Where possible and appropriate, new development should take the opportunity to open up new public views or to enhance existing views. Applicants must also ensure that their proposals are designed with consideration for local character and that they do not reduce local distinctiveness. The fundamental principle across the whole District is that the Council expects development to, at the very least, not harm landscape quality and diversity, and preferably to improve it.

- 10.13 The Lincoln Cliff scarp slope is the most physically dominant landscape feature in the District, and in the context of the relatively flat land to both sides, its visual significance is greatly enhanced. There are spectacular and extensive views from the Cliff towards the Trent and Witham valleys, and significant views of the scarp from this lower land. In recognition of the particularly dramatic appearance of the Lincoln Cliff and the vulnerability of its character to harm by insensitive development, it is identified as an area of distinctive landscape character (the boundaries of which are defined upon the Proposals Map). Within this area, greater attention will be paid to the landscape impact of development proposals, particularly in terms of impact upon views from, to and along the Cliff. In this respect, it is unlikely that planning permission will be granted for development that would be visually prominent, by virtue of its size or location (e.g. on the skyline) as this is highly likely to detract from the character of the area.

Policy LW2 – Green Wedges

Planning permission will be granted for development within a Green Wedge (as defined on the Proposals Map), only if the development will not adversely affect:

- 1. The landscape setting of the City of Lincoln or any other settlement;**
- 2. The appearance or landscape character of the Green Wedge;**
- 3. The recreational value of the Green Wedge; and**
- 4. The wildlife value of the Green Wedge.**

unless there is a need for the development which clearly overrides the importance of any adverse effects, such as the Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

Where development is permitted the Council will, where appropriate, seek to enter into an agreement with the developer or will place a condition on the permission to require the implementation of measures to minimise, mitigate or compensate for any adverse effects.

Justification

- 10.14 The City of Lincoln Local Plan identifies a number of areas of land as Green Wedges, which are intended to bring continuous, or closely linked open space into the heart of the City's built-up area. The City of Lincoln Local Plan seeks to protect these Wedges from development that would reduce or harm their recreational or wildlife value, or their contribution to the landscape character and setting of the City.

10.15 This Local Plan identifies six areas of largely undeveloped land adjacent to the City of Lincoln as Green Wedges, and these areas are intended to complement the City's designations. They were selected to either directly link with or to associate with the City's Green Wedges, and hence to extend the established open space links within the City's built-up area further into the surrounding countryside. The Green Wedges are valuable in different ways (and the character of each of the Wedges is described in Appendix 5), but they have four broad roles, as follows:

1. Landscape

- They may be of intrinsic landscape value (natural beauty or visual significance).
- They may provide important views into or out of the City.
- They may play an important role in providing an attractive setting to the City.

2. Recreation

- They may provide recreational opportunities for the inhabitants of the City or any of the adjacent North Kesteven settlements, or visitors.
- They may provide opportunities for the existing footpath, bridleway or cycle route networks to be enhanced.

3. Wildlife

- They may provide links of value to wildlife between the City and the countryside, between County Wildlife Sites and the countryside, or between different County Wildlife Sites.

4. Coalescence

- They may help to prevent the coalescence of settlements.

10.16 Applicants who put forward proposals for new development or for the intensification of any existing use within a Green Wedge must show that their proposals have been prepared with proper consideration for the Wedge's value. They must show that their proposals do not reduce the Wedge's existing landscape, recreational or wildlife value and must, where possible, show that their proposals will enhance the Wedge's value. The level of detail appropriate for the assessment will depend upon the scale and nature of the development and its likely impacts upon the Wedge. The current designation of land as Green Wedge should not preclude the future consideration of its longer-term suitability for development against other locations.

Policy LW3 – Visual Amenity Areas

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will adversely affect the amenity value of a Visual Amenity Area (as defined on the Proposals Map), only if there is a need for the development which clearly overrides the amenity value of the Area.

Justification

10.17 Some settlement curtilages contain open areas that have an important positive impact in terms of the settlement's character or appearance. Some open areas are the historical product of a gradual and often haphazard evolution. Others are a planned response to provide for green space or recreational facilities. Some areas play an important role in separating potentially conflicting land uses, such as industry and housing, whilst others are valuable in terms of the views that they facilitate. These areas may be under threat of development and, while it is recognised that infilling has an important part to play in meeting the District's development needs, building on these key sites would normally be unacceptable.

10.18 The Visual Amenity Areas have been selected on the basis of the following criteria

- They should be open to public view
- They should play an important role in the character of the settlement, enhancing the locality or surrounding buildings, or framing or permitting views.

10.19 The fact that an open area within a settlement has not been identified under this policy does not necessarily imply that its development would be acceptable.

Policy LW4 – Trees of significant amenity value

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will adversely affect a tree or trees protected by a tree preservation order or any other tree(s) of significant amenity value only if the need for the development clearly overrides the amenity value of the tree(s). Where permission is granted for a development that would involve the removal of a tree or trees, a condition may be applied to require the planting of an equivalent or greater number of trees on or near the site.

Justification

10.20 Trees contribute enormously to the character of many parts of the District – they are very important visual elements in the District’s landscape, since they are attractive in themselves, soften and give a context to development, and screen unsightly areas from view. However, the amenity value of trees is not confined only to their contribution to the District’s visual character. They also help to reduce noise and air pollution, and help to cool towns and villages during hot weather. Furthermore, they provide habitats for wild creatures, help to stabilise soil against erosion, and play a role in reducing climate change by locking up carbon dioxide. As a result, they are highly valued by the majority of people, and the relative scarcity of tree cover within North Kesteven gives them an added importance.

10.21 Where it is ‘expedient in the interests of amenity’, the Council has the power to make a tree preservation order (TPO) to protect trees, and there are currently well over 500 orders in effect across North Kesteven, which cover thousands of individual trees. However, many trees of at least equal amenity value to those covered by orders are not specifically protected by TPOs.

10.22 The Council will give considerable weight to the preservation of trees, and proposals that involve the removal of a tree of significant amenity value (whether protected by a TPO or not) will only exceptionally receive planning permission where an applicant can demonstrate all of the following:

- That the development could not equally well go ahead elsewhere, where no harm to trees would be involved;
- That the proposed development scheme could not be modified to retain the tree; and
- That the amenity value of the tree is outweighed by the benefits to the community of the development proposal.

10.23 New planting to compensate for the tree(s) lost will normally be required.

10.24 In the case of a planning application for development near to a tree of significant amenity value where the applicant indicates that they intend to retain the tree, the applicant will have to show that:

- The development will not damage the tree by severing its roots, compacting the soil or altering the water table. In this context, applicants will need to provide information concerning the proposed location of underground services, and present and proposed ground levels.
- Adequate room is allowed for the future growth of the tree.
- The relationship between the tree and the proposed development will not be such that a future occupier may wish to fell or prune the tree because they are concerned that the tree obscures a view, overshadows the building or its curtilage, or poses a threat to them or their property.

10.25 The Council will publish supplementary planning guidance concerning trees and development, which will provide guidance on taking account of trees' needs during the survey, design and construction phases of development.

Wildlife

10.26 The plants, fish, mammals, insects, birds and other wild creatures that live in and migrate through North Kesteven are a vital part of the District's heritage. Contact with nature is a source of pleasure to many people, and can help to contribute to general well being and good mental health. Furthermore, plant-life can play a significant role in stabilising soil against erosion and degradation, reducing air pollution and helping to reduce the effects of climate change by locking up carbon dioxide. The diversity of an area's flora and fauna is also a good general indicator of the health of the environment.

10.27 In North Kesteven, only seven sites are identified as being of sufficient importance for wildlife that they merit statutory protection. They are protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and cover just over 150 hectares, which represents only 0.16% of the District's total area (whereas 2% of the East Midlands' land area is statutorily protected, and 6% nationally). Although the District contains 44 sites that are protected as being of Countywide importance for wildlife, even these sites are fewer in number than the Lincolnshire average. Thus, it is clear that North Kesteven is relatively lacking in internationally, nationally or locally important wildlife habitat, and the Council will support the identification of new sites.

10.28 The Council is committed to safeguarding the District's existing flora and fauna and, where possible, increasing its abundance and diversity. This approach accords with the provisions of the Council's Local Agenda 21 strategy. The Council is a signatory to the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan, which seeks to safeguard, manage and increase those habitats or species that are most at risk or in decline nationally or locally. The provisions of the Biodiversity Action Plan are taken into account in making planning decisions, and are material considerations in determining planning applications. The Council also works in partnership with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to maximise the District's biodiversity.

10.29 The Council recognises that it would be a mistake to believe that the District's biodiversity can be protected and improved by focussing purely on specific areas of land that are of unusual value for wildlife. Designated 'nature reserves' (Sites of Special Scientific Interest or County Wildlife Sites) are very important in that they represent relatively (or sometimes very) rare habitats. However, they represent only a very small part of the District's total area and, as a consequence, they are not the habitat where most of the District's wildlife lives. Furthermore, most individual reserves are quite small and are separated from one another by large areas of land that may not have such special value for wildlife. Thus, the potential for species to migrate from reserve to reserve, or for genetic exchange between plants or animals occupying different reserves may be limited.

- 10.30 The Council acknowledges the importance of designated sites of nature conservation value and will seek to protect such reserves from potentially harmful forms of development and, where conflict of interest is unavoidable, will seek to minimise the adverse effects upon the value of the site. However, the majority of the District's wildlife lives in the farmland, settlements, buildings, gardens and parks of the District, rather than in reserves. It is therefore very important to ensure that the wildlife value of the District as a whole is protected and enhanced. Thus, the Council will give great weight to nature conservation issues in considering any planning application that will affect protected species, or landscape features that are important for wildlife.
- 10.31 The Council will welcome and encourage measures to increase public access to sites of nature conservation interest, provided this does not undermine or reduce the site's interest. Similarly, the erection of sensitively designed and located displays and interpretation facilities will be welcomed. Such measures can greatly enhance the recreational and educational value of sites, and can help to maximise their potential to contribute to the District's economy.

Policy LW5 – Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will directly or indirectly adversely affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (as shown on the Proposals Map) only if:

- 1. The benefits of the development, on the site, clearly outweigh the likely impacts on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs;**
- 2. The proposed development could not feasibly be located in a less sensitive location; and**
- 3. Where appropriate, the implementation of measures to minimise, mitigate or compensate for the harm, or to ensure the future management and enhancement of the site's interest, is assured by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of a condition upon the permission.**

Justification

- 10.32 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are identified because their flora, fauna, geological or geophysical features are of national importance. They are designated by English Nature, and there are seven such sites in the District, which are listed in Appendix 6. The protection of these sites is of key importance because what they exemplify is rare and irreplaceable. This policy aims to ensure that Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be safeguarded against any harmful effects of development.

10.33 The Council must consult with English Nature over proposals to develop land in, around, or where it is likely to affect an SSSI, and the views of English Nature will be a very important factor in the Council's decision-making process. Nonetheless, even though SSSIs are nationally important, other factors may override the nature conservation considerations. Such circumstances will, however, be very rare – a development that would reduce the value of an SSSI will need to be of greater importance than the Site, and that will mean that it must be of at least national importance itself. Even then, the Council will wish to ensure that short and longer-term harm is kept to the minimum and that, where possible, alternative habitat is provided. Thus, the Council will consider the use of conditions or will seek to enter into agreements with the applicant to ensure that:

- the site's value is retained or enhanced where possible (e.g. that important physical features or habitat areas are retained or improved); or
- new habitat is provided elsewhere to replace that lost; and/or
- the existing site, or the habitat provided to replace that lost is properly managed/improved in the future.

Policy LW6 – County Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will directly or indirectly adversely affect a County Wildlife Site or a Local Nature Reserve (as shown on the Proposals Map), only if:

- 1. There is a need for the development which clearly overrides the importance of the Site or Reserve;**
- 2. The proposed development could not feasibly be located in a less sensitive location; and**
- 3. Where appropriate, the implementation of measures to minimise, mitigate or compensate for the harm, or to ensure the future management and enhancement of the Site's interest, is assured by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of a condition upon the permission.**

Justification

10.34 County Wildlife Sites are identified because their flora, fauna, geological or geophysical features are of County-wide importance. They are designated by the Council, following advice from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, and there are 44 such sites in the District. In addition the District contains 2 Local Nature Reserves, which were also designated by the Council. The County Wildlife Sites and the Local Nature Reserves are listed in Appendix 7. The protection of these sites is of less importance than in the case of SSSIs but nonetheless they exemplify habitats of unusual value in the context of the County. This policy aims to ensure that County Wildlife Sites will be safeguarded against any harmful effects of development.

10.35 When a planning application is received that may affect a County Wildlife Site, the Council will seek advice from recognised nature conservation organisations such as English Nature, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds or the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, and will give significant weight to the protection of the Site's interest and value. It is only where other material factors override nature conservation considerations that the Council will grant planning permission for a proposal that will have a harmful effect upon a County Wildlife Site. Nonetheless, even though such sites are locally important, other factors may override the nature conservation considerations. Such circumstances will, however, be rare - a development that would reduce the value of a County Wildlife Site will need to be of greater importance than the Site and that will mean that it must be of at least County-wide importance itself. Even then, the Council will wish to ensure that short and longer-term harm is kept to the minimum and that, where possible, alternative habitat is provided. Thus, the Council will consider the use of conditions or will seek to enter into agreements with the applicant to ensure that:

- the Site's value is retained or enhanced where possible (e.g. that important physical features or habitat areas are retained or improved); or
- new habitat is provided elsewhere to replace that lost; and/or
- the existing Site, or the habitat provided to replace or supplement that lost is properly managed/improved in the future.

Policy LW7 – Features of importance for wildlife

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will directly or indirectly adversely affect any habitat listed as a priority in the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan or an existing landscape feature (such as a pond, reservoir, lake, gravel pit, disused railway, road verge, river, canal or drain or their banks, building traditional field boundary (such as a hedgerow or stone wall), linear tree belt/shelter, plantation or small woodland, larger semi-natural or ancient woodland, heathland, parkland, semi-natural grassland or unimproved pasture) that is important for wild flora or fauna, only if:

- 1. The need for the development clearly override the importance of the feature; and**
- 2. Where appropriate, the implementation of measures to minimise, mitigate or compensate for the harm, or to ensure the future management and enhancement of the feature's value, is assured by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council, or by means of a condition upon the permission.**

Justification

10.36 The countryside and settlements of North Kesteven contain a wealth of natural and man-made features that play a valuable role as habitat for wild plant and animal species. Such features can play an important role in the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild flora and fauna – either as 'stepping stones' or direct links between one habitat and another. If such features are lost or if their value to wildlife is diminished, the number and diversity of wild species in the District will tend to reduce and, given the Council's commitment to maintaining and improving the District's biodiversity, such losses should be avoided wherever possible.

- 10.37 Clearly, however, every example of these sorts of features will not be of equal value as wildlife habitat, e.g. road verges that are frequently mowed, ponds that are maintained for exotic plants or fish, or areas of commercial coniferous woodland may have relatively little value as natural habitat. Nature conservation issues will not be particularly important in determining all applications affecting all examples of the features listed above. Applicants must assess whether their proposal will affect any features of value to wildlife and, if it will, they must provide information concerning the feature itself, the nature of its value to wildlife, the impact that their proposal will have, and the measures they propose to alleviate or compensate for that impact. The Council will seek advice from recognised nature conservation organisations such as English Nature, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds or the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.
- 10.38 It is only where other material factors override nature conservation considerations that the Council will grant planning permission for a proposal that will have a harmful effect upon a valuable feature. Even then, the Council will wish to ensure that short and longer-term harm is kept to the minimum and that, where possible, alternative habitat is provided. Thus, the Council will consider the use of conditions or will seek to enter into agreements with the applicant to ensure that:
- the value of any unaffected parts of the feature is retained or enhanced; or
 - new habitat is provided elsewhere to replace that lost; and/or
 - the existing site, or the habitat provided to replace that lost is properly managed/improved in the future.

Policy LW8 – Protected species

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will adversely affect protected species or their habitat, only if:

- 1. The need for the development clearly override the importance of the protected species;**
- 2. The proposed development could not feasibly be located in a less sensitive location; and**
- 3. An agreement between the developer and the Council or a condition upon the permission will:**
 - a. Facilitate the survival of individual members of the species;**
 - b. Reduce disturbance to the minimum;**
 - c. Provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population of the species.**

Justification

- 10.39 Certain plant and animal species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994, and under specific legislation such as the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. [In North Kesteven, it is most common for development proposals to affect owls, bats or water voles]. Applicants must assess whether their proposal will affect any protected species (if necessary by commissioning a survey by a suitably qualified person or organisation) and, if it will, they must provide information concerning the species, the impact that their proposal will have, and the measures they propose to alleviate or compensate for that impact. When the Council receives a planning application that is likely to harm (either directly or indirectly) any protected species or its habitat, it will give significant weight to the protection of the species. The Council will seek advice from English Nature, and will permit harmful proposals only in exceptional circumstances. Such proposals will be allowed only if the benefits of the development to the community outweigh that of the protected species and, even then, the Council will need to be satisfied that the proposed development could not equally well be sited elsewhere, where it would not affect a protected plant or animal species.
- 10.40 Even when a case can be made for a proposed development to be permitted where it will affect a protected species, the Council will wish to ensure that harm to the species is minimised. Thus, the Council is likely to either seek to enter into an agreement with the applicant or to attach conditions to any approval to: facilitate the survival of individual members of the species; reduce disturbance to the minimum; and provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population of the species.
- 10.41 Developers should note that, even if they have received planning permission to carry out works on a site affecting a protected species, they must still conform with any relevant statutory species protection provisions, and should therefore consult with English Nature. Furthermore, developers should be aware that, if they intend to carry out any works that would interfere with a badger sett, they will need to obtain a licence from English Nature.

The Historic Environment

- 11.1 North Kesteven has been the home to generations of people, and the character of the District as we see it today is largely the product of the social, economic and spiritual lives of each of these generations. The physical evidence of our predecessors is all around us: – the patterns of our boundaries, roads, paths and rivers; the layout of our towns, villages and farms; and the character of our buildings, parks and gardens. This heritage is fundamental in giving the District its distinct and attractive character, plays an important role in the District's economy, and is greatly valued by those who live and work in the area as well as visitors.
- 11.2 However, this heritage is irreplaceable – once it is gone, it is gone forever. Consequently, one of the roles of the Local Plan is to balance the on-going need for development and change with the need to protect and enhance the historic environment.
- 11.3 To this end, the Council will use its powers to prevent development that would harm those parts of the District that exemplify the past, and will encourage developments that will reveal or improve them. The Council will protect the most visible or important examples, such as listed buildings, ancient monuments or conservation areas. However, the Council will not ignore locally-important remains, features, structures or buildings that nonetheless speak in some way of the area's history, since they contribute a great deal to the diversity and interest of the area.
- 11.4 The policies of this chapter are intended to protect and enhance the historic environment inherited from previous generations. This approach accords with the provisions of the Council's Local Agenda 21 strategy, and will contribute towards all three of the Council's objectives
- A good quality of life for all residents - Historical features are a cultural asset, and contribute to the quality of life. They are of great importance to many local people and are something that people strongly identify with their community's identity.
 - A thriving and prosperous economy - Historical buildings and features are assets that have a valuable role to play in the District's economy. Many listed buildings and conservation areas are in commercial use and should remain so, for the benefit of both the District's economy and the buildings or areas themselves (because it is only by being used that they are likely to be properly cared for). Most examples of the area's heritage improve the image that the District projects to visitors, tourists and potential inward-investors.
 - A clean, green and safe environment - Historical buildings and features are a very obvious and positive part of the District's environment, and make an important contribution to local distinctiveness. Looking after them is a vital part of protecting, improving and managing the diversity of the District's overall environment. They are non-renewable assets, and preserving them is an important aspect of ensuring that the future development of the District is sustainable.

Archaeological Remains

- 11.5 Archaeological deposits are finite and irreplaceable direct evidence of past human lives, and North Kesteven contains an unusually rich range of them.
- 11.6 Evidence of human occupation and activities prior to 8,000BC is extremely sparse. However, isolated scatters of stone tools, weapons and other implements left by the hunter-gatherer peoples living in the District during the next 5,000 years (the Mesolithic period) have been found. The development of farming and bronze technology in the following Neolithic and Bronze Age periods resulted in a more settled way of life and more intensive use of the landscape. Bronze and polished stone axes are a relatively common find throughout the District, reflecting an increase in forest clearance. Ceremonial monuments in the form of long barrows, earthwork enclosures and round barrows were introduced in these periods, and there are notable Bronze Age barrow cemeteries at Anwick, Walcott and Washingborough.

- 11.7 The archaeological record for the later Iron Age and Roman periods (200BC – 450AD) is much fuller than preceding eras. Sleaford, in particular, stands out as a major Iron Age centre. Elsewhere, throughout the District, the remains of numerous Iron Age farmsteads, field systems, salt workings, roads and trackways and a great many metal objects are known. Larger Romanised settlements have been found at Sleaford, North Hykeham and Navenby, and Ermine Street, Mareham Lane and the Fosse Way are Roman Roads still in use today. The Carr Dyke (a monument of national importance) was largely constructed at this time, as was the Fosse Dyke.
- 11.8 A dense scatter of early Anglo-Saxon settlement has recently been discovered, and graveyards have been excavated in Sleaford, Quarrington and Ruskington. Most of the District's present day villages originated in the later Anglo-Saxon period, as is reflected in their place names. Glimpses of Anglo-Saxon architecture can still be seen in some of our churches, but the overwhelming influence is medieval (1066-1500). During the medieval period, based on a flourishing wool trade, monasticism flourished, towns prospered and landowners became extremely wealthy. Ruined monasteries, exquisite churches, moated manor houses and now deserted villages evident throughout North Kesteven attest to the richness of the medieval period.
- 11.9 The modern landscape, and the distinct character of the District's settlements is largely the product of the post-medieval age. In the countryside, dry stone walls, hawthorn hedges, fox coverts, straight roads with wide grass verges, red brick farms and windmills are the result of enclosure and subsequent land 'improvement' in the 18th and 19th centuries. Country estates, grand houses, formal gardens and former deer parks attest to the wealth generated by enclosure improvements. In the towns, many of our fine commercial and public buildings were built at this time. More recently, innovations in agriculture, industry and defence have resulted in a rich legacy of buildings and landscape, such as breweries, engineering works, pumping stations and airfields.
- 11.10 These remains are valuable for their own sake since they are a significant part of the area's identity, but they also have an economic value in that they can attract tourists and visitors. Furthermore, the preservation of archaeological resources is consistent with the Council's commitment to seek sustainable development. Consequently, the Council will give great priority to protecting, enhancing and preserving the District's archaeological heritage.
- 11.11 The Council will welcome and encourage the erection of sensitively designed and located displays and interpretation facilities on sites of archaeological interest. Such displays can greatly enhance the recreational and educational value of archaeological remains, and can help to maximise their potential to contribute to the District's economy.

Policy HE1 – Sites containing nationally important archaeological remains

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will not adversely affect the archaeological value or interest, or the setting, of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (as shown on the proposals map) or other site containing nationally important archaeological remains.

Justification

- 11.12 The District contains 65 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the locations of which are shown on the Local Plan's maps, and descriptions of which are included in Appendix 8. These monuments are identified by the Government as being nationally important archaeological remains. They range from obvious standing structures such as churchyard crosses, to areas that the casual onlooker might not immediately recognise as being of particular archaeological interest, such as the site of a deserted historical settlement. However, not all nationally important archaeological remains are scheduled, and the Government continues to identify and schedule remains that merit this level of protection. Thus, this policy will apply not just to the Scheduled Ancient Monuments listed in Appendix 8 and shown on the Local Plan's maps, but also to any remains that are scheduled after the Local Plan's publication. It will also apply to any other nationally important archaeological remains that are identified as part of an archaeological evaluation as referred to in Policy HE2.
- 11.13 Given the national importance of these remains and their vulnerability to damage, the Council will operate a strong presumption against any development that would harm them.
- 11.14 It should be noted that works that would demolish, destroy, damage, remove, repair, alter, add to, flood or cover up a Scheduled Ancient Monument also require Scheduled Monument Consent from the Secretary of State. Anyone carrying out unauthorised works to a Scheduled Ancient Monument is guilty of an offence under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Policy HE2 – Archaeological assessment and evaluation

Planning applications affecting a site where evidence suggests that archaeological remains are likely to be present must be accompanied by an assessment identifying the extent and importance of any remains, together with any proposals for their protection or to mitigate adverse effects.

Justification

- 11.15 Large areas of the District have significant archaeological potential and developers should routinely investigate whether it is likely that their site contains archaeological remains, even if it does not contain a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument. Anyone considering undertaking a development of a significant scale should always contact the Council well before they begin to draw up their detailed proposals or make a planning application. The Council, or its archaeological consultants, will be able to advise developers whether their site is known to be archaeologically sensitive. If it appears that their site is likely to be of some archaeological interest, developers will need to consider at an early stage how they will ensure that the needs of archaeology and development will be reconciled.
- 11.16 If there is evidence that archaeological remains exist on a proposed development site, the Council will require developers to provide information on the nature, importance, and location of the remains, before a planning application can be determined. This will involve the developer in arranging for an archaeological assessment to be carried out by a professionally qualified archaeologist or archaeological organisation, and reporting their findings to the Council. An assessment will involve a desk-based evaluation and, if this initial research indicates that important archaeological remains may exist, a more detailed field evaluation such as field-walking, geophysical survey or trial trenching may be requested. The cost of an evaluation will be borne by the applicant, and should be regarded as a part of normal development costs.

- 11.17 The evaluation's findings should allow the character and extent of any remains to be identified, the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed, and a suitable preservation strategy to be established. Without the submission of such information, the Council cannot make an informed and reasonable planning decision, and applications that are not supported with such documentation will be refused. An evaluation's findings may, in some circumstances, render parts of a development site unsuitable for development, and consequently it is important for the evaluation to form an integral part of the design of the development.

Policy HE3 – Sites containing archaeological remains

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will affect locally or regionally important archaeological remains or their setting, provided that:

- 1. The remains will be preserved in situ, and will not be damaged; or**
- 2. Where preservation in situ is not justified, the recording and/or excavation of the remains prior to and during development is assured (by means of an agreement between the developer and the Council or by means of a condition upon the permission)**

Justification

- 11.18 The Council will operate a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of archaeological remains in situ, i.e. retaining them where they are, without any significant alteration or damage. This can be achieved by, for example, locating open space or landscaped areas over them, or using foundations that avoid disturbing them. Preservation in situ may make the remains inaccessible in the short-term, but ensures that all available archaeological evidence is retained for possible future investigation.
- 11.19 However, the Council will permit proposals that will disturb archaeological remains if the applicant can clearly demonstrate that preservation in situ is not justified. Solutions involving the disturbance of remains are regarded as second best options, since they involve the destruction of evidence (apart from any artefacts that can be excavated), are time-consuming, and may require discoveries to be evaluated in a hurry and without the benefit of proper research.
- 11.20 Nonetheless, where such a solution is considered appropriate, the Council will wish to ensure that any remains are excavated, archived and recorded (in line with a brief prepared by the Council) before development begins, and that the findings will be published. A range of measures can be involved, such as:
- Archaeological monitoring of topsoil removal (usually in designated areas specified by the brief), followed by recording and sampling of any features exposed.
 - Earthwork survey.
 - Further limited sampling and/or analytical work on samples already collected in a previous evaluation.
 - Excavation within a designated area specified in the brief.
 - A watching brief within a designated area specified in the brief.
- 11.21 The Council will seek to enter into an agreement with a developer under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to provide for such works, or will attach a condition to a planning permission.

Listed Buildings

- 11.22 Listed buildings are identified by the government for their special architectural or historic interest, and are of national importance. In North Kesteven, just over 1,000 buildings are listed, which is a very high number in relation to the District's size (North Kesteven has one listed building for every 86 people, whereas the figure for England as a whole is 1 for every 110 people). Furthermore, a very high proportion of the District's listed buildings are of particular value. Across England as a whole, around 2% of listed buildings are Grade I (the most important grade) and 4% are Grade II* (the next most important), but in North Kesteven 5% of all listed buildings are Grade I and 5% are Grade II*. Thus, it is very clear that North Kesteven has an unusually large and important stock of historically and architecturally interesting buildings.
- 11.23 The majority of the District's listed buildings are dwellings and, whilst most date from the 18th and 19th Centuries, a few pre-date the 17th Century. The District also contains many exceptional churches, and these tend to be older (parts of some dating back to the 10th Century) and are generally listed at higher grades. However, the range of buildings that is listed is very wide and includes industrial, commercial and farm buildings, walls, fences, gates, telephone boxes and street furniture. Listed buildings contribute to the character of almost all parts of the District, whether town, village or countryside.
- 11.24 They are one of the most visible elements of the historic environment and, make a vital contribution to the area's unique character. They are worthy of protection as an asset of intrinsic value but, by helping to maintain the overall attractive appearance of the District, they also have economic benefits by helping to attract inward investment and tourism.
- 11.25 Listed Building Consent is required from the Council for any proposals that may affect the character or appearance of these buildings, and in considering such proposals the Council must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting, and any internal or external features which contribute to its special interest. However, local plan policies may not deal with the criteria against which listed building consent applications will be determined. Thus, the policies that follow set out how the Council will deal with planning applications affecting listed buildings.
- 11.26 As well as protecting listed buildings through the determination of planning and listed building consent applications, the Council also has powers to carry out urgent works necessary to preserve an unoccupied listed building (such as making it weather-tight, or preventing it from collapsing). It has further powers to specify to the owner of a listed building works that need to be carried out in order to preserve the building. If the owner does not carry out the specified works, the Council may begin proceedings to compulsorily purchase the building. Where it is apparent that the condition of a listed building is declining, the Council will consider the use of the above powers to ensure its preservation.

Policy HE4 - Demolition of a listed building

Planning permission will be granted for proposals involving the removal of the whole or substantially all of a listed building, provided it can be demonstrated that:

- 1. The building is beyond reasonable repair; or**
- 2. Every reasonable effort has been made to continue its current use or find a compatible alternative use that would allow for the building's retention.**

Where permission is granted for the demolition of a listed building, and the creation of a cleared site will harm the character of the area, a condition will be applied to prevent demolition being carried out until a redevelopment scheme has been permitted and contractually secured. Where appropriate, planning permission will be granted subject to a condition requiring the recording of features to be lost.

Justification

- 11.27 Once lost, listed buildings cannot be replaced, so demolition will not be permitted simply because redevelopment is more economically attractive. Demolition will be allowed only where it is unavoidable, e.g. where applicants can show that:
- the building is in such a poor structural condition that the cost of repairing it would be prohibitive. Applicants making a case for demolition on this basis should provide information on predicted repair and maintenance costs and the value that can be derived from the building's continued use. Where it is clear that a building has been deliberately neglected in order to increase the likelihood of demolition being approved, the Council will give less weight to the costs of repair in weighing up whether the building is beyond reasonable repair; or
 - real efforts have been made without success to continue the present use or to find a compatible alternative use for the building. This should include the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition.
- 11.28 Where appropriate, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for features that would be lost in the course of the proposed works to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.

Policy HE5 - Development affecting the setting of a listed building

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will not adversely affect the setting of a listed building

Justification

- 11.29 The setting of a listed building can simply be the land that directly accompanies it – the garden to a house, for example. However, a building's setting can encompass land a considerable distance from it – for example, where a listed building is a prominent visual element in a street scene, the whole street should be regarded as the building's setting. As a result, a proposed development that does not directly involve a listed building or its grounds can still affect the building, if it will have an impact upon its setting.

- 11.30 In many cases, the setting forms an essential part of a listed building's character and links the building to its surroundings. Sometimes a listed building and its grounds will have been designed as a cohesive whole and, in such cases, it is very important that the character of the immediate setting should not be undermined or harmed. However, more informal relationships between a listed building and other buildings, or with trees or other landscape features can greatly add to the visual pleasure that can be had from a listed building. New development that interrupts such relationships will not normally be permitted.
- 11.31 Informal views of a listed building will often give great visual satisfaction. Such views should not be extinguished or diminished in quality by new development. Where possible, proposals in the vicinity of a listed building should take the opportunity to enhance existing views, or to open up new public views that will contribute to the overall appreciation of the building.

Policy HE6 – Extension, alteration or change of use of a listed building

Planning permission will be granted for proposals to extend, alter or change the use of a listed building provided that they will not adversely affect the building's special architectural or historic interest.

Justification

- 11.32 The Council recognises that the best way to ensure that a listed building is preserved is for it to be in active and economically viable use. However, the introduction of new uses and the changing needs of existing uses can require alterations or extensions to be made to a listed building. Some alterations, such as the removal of a later addition that spoils a listed building's appearance, may have a beneficial effect whilst others may have adverse effects. Whilst many listed buildings can accommodate sensitive alteration or extension without harm to their character, some can be robbed of the very qualities that made them worthy of listing by an unsuitable alteration or extension. Indeed, the character of some listed buildings is so sensitive that the scope for extending or altering them can be very limited.
- 11.33 Proposals will be judged in terms of the impact they will have on the elements that make up the building's special interest. Although they do not have to be reproductions or pastiches of the existing building, extensions should harmonise with the listed building, and issues such as the scale, proportions, height and form of the proposed extension will be crucial. In particular it is vital that the original building remains visually dominant, and that it is not overpowered by extensions. However, details such as materials, finishes, or the proportions of window openings can also help to ensure that an extension blends in with the existing building. Alterations must not erode the building's character, and it is therefore crucial that applicants are fully aware of the qualities that are vital to the listed building's appearance, and retain them and add to them.
- 11.34 Where appropriate, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for features that would be lost in the course of the proposed works to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.

Conservation Areas

- 11.35 District Councils designate conservation areas, which are areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Thirty-six conservation areas have been designated in this District, and Appendix 9 lists them, indicates when they were made, and gives a very brief description of each area's character.

11.36 The Council will publish more detailed Conservation Area Character Statements for each area, which will provide a fuller description of what qualities, make the area special, and why it has been designated. These assessments will be adopted as supplementary planning guidance, and will explain the context that new buildings, extensions, and alterations must respect. The Council will also periodically review the relevance of existing conservation areas and their boundaries, and will consider the need for new designations.

11.37 The designation of a conservation area means that:

- The Council will pay greater attention to ensuring that development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of its surroundings;
- The Council's consent is required to demolish most buildings;
- Six weeks' notice must be given to the Council of most works to trees;
- Permission is needed for certain types of development that do not need permission elsewhere;
- The Council may make an Article 4 Direction to withdraw permitted development rights in order to protect features that are key elements of particular conservation areas; and
- Consent is needed to display certain types of advertisements that do not need consent elsewhere.

11.38 The Council gives a high priority to the protection and enhancement of the District's conservation areas which, like listed buildings, are a vital element of the area's character and bring economic benefits. The Council will expect developers to demonstrate a corresponding level of concern for the character and appearance of all conservation areas.

Policy HE7 – Development in a conservation area

Planning permission will be granted for development (including new buildings, changes of use, alterations and extensions) within or adjoining conservation areas provided that it would preserve or enhance the area's character, setting and appearance.

Justification

11.39 The designation of a conservation area is not intended to prevent change, and indeed the best way to ensure that its character or appearance is preserved or enhanced is for it to be in active use, as somewhere where people live, work, shop or enjoy themselves. A conservation area that is being used in these ways will inevitably be subject to pressure for change as people's needs change over time. Such change should be welcomed, because it indicates that the area is 'alive'. However, change must be managed and controlled to ensure that the area's special architectural and historic interest is not diminished.

11.40 As a result, the Council will not allow new development that would harm a conservation area's character or appearance, and will welcome development that makes a positive contribution to that character. New buildings do not have to imitate existing buildings, but they must harmonise with the characteristic built form of the area. Issues such as the scale, proportions, height, form and siting of new buildings will be crucial, but details such as materials, finishes and the proportions of window openings can also help to ensure that new development blends in with the conservation area. Extensions and alterations to buildings must both respect the character of the building involved, and must not detract from the area as a whole.

- 11.41 However, the character of a conservation area does not come purely from the buildings that it contains. Open spaces, the mix of uses, shop fronts, advertisements, trees, the street pattern, street furniture, boundary and surface treatments, vistas, and the relationship between buildings all contribute enormously to a conservation area's special character. Developments must take account of the importance of such features and must seek to protect them and, where possible, to add to them.
- 11.42 Where important features are to be lost in the course of any proposed works, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for them to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.
- 11.43 To enable the Council to weigh up the likely impact of a development in a conservation area, detailed drawings will almost always need to accompany a planning application. As a result, outline planning applications will not usually be appropriate.

Policy HE8 – Demolition within a conservation area

Planning permission will be granted for proposals involving the demolition of all or substantially all of an unlisted building in a conservation area provided that:

- 1. The building does not make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area; or**
- 2. The building or structure is beyond reasonable repair; or**
- 3. Every reasonable effort has been made to continue its current use or find a compatible alternative use that would allow for the building's retention**

Where permission is granted for demolition and a vacant site would harm the character of the area, a condition will be applied to prevent demolition being carried out until a redevelopment scheme has been permitted and contractually secured.

Justification

- 11.44 The demolition of a building or structure that is of little or no importance to the area's appearance will generally be acceptable. However, buildings and other structures in conservation areas that make a positive contribution to the area should be retained, where possible. Nonetheless, circumstances can arise that would justify demolition, namely where:
- a building or structure is in such a poor structural condition that the cost of repairing it would be prohibitive, and is not justified in relation to the importance of the building. Applicants making a case for demolition on this basis should provide information on predicted repair and maintenance costs and the value that can be derived from the building's continued use. Where it is clear that a building has been deliberately neglected in order to increase the likelihood of demolition being approved, the Council will give less weight to the costs of repair in weighing up whether the building is beyond reasonable repair;
 - real efforts have been made without success to continue the present use or to find a compatible alternative use for the building. This should include the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the building's condition.
- 11.45 Where permission is granted for the demolition of a building or structure in a conservation area, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for features that will be lost in the course of the proposed works to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.

- 11.46 Conservation area designation introduces control over the demolition of most buildings, and applications for conservation area consent to demolish must be made to the District Council. However, local plan policies may not deal with the criteria against which conservation area consent applications will be determined and this policy sets out how the Council will deal with planning applications involving the demolition of buildings in conservation areas.

Other Historic Assets

Policy HE9 - Historic parks and gardens

Planning permission will be granted for proposals, provided they will not adversely affect the character, appearance, or setting of any park or garden of special historic interest (as shown on the Proposals Map).

Justification

- 11.47 Historic parks and gardens are an important part of the District's heritage and landscape. Five of the most important are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest compiled by English Heritage. These are at Coleby Hall, Culverthorpe Hall, Doddington Hall, Rauceby Hall and Rauceby Hospital - brief descriptions are given in Appendix 10. Their inclusion on the Register reflects the fact that they have an historical interest of greater than local importance. [It should be noted that planning permission is outstanding for the residential development of the grounds of Rauceby Hospital, and that this permission pre-dates its inclusion on the Register.]
- 11.48 These parks and gardens contribute greatly to the particular character of North Kesteven, and they merit protection from harmful development. A historic landscape appraisal may be required where development affecting a historic park or garden or its setting is proposed. The Council will welcome the restoration, enhancement or interpretation of these parks and gardens.
- 11.49 Where development is exceptionally permitted that would lead to the loss of important elements of any of these parks and gardens, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for features that would be lost in the course of the proposed works to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.

Policy HE10 – Local distinctiveness

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that will not adversely affect the contribution made by a locally important traditional building or structure to the character of its surroundings.

Justification

- 11.50 Listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens are the most obvious examples of historical features that make North Kesteven's character so pleasant. It is as a consequence of their particular importance that they are specifically identified and protected. However, features of lesser individual importance contribute to the District's character, and collectively their contribution can be very significant.

- 11.51 For example, there are many examples of traditional buildings within the District that are not of sufficient quality to justify listing, but which nonetheless possess significant local and/or historic character. The Council has identified many such buildings as 'sensitive buildings', and will be concerned to ensure that their intrinsic worth is preserved. In addition, there are many other features or structures such as historic/traditional shopfronts, street furniture (e.g. guide posts, benches, statues), walls, railings, individual garden features, or areas of traditional street paving that give historic interest to their surroundings. More detailed guidance on shopfronts is given in the Sleaford Shopfront Design Guide (formally adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in May 1998).
- 11.52 Where appropriate the Council will expect traditional buildings and features to be retained. In cases where the retention of traditional buildings and other structures is not considered appropriate, the Council may require the applicant to arrange for features that would be lost in the course of the proposed works to be recorded as a condition of any planning permission granted.

Policy HE11 - Advertisements in conservation areas, on listed buildings and on scheduled ancient monuments

Consent will be granted for advertisements to be displayed within conservation areas, or on listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments provided that:

- 1. Public safety will not be compromised; and**
- 2. The advertisement will not adversely affect;**
 - a. the architectural or historic interest or setting of a listed building or scheduled ancient monument; or**
 - b. the character or appearance of a conservation area.**

Justification

- 11.53 Advertisements have a useful role to play in the District's commercial life, and can be a positive element in the built environment. However, they can have a harmful effect upon the appearance of any building or area and, when listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments or conservation areas are involved, poor quality advertisements can be especially harmful. This policy is intended to protect and enhance the amenity and safety of people's surroundings, whilst allowing for appropriate advertisements.
- 11.54 Many of the District's listed buildings and conservation areas are in parts of the District where commercial activity is concentrated, and where it is to be expected that advertisements will be displayed. Thus, the Council accepts that, in many cases, it is appropriate for signs and advertisements to be displayed in conservation areas and on listed buildings (and more unusually on ancient monuments), and acknowledges that well-designed advertisements can actually make a positive contribution to a building or area. However, the Council will wish to apply more exacting standards of advertising control in such circumstances than it may in other parts of the District.

11.55 Proposed advertisements must not detract from the integrity of a conservation area, and must not obscure or detract from the design or historic character of a protected building, nor spoil its setting. Clearly what will be acceptable will vary from building to building and from area to area, but the following general guidelines can be set out:

- Large-scale poster advertisements will rarely be appropriate on a listed building or scheduled ancient monument. In a commercial part of a conservation area, they may be acceptable, provided that they will be compatible with the area's architectural or historical features and will not be out of scale with the building on which they are displayed;
- Projecting box signs will rarely be appropriate, since they can disfigure the appearance of historic buildings;
- Flag advertisements will not usually be acceptable, because they tend to dominate a building or area (only larger buildings can accommodate a flag advertisement without harm);
- Materials will normally need to be natural (wood or metal). Bright colour schemes and synthetic materials will seldom be compatible with a historic building or area;
- Advertisements must not be excessively large or obtrusive;
- Illumination of signs (particularly internal illumination) can be alien to the character of historic buildings and areas; and
- Advertisements displayed above fascia level or above the bottom of first floor window level will seldom be acceptable, as this is not a traditional position for advertisements to be displayed (with the exception of pub signs).

11.56 As is always the case with advertisements, public safety must not be reduced and thus advertisements must not distract drivers, obscure visibility or be potentially confused with existing traffic signs.

11.57 Applicants should note that the fixing of most advertisements to a listed building will require listed building consent.

Appendix 1 - Parishes in North Kesteven forming part of the Lincoln Policy Area

- Aubourn and Haddington
- Bassingham
- Boothby Graffoe
- Bracebridge Heath
- Branston and Mere
- Canwick
- Coleby
- Doddington and Whisby
- Dunston
- Eagle and Swinethorpe
- Harmston
- Heighington
- Metherringham
- Nocton
- North Hykeham
- North Scarle
- Potterhanworth
- Skellingthorpe
- South Hykeham
- Thorpe on the Hill
- Thurlby
- Waddington
- Washingborough
- Witham St Hughs

Appendix 2 - Employment Allocations and Employment Sites with Planning Permission Identified

Identified by Policies E1 and E2

(Area in Hectares (Ha) is Residual Site Capacity of Sites (2006))

(1) Strategic Employment Sites – Lincoln Policy Area				
Site Reference	Location	Ha	Phase	Types of Development Uses Permitted
E1-SWA1	Witham St Hughes	c12.0	1	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK2	Whisby Rd South	4.2	1	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK5	Whisby Rd South	9.0	1	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK5	Whisby Rd South	21.7	2	B1, B2, and B8
E1-SHK1	South Hykeham	4.6	1	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK1	Whisby Rd North	3.4	1	B1, B2, B8, D2 and Sui Generis
E2-DFBP	Decoy Farm	25.0	1	B1
E1-BBG1	Bracebridge Heath	10	2	B1, B2, and B8
Total		89.9		

(2) Local Employment Sites – Lincoln Policy Area			
Site Reference	Location	Phase	Types of Development Uses Permitted
E1-BAS1	Bassingham	0.15	B1
E1-HEI1	Heighington	1.50	B1
E1-MET1	Metheringham	3.19	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK4	North Hykeham	1.10	B1, B2, and B8
E1-WAS1	Washingborough	2.30	B1, B2, and B8
E1-NHK3	North Hykeham	1.30	B1, B2, and B8
Total		9.54	

(3) Strategic Employment Sites – Rest of the District (Sleaford)

Site Reference	Location	Phase	Types of Development Uses Permitted
E1-SLE1	North of Railway, Sleaford	14.5	B1, B2, and B8
E1-SLE3	North of Railway, Sleaford	16.7	B1, B2, and B8
E1-SLE5	West of East Road, Sleaford	1.12	B1, B2, and B8
E1-SLE6	East of East Road, Sleaford	4.10	B1, B2, and B8
E1-SLE7	Land off B1517, Sleaford	2.52	B1, B2, and B8
Total		38.94	

(4) Local Employment Sites – Rest of the District

Site Reference	Location	Phase	Types of Development Uses Permitted
E1-BIL2	Billinghay	0.2	B1
E1-HEC1	Heckington	4.6	B1, B2, and B8
E1-RUS1	Ruskington	1.5	B1, B2, and B8
Total		6.3	

Appendix 3 - Criteria for Defining Sleaford Town Centre and Main Shopping Frontages

Town Centre

This is the central part of Sleaford, in which a mixture of mutually compatible uses and activities will be concentrated, so as to:

- Support the Town Centre's vitality and viability as a focus for shopping and other retail-related activities;
- Maximize opportunities for people to live within walking distance of a range of places of employment, shops, entertainments, cultural and other facilities;
- Maximize opportunities for people to live, work, shop and carry out other activities in an area that is easily accessible by public transport.

In defining the extent of the Town Centre for the purposes of this Local Plan, regard has been had to the following factors:

- Concentration of existing "town centre uses", as referred to in PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Developments);
- Urban regeneration objectives, including the existence of land and buildings considered to have potential for development or redevelopment for uses appropriate to a town centre location;
- A development strategy that seeks to strengthen links between key points, including the railway station, the market place, the riverside and Navigation Yard, and the Tesco store off Northgate.
- Urban form;
- Accessibility; and
- Amenity.

Main Shopping Streets

These are the parts of Sleaford's Town Centre in which shopping, financial and professional services and food and drink outlets are to be the dominant uses at ground-floor level on active street frontages.

In defining the extent of the Main Shopping Streets for the purposes of this Local Plan, regard has been had to the following factors:

- Concentration of existing uses within Use Classes A1, A2 and A3;
- A retail development strategy that seeks to strengthen links between key points, including the railway station, the market place, Navigation Yard, and the Tesco store off Northgate;
- Accessibility; and
- Amenity.

Appendix 4 - Parking Standards

Type of development	Standards	Notes
Residential		
Houses and flats (including aged persons' dwellings)	<p>A. Within Sleaford and North Hykeham</p> <p>A maximum on average of 1.5 car parking spaces per dwelling.</p> <p>B. Elsewhere in the District</p> <p>A maximum on average of 2 car parking spaces for dwellings with 3 or less bedrooms, and 3 car parking spaces for dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms.</p>	A garage space plus the space immediately in front of it will count as one space.
Sheltered housing - warden aided accommodation	<p>A maximum of 1 car parking space per 2 units.</p> <p>Cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.</p>	
Community homes - homes for the elderly/children/physically or mentally handicapped people	<p>A maximum of 1 car parking space per 3 residents.</p> <p>Cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.</p>	
Halls of residence/nurses homes/other residential hostels	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.	The general aim will be to restrict car parking to the minimum required for safe operation (e.g. off-loading/picking up) within Sleaford and North Hykeham, and to a maximum of 1 space per 3 residents elsewhere.
Retail		
Food retail	<p>A maximum of 1 car parking space per 14 square metres of gross floor area.</p> <p>A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 250 square metres of gross floor area</p>	In general, car parking within Sleaford town centre will normally be expected to be short stay and available for public use.
Non-food retail	<p>A maximum of 1 car parking space per 20 square metres of gross floor area.</p> <p>A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 500 square metres of gross floor area.</p>	In general, car parking within Sleaford town centre will normally be expected to be short stay and available for public use.

Type of development	Standards	Notes
Employment		
Offices	A maximum of 1 car parking space per 30 square metres of gross floor area. A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 200 square metres of gross floor area.	
General industry	A maximum of 1 car parking space per 65 square metres gross floor area. A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 200 square metres of gross floor area.	
Warehousing	A maximum of 1 car parking space per 150 square metres of gross floor area. A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 1,000 square metres of gross floor area.	
Education		
Nursery schools/primary schools/secondary schools	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits, but typically a maximum of 1 car parking space per 2 staff plus an allowance for visitors.	A School Travel Plan is likely to be required in support of any proposal.
Higher and further education	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits, but typically a maximum of 1 car parking space per 2 staff plus a maximum of 1 space per 15 students.	A Transport Assessment (see paragraphs 7.8 and 7.12) and Travel Plan (see paragraphs 7.11 and 7.12) are likely to be required in support of any proposal.
Other development types		
Cinemas/theatres/conference facilities/bingo halls/other places of assembly with fixed seating	A maximum of 1 car parking space per 5 seats. A minimum of 1 cycle stand per 20 seats.	
Hospitals (including extensions to existing sites)	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.	A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are likely to be required in support of any proposal

Type of development	Standards	Notes
Other development types		
Stadia	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits, but typically a maximum of 1 car parking space per 15 seats.	A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are likely to be required in support of any proposal
Sports facilities (e.g. leisure centre /swimming pools/ squash clubs)	Car and cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.	A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are likely to be required in support of any proposal
Restaurants/cafes /public houses /licensed clubs	A maximum of 1 car parking space per 3 square metres public drinking area plus 1 space per 5 square metres of public dining area. Cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.	Additional facilities, such as accommodation and conference facilities will need to be assessed separately in accordance with the appropriate standard.
Hotels	A maximum of 1 car parking space per bedroom. Cycle parking requirements to be assessed on individual merits.	Additional facilities, such as bars/dining rooms open to the general public and conference facilities, will need to be assessed separately in accordance with the appropriate standard.

Parking for powered two-wheelers (motorcycles, mopeds, scooters, etc.) should be provided at 1 space per 20 car parking spaces.

Parking for disabled people should be provided, in addition to the adopted maximum parking standards, in accordance with the following standards:

- Parking areas with less than 20 spaces in total - a minimum of 1 space.
- Parking areas with more than 20 spaces in total – a minimum of 2 spaces or 6% of the total, whichever is greater.

Cycle stands should be of the hooped type (often referred to as a Sheffield stand), which is capable of accommodating 2 cycles.

Appendix 5 - Green Wedges

Skellingthorpe Green Wedge

The Skellingthorpe Green Wedge links with the City of Lincoln's Wedges on the north-eastern side of the Fosdyke, to the east of Swanpool (and via this Wedge links to Hartsholme Country Park and Swanholme Lakes within the City's built-up area), and at Hospital Plantation/Skellingthorpe Moor Plantation.

Landscape - The Wedge's character is generally open, but varies from low-lying and flat in eastern parts, to gently undulating, and well wooded in the west. Woodland alongside the A46 provides a strong feeling of enclosure, and on emerging from this enclosed section, the elevated highway provides spectacular views of Lincoln Cathedral and the City.

Recreation - There are no bridleways within the Wedge, and footpaths are limited in number. However, the Sustrans cycle route provides pedestrian and cycle access between Skellingthorpe and the City.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains no County Wildlife Sites, but links the extensive grassland habitat of West Common with the woodland of Hospital Plantation/Skellingthorpe Moor Plantation.

Settlement pattern - The Wedge separates Skellingthorpe from the City of Lincoln.

Hykeham Pits Green Wedge

The Hykeham/Whisby Pits Green Wedge does not directly link with any of the City of Lincoln's Wedges. However, it relates closely to the Swanholme Lakes Wedge to the north-east.

Landscape - The Wedge is dominated by a complex series of lakes and pools, linked by narrow embankments. Dramatic views across this unusual landscape are available from the elevated A46.

Recreation - The lakes are used for an extensive range of water sports, and the Wedge includes the recreation ground at Newark Road, North Hykeham. Use for passive recreation is available at the Millennium Green, off Station Road, North Hykeham.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains one County Wildlife Sites, and is part of a chain of lakes within North Kesteven and the City of Lincoln that together form an important habitat, especially for over-wintering wildfowl.

Settlement pattern - Land in this part of the District is subject to development pressure, and the Wedge identifies those parts of the area that are sensitive lakeside environments.

Witham Valley Green Wedge

Together with the City of Lincoln Green Wedge to the north, this Wedge takes in the whole of the Witham valley from South Hykeham to Boultham.

Landscape - The Wedge has a flat, valley-floor character and is intensively farmed. Long views into the City of Lincoln are available, focussed upon the Cathedral, and channelled and narrowed by the existing development to the west and east.

Recreation - The Wedge contains the Fen Lane, North Hykeham playing field, and the River Witham is used for angling. Footpath and bridleway access is limited.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains no County Wildlife Sites, but the River Witham and its banks have habitat importance. Land within the City of Lincoln Green Wedge to the north is also of wildlife value.

Settlement pattern - The Wedge separates North Hykeham from South Hykeham, and North Hykeham from Waddington Brant Road.

Waddington/Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge

The Waddington/Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge links with the City of Lincoln's Wedge covering South Common, Bracebridge Old Clay Pit, Cross O'Cliff Orchard and Bennett's Field.

Landscape - The Wedge covers the Lincoln Cliff scarp slope, which is the dominant landscape feature of the District, and which is identified as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Spectacular views are available over the Witham and Trent valleys.

Recreation - The Viking Way long-distance footpath runs along the Cliff top, and there are significant footpath links between the City, Bracebridge Heath and the Wedge.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains no County Wildlife Sites, but the mature hedges and trees of the area also provide important wildlife habitat. Land immediately to the north, within the City of Lincoln's boundaries is also of wildlife value.

Settlement pattern - Separates Bracebridge Heath from Lincoln, and Waddington village from Waddington Brant Road.

Canwick/Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge

The Canwick/Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge links with the City of Lincoln's Wedge covering South Common, Bracebridge Old Clay Pit, Cross O'Cliff Orchard and Bennett's Field. Via the City of Lincoln Wedge it also links with the Waddington/Bracebridge Heath Green Wedge.

Landscape - The Wedge is a largely featureless plateau area at the top of the Lincoln Cliff scarp slope, from which excellent uninterrupted views of Lincoln Cathedral and the City are available.

Recreation - The Viking Way long-distance footpath runs along the Wedge's western boundary, but there are no footpath or bridleway routes within the Wedge itself.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains no County Wildlife Sites.

Settlement pattern - Together with South Common, it separates Bracebridge Heath from the City of Lincoln.

Canwick/Washingborough Green Wedge

The Canwick/Washingborough Green Wedge links with the City of Lincoln's Washingborough /Canwick Green Wedges to the north, and with the City of Lincoln's South Common Green Wedge to the west. Via the South Common Wedge it also links to the Waddington/Bracebridge Heath Wedge.

Landscape - The Wedge incorporates the southern side of the Witham valley. Most of it is steeply sloping, but those parts to the north of Washingborough Road are relatively flat. The majority of the Wedge is arable farmland, with large fields defined by low hedgerows but it also includes a golf course. Tree cover is sparse except at Canwick village and Canwick Park Golf Club. Fine views of Lincoln Cathedral and the City are available from Heighington Road, and from Lincoln Road, Washingborough.

Recreation - A footpath and the Sustrans cycle route run alongside the River, but otherwise, public access to the Wedge is limited. Western parts of the Wedge are made up of Canwick Park Golf Club.

Wildlife - The Wedge contains one County Wildlife Site, but the River Witham and its banks, and the mature woodland at Canwick have habitat importance. Land at the north-western end of the Wedge, within the City of Lincoln's boundaries, is also of wildlife value.

Settlement pattern - The Wedge separates Canwick from the City of Lincoln, and Washingborough from Canwick and the City. In particular the gap between Canwick and Lincoln is very narrow, but the dense tree planting of the golf course provides an important visual buffer.

Appendix 6 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest

High Dyke Parish: Cranwell	The wide verges of Ermine Street, along with some further roadside verge to the south, comprise a substantial area of Eastern Jurassic Limestone grassland in south Lincolnshire. This site is the locality of two nationally important rare plant species, at the edge of their British geographical range.
Doddington Clay Woods Parish: Doddington	Old Hag and Little Sale Woods are two ancient semi-natural woodlands which have developed on the heavy clay soils derived from scattered outcrops of Lias Clay which occur amongst glacial gravels in this area of Lincolnshire. The woods contain representative examples of several woodland types now scarce in lowland Britain, such as, wet ash-wych elm woodland, acid birch-ash-lime woodland, and lowland maple-ash-lime woodland. Both woodlands also have a rich and varied ground flora, reflecting variations in soil moisture and base status. Old Hag Wood is the site of a large heronry and also supports a varied community of other breeding birds.
Metheringham Heath Quarry Parish: Metheringham	The interest in this site is based on the geological formation which shows an excellent and virtually complete exposure through the Lincolnshire Limestone formation laid down in the middle Jurassic, about 170 million years ago. The basal part of the formation is particularly well developed providing essential information relating to the palaeoenvironmental interpretation of the basal beds of the Upper Lincolnshire Limestone. It is therefore a key sedimentological and stratigraphic site.
Potterhanworth Wood Parish: Potterhanworth	The site is known to have been continuously wooded and its long management as coppice with standards, combined with variations in soil texture and drainage has resulted in outstanding plant and animal communities. The wood also supports a breeding bird community characteristic of ancient woodlands and contains a small heronry.
Copper Hill Parish: Wilsford	This site includes nationally important exposures of Lincolnshire limestone. The site is of particular geological importance as it provides evidence of the environmental conditions at the time when the limestone was laid down, 170 million years ago. The biological interest lies in the rich and varied limestone flora and its associated range of butterfly species.
Wilsford Heath Quarry Parish: Wilsford	The site is a disused limestone quarry with semi-natural deciduous woodland dominated by oak, ash, beech and sycamore. Another important habitat is the species-rich limestone grassland which supports a flora now uncommon in the East Midlands.
Wilsford and Rauceby Warrens Parish: Wilsford/ South Rauceby	This site comprises the most extensive remaining area of limestone grass heath in south Lincolnshire. Variation in the thickness of glacial deposits gives rise to a mix of dry lime-rich soils and lime-poor soils with a correspondingly high botanical diversity. A large population of nationally rare plants occur in this area. Great crested newts breed in one of the old water-filled sand and gravel workings.

Appendix 7 - County Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves

Springwell Plantation Parish: Ashby-de-la-Launde	A small wet, mixed plantation, which supports the nationally rare native black poplar. One of the most important black poplar sites in Lincolnshire and of significant importance nationally.
Blankney Brick Pits Parish: Blankney	A small group of former clay workings, now disused and flooded, and surrounded by marsh and woodland. The range and quality of its habitats (open water, woodland, mixed plantation and marginal habitats) is unusual, and it supports a range of marsh and marginal plant species that is usually confined to unmanaged ditches and former mineral workings.
Gilbert's Wood Parish: Blankney	One of the more species-rich small woodlands in the District, with a particularly rich ground flora for a woodland of this type and size.
Murray Wood and the Belt Parish: Blankney	Mixed woodland, with a particularly diverse understorey, and a ground flora that suggests that the site has supported woodland for centuries. One of the richest woodlands in the District and an integral part of a complex of woods of County importance in this area.
Oak Holt Parish: Blankney	A remarkably diverse, mixed woodland on soil that varies from light and sandy to a heavy loam, giving a range of woodland types with a varied ground flora, which suggests that this is an ancient woodland site. It is also within a complex of ancient woodlands in this part of the District that are of County importance.
Scopwick Long Wood Parish: Blankney	A small copse of broad-leaved woodland that may be semi-natural, but is certainly quite old. The understorey and ground flora are exceptionally rich for a wood of this small size.
Boothby Graffoe Protected Road Verge Parish: Boothby Graffoe and Metheringham	A 700-metre length of road verge, which supports the very dry, lime-rich grassland typical of the thin soils of the Lincoln Edge - a habitat that was once widespread, but which is now scarce.
Branston Delph Parish: Branston and Mere	A drainage ditch of approximately 3 kilometres in length, which contains many aquatic and marginal or marshy plant species.
Branston Island Parish: Branston and Mere	Approximately 200 hectares of arable land, which is used as a flood defence washland in periods of high water levels. The site is used by large numbers of bird species in the winter (plover, curlews, snipe and Bewick's and Whooper swans) and, in periods of inundation, also attracts wildfowl such as mallard, shoveler, shelduck, wigeon, mute swans, redshank and other wintering species. It is one of the most important inland flood washland sites in Lincolnshire.
Curtois's Holt Parish: Branston	A mainly ash woodland of 9 hectares, which has a rich understorey and ground flora. It is both an important part of the Blankney Woods complex and a distinct wood within it, reflecting both the slightly acidic conditions and the close proximity of Potterhanworth Wood.

Moor Wood Parish: Brauncewell	A small, but species-rich mixed woodland, probably plantation but with a rich enough ground flora to suggest that the site may have supported ancient woodland.
Flowerpot Brick Pit Parish: Burton Pedwardine	This site contains areas of open water, scrub, and grassland. The water body and scrub are species poor, but the pockets of grassland that have developed on lime-rich clays (resulting in marshy calcareous grassland) are particularly species rich.
Carlton Le Moorland Grassland Parish: Carlton Le Moorland	A small (0.5 hectares) fragment of wet unimproved grassland on clays - a habitat that was once relatively common in this part of Lincolnshire. The sward contains high numbers of species, which suggest antiquity.
Cranwell Grassland Parish: Cranwell & Byard's Leap	A small (2 hectare) area of limestone pasture, with adjacent copse and with hawthorn scrub, which is very rich in plant species.
Whisby Nature Park Parish: Doddington, Whisby and Thorpe-on-the-Hill	Former gravel workings, which represent one of the largest (103.7 hectares) complexes of inland wetland in the County, as well as supporting a wide diversity of habitats from dry grassland to reedswamp. The site supports large numbers of breeding, passage and wintering bird species, nationally scarce plant species, plant species notified as vulnerable or endangered in the County, and nationally scarce invertebrate species. It is one of the best wetland sites in the County, and certainly the most extensive wetlands in the District. This site has also been designated as a Local Nature Reserve.
Metherringham Heath Protected Road Verge Parish: Metherringham	A grassland site on thin soils over limestone, resulting in a very dry sward rich in species. It is one of the few remaining examples of Lincoln Edge lime-rich heath habitat.
Eagle Wood and Protected Roadside Verge Parish: Eagle	A spruce plantation with a particularly rich ground flora, which includes many primary woodland indicator species, suggesting that this is an ancient woodland site. The ground flora can also be seen along the adjacent road verge.
Hurn Wood Parish: Eagle and Swinethorpe	Hurn Wood is clearly secondary, but the richness of the ground flora suggests that the wood is certainly old, and probably semi-natural. It also has a role as important cover for breeding birds. One of the richest woodlands in the District.
Kirkby-La-Thorpe Pit Parish: Kirkby-La-Thorpe	A flooded pit, but also includes areas of willow scrub and grassland, some of which is quite marshy. Supports a variety of neutral grassland plant species, as well as aquatic and marginal species.
Fulbeck - Leadenham Dismantled Railway Parish: Leadenham & Fulbeck	This site contains calcareous grassland, scrub, disturbed ground and secondary woodland. It is the mix of habitats that gives the site much of its importance, but some of the grassland areas support a rich limestone flora. There are damp hollows and dense hawthorn scrub, which supports a number of birds.

Green Man Wood Parish: Metheringham	A large area of broad-leaved and mixed woodland (approximately 50 hectares), which is obviously plantation in places, but which has a rich ground flora suggesting that at least part may have been replanted on the site of ancient woodland.
Gorse Lane Parish: Navenby & Wellingore	A green lane bounded by hedgerows in places and in others by dry stone walls. The site consists of dry limestone grassland that is herb-rich in places. Disturbed areas are occasionally colonised by unusual or rare arable weeds.
Bloxham Lane Woods Parish: Nocton	A relatively small wood (3.6 hectares) which contains some extremely large and mature trees, which suggests that it is a site of some antiquity. The shrub layer is very rich, and the ground flora is patchy, but very rich in places. It is an important wood, and is one component of a complex of woodlands that is of County importance.
Long Holt Parish: Nocton	A small strip of broad-leaved woodland, probably ancient, that is an important corridor feature joining up with the larger Neville's Wood. The ground flora is very rich and indicates the sandy nature of the soil.
Neville Wood Parish: Nocton	An area of ancient, broad-leaved woodland, with a ground flora that reflects the slightly damp and acid conditions.
Nocton Delph Parish: Nocton and Dunston	A long drainage ditch, with particular interest present in the water edge habitat, which has a marshy, fen type character.
Nocton Wood Parish: Nocton	An outstanding wildlife site, and the central part of a complex of woodlands in this part of the District that are of County importance. It is also one of the largest woodland blocks in the District. The woodland type varies from high forest to coppice, and the shrub layer is rich. The soil is sandy and the ground flora is therefore quite different to the other woods in the area. The wood is an important bird habitat and, in overall terms, is one of the finest non-SSSI woodlands in Lincolnshire.
Heath Farm Road Verge Parish: North Rauceby	One of very few sites of unimproved calcareous grassland in the District, containing a rich variety of wild flowers characteristic of limestone soils.
Wilsford Bank Protected Road Verge Parish: North Rauceby	The verge is botanically rich and has been colonised by plant species typical of short calcareous turf – species that are becoming uncommon in the County.
Enfield Farm Meadows Parish: North Scarle	Two meadows rich in plant species, typical of the type of wet neutral grassland that has been lost throughout much of Lincolnshire since the 1930s. The site is bounded by large mature hedgerows with standard trees.

Hill Holt Wood Parish: Norton Disney	Probably the best example of wet, acid woodland in the District. It has developed on sands and gravels, with wet areas and a predominantly acidic soil, and supports a wide range of species of plants and animals.
Quern Dyke Holt Parish: Potterhanworth	A small (4 hectares) ancient, broad-leaved wood, which is part of a complex of woodland of County importance in this part of the District. However, it is situated on a sandy soil and the water table is high, and consequently it is considerably wetter than others in the complex. The shrub layer and ground flora are unusual, reflecting the damp and acid soil.
Scopwick Heath Old Quarry Parish: Scopwick	An abandoned limestone quarry, dominated by scrub. Calcareous grassland is developing on the quarry floor and is, in parts, exceptionally rich. One of the best examples of this habitat in the District.
Skellingthorpe Big Wood Parish: Skellingthorpe	Approximately 175 hectares of ancient semi-natural broad-leaved woodland and coniferous plantation, which is one of the finest examples of woodland in Lincolnshire. The tree cover is primarily pendunculate oak, birch, with some small-leaved lime, ash and hazel coppice. The ground flora is varied, reflecting variations in soil type and wetness.
Lollycocks Field Parish: Sleaford	This land was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 1993, since when it has been managed by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers for a range of habitats – as a spring meadow, a summer meadow, several groups of trees and shrubs, an area of wet tall fen, and a pond. Its value lies principally in its accessibility for the public (and especially local schools) to enjoy a site with a range of quality habitats.
Sleaford Fen Parish: Sleaford & Quarrington	An area of willow scrub and open ponds, which contains nationally rare pond and lake-edge plant species. It also represents an important site for breeding birds.
Rauceby Quarry Parish: South Rauceby	An abandoned limestone quarry, which now supports recolonising limestone grassland and scrub. It represents one of the best calcareous grassland sites in the District, supporting a wide variety of wild flowers typical of this habitat.
Beckingham Ranges Parish: Stapleford & Beckingham	The largest area of open grassland habitat in the District – approximately 450 hectares. Much of the grassland is fairly rough pasture, but the site also contains wet areas where marsh and marginal habitats can be found. Scrub, copses and arable areas are also present within the site. The site's importance comes from the amount of grassland that it supports, the range of habitats present and the relative lack of disturbance.
Stapleford Moor Parish: Stapleford	A large area (120 hectares) of woodland, unimproved acid grassland and heathland. It represents one of the last remaining fragments of heathland in the District, and supports a variety of breeding birds.

Stapleford Wood Parish: Stapleford	A very large (280 hectares) conifer plantation on sandy soil, with wet area and areas of oak and birch. It retains a heathland interest, and represents the last and best remaining example of the habitat type in the District, supporting a number of plant species that rare and declining across the County. A number of rare bird and invertebrate species have been recorded. It is one of the most important wildlife sites in the District, and is of County importance for its remnant heathland habitat, and its invertebrate and breeding bird populations.
Tunman Wood Parish: Thorpe on the Hill	A 19 hectare wood situated partly on sandy, free-draining soil and partly on wet loams and clays. The sandy soil supports a species-poor coniferous plantation, but the remainder of the wood has a diverse flora and bird fauna.
Waddington Pasture Parish: Waddington	A pair of neutral unimproved grassland fields bounded by large hedgerows. Both are botanically rich, but the western field has an outstanding range of plant species. The site also includes a marshy area, where the flora is quite different.
Washingborough Junction Parish: Washingborough	A small, marshy grassland site, also containing a small copse. The marsh and open water support a wide variety of wetland plants, and the site as a whole supports a number of birds of marshy and wet grassland, as well as barn owls.
Wilsford Carr Parish: Wilsford	One of a declining number of semi-natural, wet woodland sites in the County, which supports a variety of habitats, including willow carr, reed swamp, freshwater marsh and scrub. These habitat mosaics, plus the relatively large size of the site result in an important wildlife site.

Appendix 8 - Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Parish	Monument Number	Title	Grid Reference
Aubourn, Haddington and South Hykeham	22771	A medieval and post-medieval hall complex, Haddington	SK 91286278
Anwick	22636	Churchyard cross, St. Edith's churchyard	TF 1145 5062
Asgarby and Howell	22635	Churchyard cross, St. Oswald's churchyard	TF1349 4624
Aswarby and Swarby	138	Barrow in Aswarby Park	TF 059 401
Aunsby and Dembleby	22772	Buried remains of medieval church and churchyard, Dembleby House Farm	TF 0382 3780
Beckingham	22663	Churchyard cross, All Saints' churchyard	SK 8756 5376
Blankney	313	Carr Dyke SE of Blankney Wood	TF 117 617 TF 115 619
Blankney	314	Carr Dyke at Linwood Hall	TF 121 614 TF 123 605
Boothby Graffoe	64	Somerton Castle	SK 954 588
Branston and Mere	31604	Moated site 325m south east of Branston Lodge	TF 0626 6830
Brauncewell	22738	Dunsby medieval village	TF 0401 5132
Brauncewell	22740	Brauncewell medieval village	TF 0466 5255
Burton Pedwardine	31605	Mareham Grange	TF 0859 4307
Cranwell and Byard's Leap	22630	Cranwell village cross	TF 0323 4993
Digby	22637	Digby village cross	TF 0814 5477
Digby/Walcott	30001	Catley Priory	TF 1188 5554
Eagle and Swinethorpe	22620	Remains of a preceptory, fishponds and post-medieval gardens at Eagle Hall	SK 8650 6568
Ewerby and Evedon	178	Haverholme Priory	TF 109 494
Ewerby and Evedon	22634	Ewerby village cross	TF 1211 4728
Heckington	317	Settlement site 650 yds (600m) E of Holme House	TF 179 455
Heckington	22670	Churchyard cross, St. Andrew's churchyard	TF 1429 4409

Parish	Monument Number	Title	Grid Reference
Helpringham	274	Carr Dyke, Roman canal, at Helpringham	TF 144 388 TF 148 392
Helpringham	303	Roman saltern in Helpringham Fen	TF 172 385
Helpringham	22626	Medieval moated site, settlement and cultivation remains, post medieval park and garden, Thorpe Latimer	TF 1349 3981
Helpringham	22640	Helpringham village cross	TF 1396 4074
Metheringham	94	Village Cross	TF 068 614
Newton and Haceby	51	Roman villa, Haceby	TF 019 369
Newton and Haceby	240	Haceby moated site	TF 031 359
Newton and Haceby	22625	Moated site, Newton	TF 0487 3605
Newton and Haceby	22690	Bowl barrow, 400m south east of Moat Farm	TF 0505 3580
Nocton	312	Carr Dyke in Nocton Wood	TF 082 646 TF 089 634
Nocton	22750	Nocton Park Priory on Abbey Hill, 750m north east of Nocton Wood Houses	TF 0771 6478
North Kyme	22632	North Kyme village cross	TF 1516 5266
North Rauceby	22639	North Rauceby village cross	TF 0221 4639
Norton Disney	81	Roman villa W of Hill Holt	SK 859 602
Osbournby	31601	Medieval fishpond complex 250m south of Laurels Farm	TF 0665 3776
Rowston	22638	Rowston village cross	TF 0840 5630
Scredington	22641	Boundary cross, Mareham Lane	TF 0841 4203
Scredington	22739	Packhorse bridge, Northbeck	TF 0970 4092
Scredington	31602	Thorny Close moated site, Northbeck	TF 0963 4121
Scredington	31603	Hall Close moated manorial complex	TF 0939 4074
Silk Willoughby	22642	Silk Willoughby village cross	TF 0564 4296
Silk Willoughby	22751	Butt Mound bowl barrow, Butt Lees	TF 0546 4298
Silk Willoughby	22752	Folk Moot bowl barrow, Butt Lees	TF 0538 4297
Silk Willoughby	22753	Silkby Chapel remains, Butt Lees	TF 0528 4298

Parish	Monument Number	Title	Grid Reference
Skellingthorpe	30101	Skellingthorpe duck decoy, 550m north east of Decoy Farm	SK 9419 7166
Sleaford	338	Settlement and enclosure, Holdingham	TF 046 456
Sleaford	22689	Sleaford Castle	TF 0646 4555
South Kyme	22622	Remains of medieval monastery, moated manor house, fishponds and post-medieval garden	TF 1685 4972
Stapleford	22662	Churchyard cross, All Saints' churchyard	SK 8862 5757
Temple Bruer with Temple High Grange	22609	Remains of preceptory church, Temple Bruer	TF 0084 5370
Threekingham	22610	Site of Anglo-Saxon nunnery and medieval chapel, Stow Green	TF 0941 3507
Threekingham	22643	Churchyard cross, St. Peter's churchyard	TF 0898 3611
Threekingham	30207	Post medieval formal garden remains and medieval enclosures, Manor Farm	TF 0866 3624
Thurlby	22661	Churchyard cross, St. Germain's churchyard	SK 9086 6171
Timberland	298	Carr Dyke	TF 127 586 TF 127 582
Timberland	315	Carr Dyke W of Martin Wood	TF 126 588
Walcot near Folkingham	22690	Bowl barrow 400m south east of Moat Farm	TF 0505 3580
Walcot near Folkingham	31607	Medieval fishpond complex, 80m south west of Manor House	TF 0588 3506
Walcott	27900	Neolithic long barrow 770m ESE of Rowston Grange	TF 1155 5559
Washingborough	275	Carr Dyke, Roman canal N of Washingborough	TF 024 707
Washingborough	276	Carr Dyke, Roman canal adjoining Glebe Farm	TF 041 705
Washingborough	311	Carr Dyke between Washingborough and Common Square	TF 031 706 TF 036 705 TF 037 705 TF 039 705
Washingborough	22627	Washingborough village cross	TF 0192 7061
Welbourn	33129	Castle Hill ringwork	SK 9681 5432
Wellingore	22660	Wellingore village cross	SK 9838 5679

Appendix 9 - Conservation Areas

To note: In accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 69) and the Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – Planning and Historic Environment Conservation Areas designation must be reviewed from time to time. Therefore all summaries need to be read in conjunction with any review undertaken.

Aswarby – June 1991

Aswarby Conservation Area has an area of 77.3 hectares and covers the settlement itself, and also takes in Aswarby Park. The Conservation Area has a very open character, since it contains few buildings, some of which are set back significantly from the edge of the highway. Buildings are 2 storey in height and are built in coursed rubble stonework, with slate roofs. However, there are two distinct architectural styles within the settlement. Some buildings have low parapet gables, gabled dormers and porches, diamond shaped chimney stacks and wood casement windows. Others have deep parapet gables, rectangular separated chimney stacks, and stone mullioned windows with 3 vertical panes. Throughout, trees contribute greatly to the Conservation Area's attractive character.

Bassingham – June 1991

Bassingham Conservation Area has an area of 13.6 hectares and covers central and southern parts of the village around Newark Road/High Street. Buildings are generally 2 storey in height, and many are located directly on the pavement edge. The majority of buildings are detached but linked together by roadside walls or hedges. Red brick is the predominant building material, and roofs are in red pantile or slate, are steeply pitched (between 40° and 45°), and are often punctuated by ridge level chimney stacks. Roof verges are plain, or are emphasised by specially coursed brickwork or a shallow parapet. Dormer windows are not characteristic, and windows generally have a strong vertical emphasis with arched brickwork lintels. Trees are important throughout the Conservation Area.

Billinghay – December 2006

Billinghay Conservation Area has an area of 3.8 hectares, and covers eastern parts of the village, around Church Street, Bridge Street, Church Lane, Victoria Street and Market Place. Buildings are densely grouped, are generally 2 storey in height and are located on the pavement edge, clearly defining the greatly varying shape and width of the streets. Buildings are also commonly linked together by walls and fences, further increasing the definition of the highway edge. Red/brown brick is the predominant building material, and roofs are in slate or pantile, and have plain verges. Chimney stacks rising within buildings and emerging at ridge height are characteristic. Windows generally have a vertical emphasis, are usually slightly recessed from the face of the building, and small panes and dormer windows are uncharacteristic. The Conservation Area contains a number of traditional shop fronts, which contribute significantly to its character.

Blankney – December 1977

Blankney Conservation Area is in two parts, one covering the settlement itself, and the other covering St Oswald's Church, which together they have an area of 8.6 hectares. The settlement has two distinct character areas. Buildings alongside the B1188 are closely arranged, and have a 'Tudor' character, although they were built in the 1830s and 1840s. They are 2 storey in height, built in stone and slate and have mullioned windows, dramatic brick chimney stacks and white rail fences and hedges. The buildings are separated by yew trees, which soften the character of this

part of the settlement. In contrast, buildings to the east are more informally laid out, and designs are simpler and more traditional – 2 storey, stone and pantile buildings with pitched roofs, with the main ridge normally parallel to the road. Substantial chimneys rise at ridge height, and windows are vertically proportioned, with small panes and arched lintels. The character of this part of the Conservation Area depends greatly upon the contrast between the buildings on the northern side of the road and the high stone wall on the southern side which is given extra prominence by the dense planting behind it.

Bloxholm – June 1991

Bloxholm Conservation Area has an area of 15.9 hectares, and covers the entire settlement as well as the grounds to Bloxholm Hall. The Conservation Area has a very open character, since it contains few buildings, many of which are set back significantly from the edge of the highway. Buildings are generally 2 storey in height, and constructed in natural stone (coursed rubble), with pitched slate roofs with hipped gables or ornate barge boards. Chimney stacks rise within buildings to appear at ridge level. The churchyard and the grounds to Bloxholm Hall dominate the Conservation Area, and give it its distinctive character

Boothby Graffoe – December 1977

Boothby Graffoe Conservation Area has an area of 10.0 hectares, and covers the majority of the village. The character of the Conservation Area depends very heavily upon the presence of large numbers of mature trees, particularly at its northern end. These trees play a major role in blending the village into the landscape, filling gaps between buildings and adding interest and colour to views along the Area's streets. The majority of buildings are 2 storey in height, built in coursed rubble limestone, and are generally slightly set back from the pavement edge. Roadside boundaries are strongly defined by stone walls, and by hedges in outer parts of the settlement. Roofs are steeply pitched (between 40° and 45°), pantiled, have plain or parapetted verges, and chimney stacks at ridge level are typical. Windows have a strong vertical emphasis, and lintels are often detailed.

Branston – July 1979

Branston Conservation Area has an area of 46.9 hectares, and covers southern parts of the village around High Street, Church Road, Silver Street, Chapel Road and Chapel Lane, and also includes Branston Park. Buildings are predominantly built of coursed limestone, are 2 storey in height and, in many parts of the Conservation Area, are set directly at the roadside, tightly defining the curve of the streets. Even where buildings are set back from the edge of the highway, the road edge tends to be strongly defined by limestone walls. Roofs tend to be steeply pitched (at least 45°) and are generally covered in pantiles, although natural slate is used in parts of the Conservation Area. Most buildings have plain verged gables, and ridge lines tend to run parallel to the street. Windows are generally slightly recessed and have a vertical emphasis, and cills and lintels are often prominent. Trees are a very important element in the Conservation Area's character, particularly within Branston Park, and in more southern parts.

Brant Broughton – January 1973

Brant Broughton Conservation Area covers an area of 30.8 hectares, and covers the majority of the village. Buildings are typically 2 or 3 storey in height and are built in natural stone or russet/red brick. The placement of buildings in relation to the street varies greatly from area to area, and continuous building lines extending further than 60 metres are untypical of the Conservation Area. Nonetheless, the Area generally has a distinct sense of enclosure because, even where buildings are set back from the highway edge, the roadside boundary is usually defined by railings, walls (often in patterned bonded brickwork) or hedgerows. Roofs are pitched between 40° and 50° with

plain-verged gables, and main ridge-lines tend to run parallel to the street, often punctuated by solid chimney stacks. Windows have a vertical emphasis and are often recessed one brick's width from the face of the wall, with lintels picked out by brick detailing. Dormer windows are generally modest and are capped by ornate boarded gables. Throughout the Conservation Area, mature trees play a major role in defining road edges, punctuating the built form and framing views. They are of great importance to the Area's character.

Coleby – December 1977

Coleby Conservation Area has an area of 33.3 hectares, and covers almost the entire village, and also takes in parts of the grounds to Coleby Hall which are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Buildings are almost universally 2 storey in height, and built in natural stone with red clay pantiled roofs. In many parts of the Conservation Area, buildings are set on the edge of the highway, and this gives a sense of enclosure, gives strong definition to the curve of the roads, and frames views over the Cliff. Where buildings are set further back, the sense of enclosure is maintained by the use of stone walls along the front boundaries of properties. Roof verges are plain, and a variety of chimney stacks contribute to the diversity of the Area's character. Windows are generally slightly recessed, and almost universally have a strongly vertical emphasis.

Doddington – November 1986

Doddington Conservation Area has an area of 9.9 hectares, and covers almost the entire village, and also takes in parts of the grounds to Doddington Hall which are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The Hall and its outbuildings, together with the Church, form a unique group of outstanding quality which is fundamental to the Conservation Area's character. However, the Area's character is equally dependant upon the fine trees, hedges, traditional iron railings and wooden paling fences which establish a link between buildings as well as enclosing and drawing the village together. Buildings are generally well spaced, and constructed in orange/red brickwork and natural clay pantiles, plain tiles or slate. Roof verges are generally plain, and chimney stacks at ridge level are common, and an important element in the Area's character. Windows have a vertical emphasis.

Dunston – December 1977

Dunston Conservation Area has an area of 8.5 hectares, and covers central parts of the village around Front Street, Middle Street and Vicarage Lane. The Conservation Area contains a number of groups of trees that contribute greatly to its character, and mature trees are the visually dominant element in a number of streets. Buildings are generally of 2 storey construction (although their heights vary considerably) and are built in stone or red brick, with slate or clay pantile roofs. Gable ends are normally plain but brick detailing is sometimes used, and chimneys stacks with stepped brickwork are traditionally set on the ridge. Buildings are generally set at or close to the edge of the pavement and, where they are set back, the highway boundary is usually strongly defined by walls, hedges or fences. Windows generally have a vertical emphasis, and dormers are uncommon and always modest in scale.

Harmston – December 2007

Harmston Conservation Area has an area of 17.8 hectares, and covers the northern half of the village around Blacksmith Lane, School Lane, Chapel Lane, Church Lane and High Street, as well as an area of parkland to the west of the village itself. Three features primarily define the Conservation Area's character: the presence of large numbers of fine trees; the role of stone walls in defining the highway edge, containing views and linking buildings together; and the contrast in the way that traditional village buildings, set tightly onto the pavement edge are concentrated at the junctions of the lanes with High Street, with remaining development being set back from the street edge.

Buildings generally are 2 storey in height, built in stone or red brick, with pantile roofs, the ridges of which generally run parallel with the lanes. Gable ends have plain verge detail, many buildings have chimney stacks at ridge level, and dormer windows are very uncommon. Windows are vertically proportioned, lintels are either flat or formed from an arch of stone or brick, and deep, solid cills are also characteristic.

Heckington Village – August 1975

Heckington Village Conservation Area has an area of 24.9 hectares, and covers central and eastern parts of the village around High Street, Church Street, Eastgate, Cameron Street and Cowgate. In many parts of the Conservation Area, buildings are located at or near the pavement's edge, giving a strong sense of definition to the street and, even where buildings are set back, walls, railings and hedges often continue this definition and enclosure. Buildings are generally 2 storey in height and are predominantly built in red brick, with slate or pantile roofs. Roof ridge lines generally run parallel to the street, and gable end treatments are typically plain or parapetted. Windows are vertical in their proportions and dormer windows, where used, are small in scale. The Conservation Area contains a number of traditional shop fronts which contribute significantly to its character, and throughout, trees contribute much to the overall character and appearance of the Area.

Heckington Station – January 1979

Heckington Station Conservation Area has an area of 1.2 hectares, and covers a group of dwellings and commercial buildings grouped around the point at which the railway crosses Station Road/Hale Road. Buildings vary in height from 1 to 3 storey, the majority have a commercial/railway character, and all are built in red brick, with slate roofs. The area to the south of the level crossing is dominated by a windmill and its yard and single-storey outbuildings, and generally has an enclosed and strongly commercial character, with non-domestic buildings located at the pavement edge. In contrast, buildings to the north are slightly set back from the highway edge, and the greater presence of domestic buildings, trees, hedges and grass verges contributes to a softer and more open character.

Heighington – September 2007

Heighington Conservation Area has an area of 17.5 hectares, and covers the area around High Street, Potterhanworth Road, Chapel Lane, Station Road, Back Lane, and Mill Lane. The Conservation Area contains an intricate network of lanes, with the highway edge normally strongly defined either by buildings at the pavement edge, or stone walls, railings or hedges where buildings are set back. Buildings are predominantly 2 storey in height, built in natural stone (although red brick is also common), and window openings have a vertical emphasis. Roofs are steeply pitched, covered in pantiles or slate, and ridge lines generally run parallel to the street. Roof verges are generally plain and chimney stacks at ridge level are common. Mature trees in groups or singly make a very positive contribution to the Area's character.

Helpringham – December 1977

Helpringham Conservation Area has an area of 9.6 hectares, and covers central parts of the village around High Street and George Street. Buildings are predominantly 2 storey and built in orange/red or brown/red brick, and the majority are situated on or near the edge of the street. Buildings around The Green are colour-washed in crisp, warm colours. Roofs are pitched, covered in slate or clay pantiles, and gable ends have plain verges. Chimney stacks are important in giving interest to the roofscape, and windows have a distinct vertical emphasis. Trees add life and interest to many parts of the Conservation Area.

Kelby – June 1991

Kelby Conservation Area has an area of 2.5 hectares, and covers the majority of the settlement. Buildings are predominantly stone-built, and 1 or 2 storey in height, with gabled roofs pitched at 35° or above, covered with natural slates or clay pantiles. Roof verges are generally plain or parapetted, and most domestic buildings have substantial chimney stacks emerging at ridge level. Windows are typically divided with vertically proportioned panes. Coursed stone walls or hedgerows define roadsides, and several small groups of trees generally enhance the Conservation Area's character.

Leadenham – December 1977

Leadenham Conservation Area has an area of 25.7 hectares, and many important groups of trees, and covers almost the entire village. Natural stone is the predominant material, although the area between High Street and Back Lane contains many red brick buildings. Northern parts of High Street are characterised by large buildings set back from the street edge, interspersed with fine mature trees, whilst walls define the curving form of the street. Further south, High Street becomes more intensively developed with terraces linked by walling, set on, or close to, the pavement edge. Main Street has a more open character, with individual buildings being particularly prominent. Throughout, buildings are generally 2 storey in height, roofs are pitched between 40° and 50°, roof verges are generally plain, and chimney stacks generally rise within buildings to appear at ridge level. Dormer windows are not characteristic of the Conservation Area, whilst windows have a clear vertical emphasis and are generally slightly recessed from walls, and solid doors are characteristic. Trees play a particularly important role in defining the character of the Conservation Area.

Martin – September 1979

Martin Conservation Area has an area of 5.2 hectares, and covers central parts of the village alongside High Street. The curving form of High Street is emphasised by the setting of the majority of buildings on the highway edge, or the use of walls, trees, hedges and railings to define the road's limits. However, the highway is wide and, as a consequence, the elevations of individual buildings and groups of buildings have special significance. The principle buildings are almost universally 2 storey in height, often with single-storey ancillary buildings. Ridge lines run parallel to the street, and roofs have plain verges on gable ends with chimney stacks at ridge level also very common. Red or brown brick, and dark grey slate or red clay pantiles are the predominant building materials, and windows have a pronounced vertical emphasis.

Metheringham – July 1976

Metheringham Conservation Area has an area of 17.0 hectares, and covers the centre of the village around High Street, Middle Street and Drury Street, and also takes in part of the grounds to the Manor House. In most parts of the Conservation Area, the shapes of the streets are strongly defined by buildings, walls, and hedges on the pavement's edge, or by trees which give an avenue effect. Buildings are generally 2 storey in height, and built in stone (or more rarely red brick) with pitched pantile or slate roofs. Gable ends are plain, and windows have a pronounced vertical emphasis.

Navenby – October 1975

Navenby Conservation Area has an area of 27.4 hectares, and covers western parts of the village. Buildings are generally two, or more rarely three, storeys in height and are built in stone or russet red brick. Roofs are pitched either at 35-40° or 50-60° and natural slates or red pantiles are typical. Substantial, ridge-level chimney stacks are prominent features and verges are generally plain. Windows are strongly vertical in appearance and flat or arched lintels are frequently picked out by brick detailing. Where dormer windows are used, they are generally modest and are capped by boarded gables. In many parts of the Conservation Area, buildings are located on the highway

edge, which gives a pleasant sense of enclosure. Even where buildings are set back from the pavement edge, walls, hedges and railings commonly give a strong definition to the highway edge. Although Navenby Conservation Area has poorer tree cover than many of the Cliff villages, its character nonetheless benefits greatly from mature trees.

Newton – November 1986

Newton Conservation Area covers 13.6 hectares, and includes the entire village. The Conservation Area's character is open, with 2 storey stone buildings separated one from another by significantly sized gardens or other undeveloped areas. Some buildings are sited close to the roadside and others are set well back, but the road edge is generally delineated by stone walls or hedgerows. Buildings generally have steeply pitched (more than 40°) red pantile roofs with plain or parapetted eaves, and chimney stacks set on the ridge are a common feature. Windows are typically divided with small vertical panes. Mature trees make a very valuable contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Nocton – July 2008

Nocton Conservation Area covers 15.3 hectares, and covers most of the village as well as parts of the grounds to Nocton Hall. The Conservation Area generally has an open character (although in some parts, buildings are massed together to form distinctive, large groups), with 2 storey, stone buildings set back from the pavement edge and separated from one another by significant garden or other undeveloped areas. Hedges or stone walls are commonly used to define the pavement edge, and these have the effect of providing a visual link between buildings. Buildings generally have steeply pitched, pantile roofs with plain or parapet verges and windows that have a vertical emphasis. Trees are essential to the character of the Conservation Area.

North Rauceby – August 1975

North Rauceby Conservation Area covers 4.4 hectares, and takes in most of the village. The Conservation Area has an open character, with buildings typically set back from the highway edge. Hedging and stone walls define plot boundaries. Buildings are typically 2 storey in height and constructed of natural stone. Roofs are typically steeply pitched, with square, solid chimney stacks at ridge height. Some buildings have ornate barge boards, but plain or parapet verges are the norm, and narrow, pitched roofed dormers are relatively common. Windows generally have a clear vertical emphasis, and most frames are recessed and have a solid stone cill. Substantial groups of trees within the Conservation Area play a very important role in establishing its attractive character.

North Scarle – June 1991

North Scarle Conservation Area covers 3.3 hectares, and covers southern parts of the village only, around High Street. Buildings are almost universally 2 storey in height and located directly at the edge of the public highway, and the majority are built of red brick (with the exception of the area to the south of the Church where stone is the predominant building material). Roofs are pantiled or slated, and are steeply pitched (between 40° and 45°). Verges are plain or parapetted, and ridge lines are generally parallel to the street, with the exception of buildings in the central section of the western side of the Conservation Area. Windows have a clear vertical emphasis, and arched brick lintels are a characteristic feature. Trees are relatively uncommon but, where they exist, they contribute much to the Conservation Area's character.

Osournby – October 1975

Osournby Conservation Area covers 11.9 hectares, and includes southern and western parts of the village around High Street, West Street and North Street. The different parts of the Conservation Area have varying characters but, for the most part, buildings are 2 storey in height, and streets generally have strong definition thanks to the linking of buildings as terraces or by outbuildings and walls. Eastern parts of High Street have wide verges, whilst western parts open into a square, but in both sections the openness of the street gives special prominence to building elevations. Trees give West and North Street a softer character. Throughout the Conservation Area, pitched roofs with plain or parapet verges are the norm, with main ridge lines running parallel to the street. Window frames are generally recessed, and windows have a strong vertical emphasis. Traditional shop fronts are important, with pilasters and fascias forming a clear frame to shop windows.

Potterhanworth – February 1978

Potterhanworth Conservation Area covers 9 hectares, and covers the parts of the village around Barff Road, Main Road, Nocton Road, Middle Street and Cross Street. Around the Village Green and around the junction of Station Road with Main Road, buildings are generally in stone with slate or pantiled roofs, whereas elsewhere in the Conservation Area, red brick and slate or pantiles dominate. Throughout, buildings are generally 2 storey in height and, even where buildings are set back from the highway edge, hedges, walls and tree planting maintain the definition of the street. Gable ends are plain, and windows have a pronounced vertical emphasis. Trees are a vital component of the Conservation Area's character.

Rauceby Hospital – November 1992

Rauceby Hospital Conservation Area has an area of 11.1 hectares, covers land which is included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and contains a number of hospital and ancillary buildings. The original hospital buildings are constructed of red brick with grey slate roofs, and represent an example of Victorian institutional architecture. They are predominantly 2 storey in height, large in scale, and are strongly symmetrical. The southern elevation is arranged as a crescent, whilst the northern elevation is dominated by the central administration block, which provides a strong focal point. The Conservation Area's special quality depends upon the scale and grouping of the hospital buildings, the associated formal landscaping, and mature woodland.

Scopwick – December 1979

Scopwick Conservation Area covers an area of 8.9 hectares, and covers central and southern parts of the village. Buildings are predominantly stone-built, 2 storey in height and are set back slightly from Main Street and from Brookside. Single storey ancillary buildings are a common feature of the Conservation Area and are often linked to the main (2 storey) building, appearing as a single entity. The edges of the highways are generally well defined by hedges or stone walls, but nonetheless, the Conservation Area has a very open character thanks to the undeveloped space surrounding the beck at its centre. This openness gives building elevations particular prominence. Roofs are typically pantiled and steeply pitched, with plain verges and chimneys above their gable ends. Windows are generally recessed a few centimetres from the building's elevation, and typically have small panes and a vertical emphasis.

Sleaford No.1 – January 1973, Sleaford No.2 – December 1977, and Sleaford Extension – November 1995

Sleaford Conservation Area covers an area of 44.7 hectares, and takes in the town's historic core and land alongside the River Slea. The Area is generally densely-developed, with significant areas of open land only at its eastern and western extremities (playing fields and Sleaford Castle at the west, and extensive pasture land at the east). Buildings are generally located on the pavement edge, giving a strong sense of enclosure to most parts of the Area, and sharply defining the shape of the Area's highways. Buildings are generally two or three storeys in height, and most are built in red brick (although stone is common in parts – most notably in Northgate and the Market Place), with slate or pantile roofs. Buildings generally run with ridgelines parallel to the street, and gable ends are usually finished with plain verges. Windows are almost universally vertical in emphasis, and many parts of the Area feature simple traditional shopfronts with a strong relationship between ground and upper floors. The Conservation Area generally contains few trees but, where they are present, trees contribute greatly to the Area's character.

South Rauceby – August 1975

South Rauceby Conservation Area covers an area of 8.8 hectares, and includes south-western parts of the grounds to Rauceby Hall which are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The Conservation Area takes in only northern parts of the village, around Main Street and Thorpe Drove. Development generally has a direct frontage to the highway, but most buildings are set back from the highway edge which is defined by stone walls. Buildings are typically 2 storey in height and constructed of natural stone. Roofs are typically steeply pitched, with the main ridge parallel to the street, and with square, solid chimney stacks at ridge height. Some buildings have ornate barge boards, but plain or parapet verges are the norm, and narrow, pitched roofed dormers are relatively common. Windows generally have a clear vertical emphasis, and frames are generally recessed and have a solid stone cill. Trees play a very important role in establishing the attractive character of the Conservation Area, particularly at its eastern end.

Waddington – August 1975

Waddington Conservation Area covers an area of 15.5 hectares, and takes in the village's historic core around Hill Top and High Street. Two storey stone buildings are characteristic of the Conservation Area which, in many parts, are set at or close to the edge of the public highway. Even in those locations where buildings are typically set back from the edge of the street, a strong sense of enclosure is achieved by stone walling on the pavement edge. Trees contribute further to this sense of enclosure and, in more open parts of the Conservation Area, mature trees are visually very important. Red clay pantiled roofs, with ridges that run parallel to the street are characteristic, as are windows with a strong vertical emphasis.

Washingborough – August 1975

Washingborough Conservation Area covers an area of 18.4 hectares, and takes in the village's historic core around Main Road, High Street, Church Hill, Manor Road and Oak Hill. Buildings are 1 or 2 storey in height, and stone is the characteristic building material. Much of the Conservation Area has a feeling of tight enclosure, thanks to the location of many buildings at, or close to, the edge of the public highway. In those locations where buildings are set back from the road edge, the highway edge is often strongly defined by hedges or walls. Mature trees also play a vital role in defining the character of many parts of the Conservation Area. Pantiled, pitched roofs with plain gable ends are characteristic, with ridge lines generally running parallel to the street. Windows generally have a vertical emphasis.

Welbourn – December 1977

Welbourn Conservation Area covers an area of 26.2 hectares, and takes in the majority of the village. The different parts of the Conservation Area have varying characters but, for the most part, buildings are 1 or 2 storey in height (although 3 storey buildings occur in parts) and are constructed in stone or orange/red brick. Highway boundaries are defined by stone or orange/red brick walls or by hedges, and the Conservation Area contains many important groups of trees. Gabled roofs (typically pitched at or above 45°) with plain verges are the norm, and clay pantiles are the predominant roofing material, although slates and red pantiles occur in some parts of the Conservation Area. Ridge lines are either parallel to, or at 90° to the highway, with chimney stacks usually at ridge level. Modestly-sized dormer windows are common, with monopitched sloping roofs, and the vertical members of window frames are typically closer than horizontal members.

Wellingore (redesignated) – January 1980

Wellingore Conservation Area covers an area of 22.1 hectares, and takes in approximately half of the village's total area, centred upon the historic core where West Street, Barnes Lane, Vicarage Lane, High Street and Hall Street join with Cliff Road. Buildings are predominantly stone-built, 2 storey (including single storey buildings with dormers) and are sited on, or close to, the edge of the public highway. High stone walls link buildings together and further emphasise the street edge. Tree planting behind the walls helps to fill the gaps between buildings and adds interest and colour to the Conservation Area. Roofs are steeply pitched, are typically in red clay pantiles, and ridge lines are often straddled by large chimney stacks. Ridge lines generally run parallel to the highway. Roof verges and eaves are plain, and windows are timber framed and have a vertical emphasis.

Wilsford – December 2006

Wilsford Conservation Area covers an area of 11.2 hectares, and takes in north-eastern parts of the village, alongside Main Street. Buildings are predominantly stone-built, 2 storey, and are sited on, or close to, the edge of Main Street, particularly in western parts of the Conservation Area. Roadside walls also define the curving line of Main Street. Trees and hedges give eastern parts of the Conservation Area a rich and distinctive character. Roofs are steeply pitched (typically more than 40°), are characteristically pantiled, with chimney stacks rising within the building and emerging at ridge level. Gable ends usually have plain verges, although ornate brickwork is sometimes used, and gable ends, roofs and chimneys are given particular significance due to the Conservation Area's sloping site. Windows generally have a vertical emphasis, and are usually recessed from the face of the building.

Appendix 10 - Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest

Coleby Hall Grade II Registered 24th June 1985	18th century landscaped park and woodland surrounding a 17th and 18th century house. To the east of the house is an area of open land surrounded by woodland, and to the west is an area of parkland with a pool. The estate also contains two temples, and a gateway in the style of a 'ruined' Roman arch (all dating from the 18th Century).
Culverthorpe Hall Grade II Registered 24th June 1985	Park with woodland and formal features, laid out from the 17th century onwards. To the north of the Hall are a terrace, a formal garden and an area of parkland containing scattered trees, a small pool, and an icehouse. Eastern parts of the estate are wooded, whilst the southern parkland is more open, and contains an extensive fishpond.
Doddington Hall Grade II* Registered 24th June 1985	Enclosed gardens dating from the 19th and 20th century, on the site of formal gardens dating back to the 17th and 18th century. Areas to the east, north and west of the Hall are formally laid out: to the west, an enclosed knot garden and terrace; to the east, a courtyard and gatehouse; and to the north, a walled kitchen garden and a herb garden. Beyond the enclosed West Garden is an avenue of yews, a ha-ha, and an avenue of limes. North-western parts of the estate are heavily planted with ornamental and unusual trees and shrubs.
Rauceby Hall Grade II Registered 24th June 1985	Landscaped park with some 19th century formal features, surrounding a 19th century house. The estate is mostly open ground containing scattered trees, with most boundaries defined by belts of trees. To the east of the Hall are a formal garden and a sizeable lake. To the north is a copse containing an icehouse, and to the south-east is a walled kitchen garden.
Rauceby Hospital Grade II Registered 27th June 2000	The grounds to the Rauceby Hospital designed in the late 19th century. Immediately adjacent to the hospital buildings themselves are airing courts of a formal design (lawn flanked by mature trees and flowering shrubs), and much of the remainder of the estate is parkland laid to pasture or lawns and bordered by woodland belts. The grounds also contain many peripheral buildings such as staff residences, a chapel, lodges, an orchard and farm buildings.