

New Local Plan for Harborough District Scoping Consultation March 2013

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Section 1:

Introduction

On 3 December 2012, the Council resolved to prepare a new Local Plan for Harborough District. The new Local Plan will incorporate a focused review of the Harborough Core Strategy (adopted in November 2011) and will also identify key areas of land for development. The refreshed Core Strategy and the strategic allocations will be prepared, consulted upon and used as a single document and will be known as the new Local Plan for Harborough District. An Allocations Plan will no longer be prepared. Further details are set out below and your views and comments on the proposed contents of the new Local Plan are invited at this stage.

Background

The Harborough Core Strategy was adopted in 2011. However, since then a number of important changes have been introduced by the Government in respect of local planning policy, including:

- The abolition of the majority of national Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements and their replacement by the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012.
- The announcement of the forthcoming abolition of Regional Strategies (previously known as Regional Spatial Strategies), which provided the region-wide basis for the preparation of local planning policy and identified the number of houses to be provided by each local planning authority within the region.
- The introduction of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the emphasis upon local planning as a means of meeting development needs in a flexible and enabling rather than restrictive manner.
- The Localism Act and the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).
- The opportunity to explore the possibility of introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- The abolition of the previous Local Development Framework system and its replacement with a simpler system of Local Plans.

The Council has undertaken an assessment of the extent to which the Core Strategy conforms to the latest national planning policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (subsequently referred to as 'the Framework'). The assessment identified a number of Core Strategy policies

which do not fully conform to the Framework and some areas of policy set out in the Framework which are not reflected in the Core Strategy.

A number of the areas of non-conformity are relatively minor. However, the Core Strategy could be seen to not fully conform to the Framework in relation to housing numbers. This is because the housing numbers set out in the Core Strategy are taken from the 2009 East Midlands Regional Strategy, rather than more up-to-date evidence of housing need across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA). Harborough has traditionally experienced high demand for new housing and a buoyant housing market has attracted significant interest from housing developers. Further evidence of housing requirements is being collected and will be used to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan. Further details are set out in section 3.

Purpose and format of the new Local Plan

Once adopted, the new Local Plan will provide a robust and up-to-date policy framework to guide future development within the District, which is fully compliant with the Framework.

Specifically, the new Local Plan for Harborough will:

- Refresh and update the Harborough Core Strategy. The Vision, Strategic Objectives, settlement hierarchy and overall structure of the document are expected to remain unchanged;
- Replace both the Harborough Core Strategy (adopted November 2011) and the remaining saved policies of the Harborough District Local Plan (adopted April 2001). An Allocations Plan will no longer be prepared;
- Roll forward the end date of the Core Strategy from 2028 to 2031;
- Include strategic allocations of land for residential, employment, retail, leisure and other land uses to meet strategic development requirements;
- Identify the boundaries of strategic greenspace;
- Ensure full compliance with the Framework;
- Ensure a continuous supply of housing land throughout the plan period through the inclusion of a phasing policy;
- Provide a high level policy on infrastructure costs, which may be supported by a Community Infrastructure Levy Infrastructure Schedule;
- Provide a policy link to support the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP);

- Reflect joint working with all organisations and bodies relevant to cross boundary planning matters of common interest;
- Be fully compliant with the new guidance and Regulations guiding the preparation of Local Plans.

The new Local Plan will be streamlined and concise, with a strong strategic focus. It will not include the level of detail and breadth of policies of the 2001 Local Plan. However, it will have at its core the same principles of sustainability and protection of Harborough District which underpin the Core Strategy and 2001 Local Plan.

However, these objectives will be achieved in a slightly different way using a more flexible policy approach including criteria-based policies to assess planning applications. This replaces the traditional approach of drawing lines on plans to identify areas for development and areas of development constraint. Criteria-based policies include a series of tests, which could, for example relate to the ability of the local highway network to accommodate additional traffic and the need to preserve undeveloped areas which are significant to the character or appearance of a settlement. Please see section 3 of this document for further details of the new policy approaches proposed for the new Local Plan.

The new Local Plan is expected to carry forward a similar format to the structure of the Core Strategy, with the addition of strategic allocations. It will include two parts: the first part will be a suite of District-wide strategic delivery policies; the second being place-based policies, including strategic allocations. The exact contents and appropriate scale of sites for allocation is still to be determined, following the current consultation. Please see section 2 of this document for a full breakdown of the proposed format of the new Local Plan.

Purpose of the current consultation and preparation timetable

The first stage in preparing the new Local Plan is to 'scope' the plan. This essentially means identifying the sort of policies that are needed within the plan in order to guide the future development of the District. Equally important will be to identify what sort of policies are no longer needed for the District. The purpose of this current consultation is to seek the views of interested parties on the proposed contents of the new Local Plan (set out in sections 2 and 3 of this document). These views will be used to finalise the scope of the Plan and to inform the identification of any further evidence requirements. Any additional evidence needed will be sought and used to inform the plan preparation stage, prior to public pre-submission consultation on a draft Plan in autumn 2013. This draft Plan is expected to be submitted to the Secretary of State in spring 2014 and subject to an Examination in Public before it is adopted in September 2014.

Timetable for the preparation of the new Local Plan for Harborough District

Year	2013												2014								
Key Stages:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Local Plan Scoping Consultation																					
SDA Masterplan Consultation																					
Pre-submission Consultation																					
Submission to Secretary of State																					
Examination																					
Adoption																					

Structure of the scoping consultation document

Following the brief introduction, this document contains two main sections: Section 2 provides an overview of the contents of the new Local Plan for Harborough District. Section 3 explores the proposed new policies and the main policy areas where change is proposed in more detail, outlining the reasons for the proposed changes and seeking views on the proposed approach.

Section 2: Overview of the Proposed Contents of the new Local Plan for Harborough District

This section provides an overview of the proposed contents of the new Local Plan for Harborough District. Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3.

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
<u>Chapter 1: Introduction</u>	Minor wording amendments and updating required
<u>Chapter 2: Spatial Portrait of Harborough</u>	Minor wording amendments and updating required
<u>Chapter 3: Vision and Objectives</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Community Strategy - Vision and Themes 	The Vision is expected to be taken forward into the new Local Plan. However, this is an opportunity to revisit and refresh the Vision, if necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Objectives 	The Strategic Objectives are expected to be taken forward into the new Local Plan. However, this is an opportunity to revisit and refresh the Strategic Objectives, if necessary.
<u>Chapter 4: Spatial Strategy for Harborough</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS1: Spatial Strategy 	The Spatial Strategy will be amended to include reference to 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development' in order to comply with the Framework and will need to be amended to reflect other policy changes.

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
Chapter 5: Delivery Policies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS2: Delivering New Housing 	<p>This policy will be amended to incorporate: the revised total housing requirements to 2031; the distribution of total housing requirements between sustainable settlements; phasing across the plan period; and the delivery of development through Neighbourhood Development Plans. The policy will be based upon the current settlement hierarchy, which seeks to direct development to the most sustainable settlements, whilst addressing local need.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS3: Delivering Housing Choice and Affordability 	<p>The impact of the current policy is being monitored, with amendments being made to the policy, if necessary.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Policy: Refreshing the approach to Limits to Development 	<p>The proposed new criteria-based policy would be used for determining planning applications for new housing and other developments on non-allocated sites. This policy should ensure that development only takes place on sustainable and suitable sites. This new policy will conform to the spatial strategy for Harborough as set out in Policy CS1. The intention is that this new policy will replace saved Local Plan policy HS8: Limits to Development and the associated identified Limits to Development.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS4: Providing for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs 	<p>This policy will be amended to provide a 5 year supply of specific, deliverable sites against locally set targets and develop</p>

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
	sites/broad locations for 6-10 years and where possible 11-15 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS5: Providing Sustainable Transport 	Minor wording amendments and updating required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS6: Improving Town Centres and Retailing 	This will be amended to include an over-arching policy which provides for the identification of primary and secondary retail shopping areas in each of the retail centres in the relevant place-based policies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS7: Enabling Employment and Business Development 	This will be amended to identify specific employment sites to be safeguarded as Key Employment Areas and the principle of protecting them from changes of use which may limit future business development, with more detail being set out in the relevant place-based policies. In relation to the rural economy CS7f will be amended to reflect para 28 of the Framework (supporting a prosperous rural economy).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS8: Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure 	This will be amended to include an over-arching part of the policy which provides for Areas of Separation and Green Wedges, which will be identified in detail in the relevant place-based policies. A new section will be inserted to identify Local Green Spaces which meet criteria in the Framework which would not otherwise be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans. (Further details are set out in the section below entitled ' Refreshing the approach to Important Open

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
	Land). Reference will also be made to mapped biodiversity and geodiversity assets to support section d) of the existing policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS9: Addressing Climate Change 	Minor wording amendments and updating required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS10: Addressing Flood Risk 	Minor wording amendments and updating required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS11: Promoting Design and Built Heritage 	This will be amended to include additional detail to assist in the determination of planning applications for housing and other development on open and undeveloped areas of land within settlements. It is proposed that the additional detail added to this policy will replace the current Local Plan Policy HS9: Important Open Land and the Important Open Land designations . Additional minor wording amendments and updating required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Policy: Protecting and Improving Local Services and Facilities 	This will be a new comprehensive and cohesive policy aimed at the protection and improvement of services across the District , reflecting the Framework requirement to plan positively for the provision of community services and facilities, including broadband and facilities for burial and cremation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Policy: Delivery of Development through Neighbourhood Development Plans 	This new policy will explain the complementary relationship between the new Local Plan and future Neighbourhood Development Plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS12: Delivering Development and Supporting 	This policy will be updated to reflect on-going work on the

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
Infrastructure	emerging Community Infrastructure Levy
Chapter 6: Policies for Places	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS13: Market Harborough 	<p>This policy will be amended to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the allocation of strategic housing, employment and other sites (if considered suitable); strategic policies for the Strategic Development Area reflecting the evidence contained in the SDA Master Plan; identification of the boundaries of the town centre and within that primary and secondary retail frontages; identification of existing employment sites to be safeguarded as Key Employment Areas; the purpose and identification of the exact boundary of the Area of Separation between Great Bowden and Market Harborough <p>Liaison with Lubenham Parish Council will be needed to ensure complementary policy coverage of the above topics between the new Local Plan for Harborough and the Lubenham Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy CS14: Lutterworth 	<p>This policy will be amended to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the allocation of strategic housing, employment and other sites (if considered suitable); the purpose of and identification of the exact boundaries

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
	<p>of the Areas of Separation between Lutterworth, Bitteswell and Magna Park;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of the boundary of the town centre and within that primary and secondary retail frontages; and • identification of existing employment sites to be safeguarded as Key Employment Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS15: Leicester Principal Urban Area 	<p>This policy will be amended to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the allocation of strategic housing and other sites (if considered suitable); and • the purpose of and identification of the exact boundaries of the Leicester /Scraptoft and Thurnby / Leicester / Oadby Green Wedges and Area of Separation to the East of Station Lane and South of Covert Lane.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS16: Broughton Astley 	<p>Liaison with the Parish Council will be necessary to ensure complementary policy coverage of the following topics between the new Local Plan and the Broughton Astley Neighbourhood Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the allocation of strategic housing, employment and other sites (if considered suitable); • the purpose of and identification of the exact boundaries of the Area of Separation between Broughton Astley and Sutton in the Elms; • identification of the boundary of the retail centre and

<u>Harborough Core Strategy Chapter and Policy</u>	<u>Proposed changes to policy in the new Local Plan</u> (Proposed main changes to the Core Strategy are shown in bold and discussed in more detail in Section 3)
	<p>within that primary and secondary retail frontages, if necessary; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of existing employment sites to be safeguarded as Key Employment Areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy CS17: Countryside, Rural Centres and Rural Villages 	<p>This will be amended to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of existing employment sites to be safeguarded as Key Employment Areas in Rural Centres and to ensure compliance with Framework paragraphs 28 (supporting a prosperous rural economy) and 55 (new isolated homes in the countryside) and to reflect changes in delivery policies (CS2-11); and • a specific policy framework for Magna Park , Lutterworth and Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground in view of their significance and location within the countryside
Chapter 7: Managing and Monitoring the Strategy	Minor wording amendments and updating required

Section 3: Proposed Main Policy Changes

This section sets out the main changes to the Council's policy approach proposed for the new Local Plan. The intended outcomes of each new or updated policy are set out, together with the proposed new approach. Questions are included throughout the section and your views on the proposed approach are welcomed.

Housing Requirements and Distribution across the District

Intended policy outcomes:

- To meet identified need for new market and affordable housing in the District as part of meeting housing need in the Leicester and Leicestershire housing market area where justified and appropriate;
- To provide a range of housing types and tenures across the District to meet up to date evidence of the population's needs;
- To identify the most appropriate distribution of the total housing requirement between the sustainable settlements across the District;
- To ensure that new housing development is located in the most sustainable locations in terms of access to services and facilities.

Approach:

The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that the Local Plan should be based on an up to date, objective assessment of housing need across the local Housing Market Area; in Harborough's case this is Leicester and Leicestershire. The Core Strategy's housing requirement is taken from the East Midlands Regional Strategy, but this is due to be revoked shortly. Authorities across Leicester and Leicestershire commissioned a study of housing requirements to 2031 which was published in September 2011 as a basis for local planning in the absence of the Regional Strategy.

The proposal is therefore for the Plan to update the District's housing requirement figure set out in Core Strategy Policy CS 2: Delivering New Housing, taking into account 2011 Census data where available and the most recent information relating to household formation rates, economic growth projections, migration trends and population projections.

As part of the process of understanding the housing needs of the District, a local Housing Requirements Study has been commissioned and will be published shortly. Further work is planned with authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire to review housing needs jointly across the Housing Market Area. This will be in the form of a revised Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Leicester and Leicestershire.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Requirements Study suggests that future housing requirements may exceed the minimum of 350 dwellings per annum currently planned for in the Core Strategy. The local study has been

commissioned to clarify and update this information and will need to be combined with work at the Leicester and Leicestershire level and other evidence to inform the level of housing provision in the Plan.

Given that the Plan looks to 2031 and that an increase in the annual housing requirement figure is likely, the new Local Plan will need to address the distribution of new housing between settlements. Whilst the Core Strategy identifies a strategy able to accommodate 350 dwellings per annum to 2028, further work will need to be carried out to establish the most appropriate distribution strategy for accommodating any increase in housing numbers. Furthermore the upcoming revocation of the Regional Strategy will result in greater flexibility for the new Local Plan to identify where homes are to be provided across the District. This flexibility will however need to be balanced against the capacity of settlements to accommodate additional housing.

Through the 'Call for Sites' which took place in March 2012, the Council is aware of the majority of possible development sites across the District and these have been assessed using the Site Assessment Methodology ([sites are listed here](#)). The findings of this assessment will be combined with an update of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (including an opportunity to put forward additional sites) in late spring and the latest information regarding the capacity of local infrastructure, services and facilities to give a complete picture as to the capacity of settlements to accommodate any additional development. This will help to inform housing distribution options from which the most appropriate strategy will be selected.

The update to the housing requirements policy will ensure that the Council is meeting objectively assessed housing needs and that development takes place in the most sustainable locations. It will represent a robust and defensible approach once the Regional Strategy is revoked and will ensure that strategic allocations are based on the most up to date information on housing need.

Q1. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q1a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Refreshing the approach to Limits to Development

Intended policy outcomes:

- To direct development to the most appropriate locations;
- To ensure that a sufficient amount of development land is available to meet the needs of the District;
- To protect and enhance settlement character;
- To ensure that the scale of new development is appropriate and proportionate to the existing settlement;
- To protect the most sensitive countryside;
- To prepare an up-to-date, flexible and National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) compliant policy.

Approach:

The proposal is to add a new policy into the new Local Plan setting out how applications for development on non-allocated sites will be determined.

Harborough's current Limits to Development were identified and consulted upon during the 1990's, before finally being adopted in the Harborough Local Plan in 2001. They formed part of a strategy which involved allocating sufficient land to meet all the District's housing and employment requirements, as set out within the Structure Plan. Since the adoption of the 2001 Local Plan, most of the sites allocated for housing have been developed. However, the limits to development have not been reviewed since 2001 and are now becoming increasingly out of date. Reviewing the limits wholeheartedly is not practicable, and would not safeguard them against becoming increasingly outdated again.

Furthermore, preventing the development of sites beyond the Limits to Development increases development pressure upon sites within the Limits to Development. This can have some unfortunate results, including the demolition of large houses within Limits to Development and the re-development of their gardens for small estates of new housing, which do not always accord with the character of the surrounding area.

It is proposed to meet the District's housing requirement by allocating sites of strategic importance (which are capable of accommodating a minimum of 50 dwellings) and setting criteria-based policy to manage the delivery of the remaining housing requirement. This means that it will no longer be possible to draw a line around all of the allocated sites and existing built up area. As such, a new approach is needed to allow for a more flexible response to applications to develop sites on the edges of our settlements.

A new approach is suggested, which provides for greater flexibility in interpretation and implementation, to ensure the development of the most suitable sites, rather than simply placing a restrictive ring around the edge of settlements. The proposed new criteria-based policy would be used for determining planning applications for new housing and other developments on

non-allocated sites on the edge of settlements. This policy should ensure that development only takes place on sustainable and suitable sites. This new policy will conform to the spatial strategy for Harborough as set out in Policy CS1 and would help to deliver the objectively assessed housing requirement for the District set out in CS2. The intention is to identify a housing target for each sustainable settlement in the District based upon evidence of:

- housing need;
- the ability of existing and proposed services, facilities and infrastructure to accommodate new development; and
- the availability of suitable and deliverable sites.

Housing targets would be identified for all sustainable settlements, defined as those which meet the criteria for Selected Rural Villages (as set out in CS17) and above in the settlement hierarchy. The settlement housing target would be expressed as a minimum number of houses to be developed in and adjacent to the relevant settlement. This settlement housing target would be an important consideration in the determination of planning applications and as such, is suggested as a policy criteria. The intention is that this new policy will replace saved Local Plan policy HS8: Limits to Development.

The policy would focus upon the characteristics of the site, rather than on the details of the proposed development itself. As such, the criteria will relate to the suitability and sustainability of the site in relation to its settlement. The details of the proposal, in terms of its design, layout and type will be considered through other policies, principally CS11: Promoting Design and Built Heritage (as amended through the new Local Plan). The policy would support development where it enhances the sustainability of settlements and does not harm the open character of the countryside, provided that development meets a number of criteria. These criteria will need to be very carefully prepared with input and advice from Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the District. Further accompanying text would refer to evidence sources to support the criteria (such as the suite of Landscape Character Assessments which have been completed for the District). Cross referencing between policies would ensure that any sites within a Green Wedge or Area of Separation are considered in terms of the requirements of the relevant policies.

The following draft criteria provide examples of the proposed new policy's likely requirements for development proposals on the edge of settlements:

- to be in conformity with the spatial strategy for Harborough District (Policy CS1); and
- to relate to one of the following settlements: Market Harborough, Lutterworth; Broughton Astley; Thurnby, Bushby, Scraftoft; Rural Centre (as set out within Policy CS17); or a settlement which fulfils the requirements of a Selected Rural Village (as set out within Policy CS17); and
- to help meet the identified housing target for the settlement. Where development would result in the number of completions plus

outstanding permissions exceeding the identified target, regard will be given to:

- i. the degree by which the requirement is exceeded;
 - ii. the likelihood of delivery of the outstanding permissions;
 - iii. evidence of community support;
 - iv. the benefits arising from the development;
- to be adjacent to the existing built up area of the settlement; and
 - to respect the shape and form of the settlement in order to maintain its distinctive character; and
 - to be of an appropriate scale which reflects the settlement size, character and level of service provision; and
 - to respect natural boundaries such as trees, hedges, rivers and streams; and
 - to maintain important views and landmarks; and
 - not to result in the coalescence of settlements; and
 - to be sensitive to the landscape setting of the settlement; and
 - to retain and where possible, enhance the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area in which it is situated.

More specific guidance is expected to be provided for larger settlements in the place-based policies.

The result of this policy will be that development proposals which are in accordance with the overall spatial strategy and which respect settlement character will be approved and those which would inappropriately extend a settlement into open countryside would be refused planning permission.

Q2. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q2a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Phasing of Development

Intended policy outcomes:

- To ensure sustainable delivery of housing development up to 2031;
- To allow a managed approach to delivery of housing in the District over the plan period;
- To ensure that the rate and timing of housing delivery goes hand in hand with the provision of associated infrastructure in the District.

Approach:

It is proposed to introduce a phasing element into the housing delivery policy CS2 to ensure that there is a continuous supply of housing delivered throughout the plan period and to provide the right planning framework to deliver the strategic objectives for individual settlements and the District.

The District has traditionally enjoyed a relatively buoyant housing market with an associated high level of developer interest. Given that the new plan period will stretch to 2031, there is a need to ensure that the housing requirements specified in CS2 are translated into a continuous supply of house building throughout the plan period. It is proposed to allocate strategic sites for development for 10 years beyond the first 5 year housing land supply required by the National Planning Policy Framework. Beyond that time, broad locations for development in the longer term may be indicated on the key diagram.

It is intended to establish a phasing policy setting out:

- District housing completion targets in 5 year phases throughout the plan period; and
- An appropriate percentage split between allocated and windfall (or unallocated sites) within the 5 year targets which would be based on up to date land availability and deliverability information.

Within the phases, consideration will be given to identifying desirable percentage splits reflecting the hierarchy level (i.e. the amount of land to be developed within the relevant 5 year period for Market Harborough, the Key Centres and the Rural Centres) in order to achieve balanced delivery across the District over the Plan period.

Monitoring will be key to identifying delivery of the targets and any issues, for example, where housing planning permissions are not coming forward, thus jeopardising the delivery of the strategy. Consideration will be given to the prioritisation of housing sites within settlements so as to ensure that if a site fails to come forward as expected, another can be brought forward in its place using the criteria based development management policy. Conversely it should be stressed that this approach will be used to control the grant of planning permissions to the level of development in the phasing period and thus ensure that development is phased across the whole of the plan period.

Where vital infrastructure is needed as part of or due to the development of a site, phasing will be used to ensure its delivery at the appropriate stage. The approach to the Community Infrastructure Levy and Developer Contributions will be detailed in a Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Q3. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q3a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Identifying strategic allocations

Intended policy outcomes:

- To allocate suitable, deliverable and sustainable sites to meet the identified growth needs of the District;
- To identify those sites which are essential to the successful delivery of the spatial strategy and policies for places;
- To provide flexibility during the plan period, enabling sites of various size to come forward and be considered for development;
- To provide scope for appropriate development across the District.

Approach:

Strategic allocations of land will be made to identify significant areas of growth. Paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) outlines the need for the Council to provide a clear strategy for allocating land “which is suitable for development in the District, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities”. Allocating strategic sites will provide certainty about the location of significant growth for the District. This will assist local communities to understand where key changes are intended to take place, allow for the phasing of such growth and the development of appropriate infrastructure needed to support significant growth.

The proposal is to allocate housing, employment and other types of sites which are of strategic significance only. There are various ways of identifying which potential development sites are of strategic significance for the District, and therefore warrant allocation through the new Local Plan. The detailed criteria will need to be worked up during the plan preparation process and are likely to include a combination of a site’s size, its location and the likely impact of the development of the site upon existing communities. However, the key test of whether a site is strategic and therefore warrants being allocated for development through the new Local Plan is whether delivery of the site is considered essential to the achievement of the new Local Plan’s objectives and overall spatial strategy. A guiding principle at this stage is that a housing site is likely to be able to accommodate a minimum of 50 houses to be defined as strategic and therefore allocated within the plan.

An example of a strategic allocation is the Strategic Development Area (SDA) immediately to the north west of Market Harborough outlined in Core Strategy policy CS1 including at least 1000 dwellings and providing access to new employment, educational and recreational facilities. Delivery of this site will contribute a large proportion of both Market Harborough’s and Harborough District’s future housing requirement. As such, the detailed boundaries of this site are expected to be allocated by the new Local Plan to provide certainty and assist with delivery of the site.

Smaller sites, which are not of strategic importance to the delivery of the spatial strategy, would not be allocated for development within the new Local

Plan. Instead, development of non-allocated sites will be determined through the Development Management process through the use of criteria-based policies. Such policies will be in conformity with and help to deliver the spatial strategy for the District and the identified settlement hierarchy and broad locations for growth. Management of smaller non-allocated sites through this mechanism should provide sufficient flexibility to respond to changing market conditions and ensure an appropriate range of sites (in terms of location and scale). In addition, non-strategic sites may be allocated by communities through Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).

To optimise the phasing and delivery of development from allocated and non-allocated sites the Council will monitor progress, and when appropriate, will seek to proactively manage delivery through the granting of planning permissions. Permissions will be monitored against annual targets in order to ensure a 5 year supply of suitable housing sites is available. Monitoring will be closely linked to the phasing of housing sites, to ensure a continual supply of sites is brought forward throughout the plan period and linked to infrastructure requirements.

The proposed approach is considered to offer a practical solution, providing a useful compromise between the need for certainty and flexibility in meeting the District's housing growth requirements.

Q4. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q4a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Market Harbourough Strategic Development Area (SDA)

Intended policy outcomes:

- To ensure that the Strategic Development Area is delivered in a timely and efficient manner to meet the housing requirements of Market Harbourough and the wider District;
- To secure the provision of community infrastructure alongside housing, employment and other development;
- To provide transport mitigation measures as required both on and off site;
- To establish the capacity of the Strategic Development Area to accommodate housing and employment.

Approach

The broad location and basic principles for a Strategic Development Area (SDA) of at least 1000 dwellings to serve Market Harbourough are set out in Core Strategy policy CS13: Market Harbourough. This policy requires more detailed design policies and principles along with an agreed Master Plan for the area to be adopted as planning policy. It is intended that the Strategic Development Area will be retained as part of the new Local Plan.

On the 19th September 2012, the Council resolved policy relating to the SDA in order to provide some context for the new Local Plan. This included agreeing to a scale of development of between 1,500 and 1,800 houses and 13.4 Hectares of employment land. The existence of Core Strategy policy CS13 was a significant factor in this decision. There had also been earlier community consultation work, which helped shape options for the development of the SDA. An options appraisal exercise had also been carried out which balanced community views with a range of other material considerations.

The preparation of a Master Plan for the SDA started in summer 2012 and a [consultation on a draft Master Plan](#) is running concurrently with this new Local Plan Scoping consultation. The Master Plan is being prepared in advance of allocating land for the SDA in the new Local Plan because there are two planning applications before the Council awaiting determination on land within the SDA; an outline application for 1000 dwellings at Airfield Farm and a detailed application for 127 dwellings on land off Lubenham Hill. It is likely that a decision on these applications will need to be made before the new Local Plan is in place and the Master Plan will be a material consideration in their determination. This is a fundamental reason why the Master Plan has to precede the Local Plan process.

Alongside its role as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, it is intended that the Master Plan document for the SDA will provide an informed basis for the preparation of new Local Plan policies relating to the SDA. In view of the fact that the majority of the SDA lies within Lubenham Parish, the planning policy framework for its delivery will be split

between the new Local Plan and the Lubenham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

More specifically the new Local Plan will set out:

- Strategic policy for Market Harborough and the SDA;
- Allocation of land for development of SDA;
- Infrastructure requirements and transport mitigations;
- Confirmation of dwelling capacity and employment capacity;
- Housing delivery over period 2011-2031; and
- Phasing of housing and provision of link road.

Whilst the Lubenham Neighbourhood Development Plan will complement Local Plan policies for the SDA by setting out more detail relating to:

- Character of SDA development in Lubenham Parish;
- Design of housing and open spaces;
- Landscaping issues;
- Definition of the Area of Separation;
- Policy for Showground; and
- Policy for Greenacres.

Updated policy in the new Local Plan will set out a planning framework for the Strategic Development Area in recognition of its key role in meeting housing need not only for Market Harborough but also the wider District over the plan period.

Q5. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q5a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Providing for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs – new need targets and the requirement for allocations

Intended policy outcomes:

- To ensure the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community are met;
- To ensure a sufficient amount of suitable land is allocated in the District to provide for the needs of the communities on a rolling 5 year period;
- To provide a range of suitable sites, including a variety of site sizes, tenures and locations to meet the housing needs of the communities;
- To aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments in the District;
- To enable provision of suitable developments from which travellers can access services and facilities, whilst also protecting the countryside;
- To provide compliance with the Planning Policy for Travellers Sites guidance and an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

Approach:

The proposed refresh of Core Strategy Policy CS4: Providing for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs adds new evidence from a revised Gypsies' and Travellers' Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA), setting new targets for the Council for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople provision to 2031. This assessment has been commissioned and will be published shortly. Definitions of gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople are set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (CLG 2012).

These new targets will outline the total number of pitches and plots required in the District, set out in 5 year phases. These figures are expressed as a minimum allocation, and split between private and social rented pitches. The requirement is split into 5 year phases to comply with a new requirement for the Council to provide a rolling 5 year supply of sites. Should the Council not achieve this new requirement within a year of publication of the PPTS (March 2013), there will be consequences in the consideration of planning applications with the lack of a supply being a 'significant material consideration when considering applications for the grant of temporary planning permission' (PPTS para 25).

The revised policy will also allocate a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet the first 5 years worth of need as outlined in the GTAA. This will be updated annually and sites will be expected to be identified through a land availability assessment for traveller sites. The policy will also identify broad locations of growth for years 6-10 and where possible, future years of the plan period. New pitches and plots will be granted planning permission providing the site complies with a series of criteria, as outlined in Policy CS4 i) – vii), and all applications should conform to current good practise guidance.

The policy aims to increase provision to meet the needs of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople communities, whilst having a minimal impact on the countryside and existing households. The policy builds upon Policy CS4 by updating the evidence of need to 2031, setting out the requirement in 5 year phases, and by following the requirement to allocate the first 5 years provision of development sites.

Q6. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q6a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Rural Economy

Intended policy outcomes:

- To ensure that sustainable development in rural areas is not isolated and will enhance or maintain the viability of rural communities;
- To support prosperity in rural areas and make it easier for jobs to be maintained and created;
- To support the growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise within the rural area which are sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms and respect the character of the countryside;
- To promote the development and diversification of agriculture, other land-based businesses, sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses, communities and visitors and which respect the character of the countryside;
- To provide flexibility for new development in rural areas where it supports sustainable, economic growth.

Approach:

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) encourages Local Plans to promote a strong rural economy through a positive approach to supporting economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. Whilst the Core Strategy policies support the sustainable development of the rural economy to a certain extent, it is considered that these policies need to be less restrictive and more flexible to ensure compliance with the Framework.

The proposal is therefore to amend the relevant parts of Core Strategy policies CS7: Enabling Employment and Business Development and CS17: Countryside, Rural Centres and Rural Villages to better comply with the Framework, principally paragraphs 28 and 55.

Policies CS7 and CS2: Delivering New Housing will continue to ensure that sufficient land for employment and housing is available to meet the District's needs and contribute to meeting the wider Housing Market Area's needs, in a way which supports the spatial hierarchy set out in Policy CS1: Spatial Strategy. The thrust of both policies is and will continue to be to direct development to Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages, as a positive approach to sustainable development in the wider rural area of a largely rural district.

Policy CS7 part f) will continue to guide economic growth in rural areas beyond Market Harborough, Key and Rural Centres to ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable and suitable locations. Policy CS17 will continue to reinforce this approach and via part a) will guide how additional housing will be delivered in rural areas. However, amendments to both policies are needed to remove overly restrictive elements relating to: the type of development; the contribution to retaining local services and

community facilities; the conversion and reuse of buildings; and to introduce flexibility to deal with development in special and exceptional circumstances.

The balance between supporting rural prosperity and unfettered development in the rural area is a sensitive local issue. Amendments to policies CS7 and CS17 will attempt to address this, reflecting the proposed refreshed approach to Limits to Development (and any changes in delivery policies CS2-11). In the case of policy CS17 the approach will be to introduce a criterion based aspect to the policy to guide residential development in special circumstances in accordance with paragraph 55 of the Framework.

More specific planning policy will be proposed within policy CS17 for Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground and Magna Park, as existing exceptional sites in the rural area based on their importance for employment and other uses. This policy will form the basis for determining planning applications and providing supplementary planning guidance for these sites as appropriate.

The result of these proposed amendments to policies CS7 and CS17 will be that development proposals for the growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas, which differ slightly from the spatial strategy, set out in CS1, but which are adjacent or closely related to sustainable settlements and which in economic, social and environmental terms are on balance considered sustainable and beneficial for rural prosperity will be supported. Those developments for which exceptional or special circumstances do not apply and which on balance would have an adverse impact in sustainability terms would be refused.

Q7. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q7a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Refreshing the approach to Important Open Land

Intended policy outcomes:

- To protect open and undeveloped areas of land which contribute to a settlement's form and character;
- To provide flexibility to allow development proposals to be considered on their own merits according to current circumstances;
- To provide a robust and defensible policy approach to protecting areas of open land which contribute to a settlement's form and character.

Approach:

The proposal is to expand upon Core Strategy Policy CS11: Promoting Design and Built Heritage, in order to allow for a full consideration of planning applications on open and undeveloped sites within settlements.

The intention is that the additional detail to CS11 will replace saved Local Plan policy HS9: Important Open Land and the associated Important Open Land designations. These were designated during the 1990's and finally adopted through the Harborough District Local Plan in 2001. Given the amount of time elapsed since their original designation and the lack of evidence to support their designation, the robustness of some Important Open Land designations could increasingly be challenged. It is not considered practical to review all of the current Important Open Land designations, nor would such a review prevent any revised designations becoming outdated again in the future as circumstances on the ground change. Instead, the further detail to be added to CS11 is designed to offer a more flexible and responsive approach to protecting areas of open land which are particularly important to the form and character of a settlement.

When considering proposals for development on open and undeveloped areas of land within existing settlements, the first consideration will be to assess the value of the land in relation to the form and character of the settlement. Some are very significant, for example, because the open area of land surrounds the village war memorial, forms part of the village green, burial ground or significant town park. In these cases the cultural, historic, visual, religious and community value of the open land is very clear and should be protected. However, in some cases open areas of land have little or no value and could be developed.

Where a development proposal is made for an open and undeveloped area of land which is of clear value, the second consideration will relate to the nature of the proposal itself. Proposals which would harm the contribution of the land to the form and character of the settlement would be refused. However, proposals which would either not harm the open character of the land, or which would enhance it (for example through the addition of public art or recreational facilities) could be approved.

Sites that have an open space, sport or recreation function are protected separately under Core Strategy Policy CS8 (as amended through the new Local Plan). This policy also provides for the protection and enhancement of the District's biodiversity and geo-diversity network of sites.

Suggested possible wording is set out below to illustrate the proposed approach. However, the additional wording will need to be very carefully prepared with input and advice from Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the District. The relevant extract from policy CS11 is shown in bold, with the suggested additional wording shown in italics.

Policy CS11: Promoting Design and Built Heritage

- b) All development should respect the context in which it is taking place and respond to the unique characteristics of the individual site and the wider local environment beyond the site's boundaries to ensure that it is integrated as far as possible into the existing built form of the District. New development should be directed away from undeveloped areas of land which are important to the form and character of a settlement or locality.**

Applications for development on open and undeveloped sites within settlements will be assessed in terms of their likely impact upon the contribution of the open land to the form and character of the settlement or locality. Proposals for development on open and undeveloped land will firstly be considered in terms of the current function of the proposal site. Where the land fulfils one or more of the following functions, the proposal will then need to be considered in terms of its potential impact upon the function of the open and undeveloped land. Proposals which would harm one or more of the following functions of open and undeveloped land within settlements would not be permitted:

- *makes an important visual contribution to the street scene;*
- *makes an important contribution to the physical form and layout of the settlement;*
- *is of historic, cultural or religious significance;*
- *provides a setting for and allows views of heritage assets or other locally valued landmarks;*
- *is of particular local significance because of its beauty and/or tranquil quality;*
- *links up with other open spaces and allow views through and/or beyond the settlement which are valued locally.*

The preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals will be supported to identify open areas of land which particularly contribute to the form and character of the settlement or locality.

Open and undeveloped areas of land which are important to local communities will be identified and protected by designation as Local Green Spaces in circumstances where they meet a number of criteria set out in the

National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 77). Both the County and District Council have already carried out consultation with Parish Councils and Meetings over this concept. Such designations may be made principally through Neighbourhood Development Plans but it is proposed that where Neighbourhood Plans are not being prepared then the Local Plan will enable such designations to be made.

Q8. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q8a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Delivery of Development through Neighbourhood Development Plans

Intended policy outcomes:

- To enable communities to understand how Neighbourhood Development Plans work in harmony with the new Local Plan;
- To ensure that Neighbourhood Development Plans are compliant with strategic policies;
- To ensure that Neighbourhood Development Plans, once adopted, become part of the statutory framework for determining planning applications.

Approach

The proposal is to add a new strategic delivery policy into the new Local Plan to explain the complementary relationship between the new Local Plan and future Neighbourhood Development Plans

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) are a new planning tool introduced through the Localism Act in 2011. They allow communities to decide how, when and where new development should take place in their community. NDPs are a flexible planning tool allowing communities to consider those planning and land issues that are important to them, and to have real influence over how their communities develop. NDPs must be in conformity with the District's strategic policies, planning for at least as much development as set out in the Core Strategy. A number of NDPs are currently being prepared by Parish Councils in the District. Once adopted, the NDP will become part of the statutory framework for determining planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area.

The new Local Plan will focus upon issues of strategic significance for the District. This strategic approach is expected to be complemented by NDPs, which will empower local communities to determine the location of housing, employment and other development within their communities within the strategic framework of the new Local Plan. The new Local Plan will identify an amount of housing and other development to be delivered through allocations in future NDPs. Local communities can then identify and allocate specific appropriate sites to meet this requirement. NDPs will also provide local detail to complement the more strategic policies in the new Local Plan.

A community may not wish to undertake an NDP. If this is the case planning applications will be determined using the criteria-based policies within the new Local Plan in accordance with CS2 Delivering New Housing and the phasing policy. It is important for communities to consider whether the Local Plan policies are sufficiently relevant to their neighbourhood, or whether additional planning related issues should be considered within the communities' own NDP.

Q9. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q9a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Protecting and Improving Local Services and Facilities

Intended policy outcomes:

- To promote and support healthy communities through the provision of community facilities and other local services;
- To protect communities against the loss of valued services and facilities;
- To encourage the improvement and modernisation of existing provision to support sustainable communities;
- To improve access to and the performance of electronic communication networks across the District.

Approach:

The proposal is to include a new delivery policy in the new Local Plan setting out a comprehensive and cohesive approach to the protection and improvement of community services and facilities across the District. Whilst the Core Strategy recognises the importance of this issue in a number of its policies, there is no overall policy which focuses on services and facilities and the contribution they make to supporting sustainable communities.

The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that Local Plan policies should:

- Plan positively for the provision of community facilities and local services;
- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services especially where this would impact on the sustainability of a community;
- Establish a planning framework which encourages established shops, services and facilities to develop and modernise in a sustainable way for the benefit of communities; and
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

In presenting the approach to the provision, improvement and retention of services and facilities under a single policy, a clear commitment to their future role and contribution to communities will be set out. The policy will consider how best to secure facilities including local shops, meeting places, sports and recreational buildings and land, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

The policy will also set out to encourage improvements to broadband access, provision and speed across the District, enabling new ways of accessing services and facilities. The new policy will also provide the context for additional cemetery provision as well as consider the possible need for a crematorium in the District.

It is intended that the new policy will set out a framework and criteria for decisions relating to the protection and, where possible, the improvement of local service and facility provision. It will recognise their importance in encouraging sustainable communities and neighbourhoods and seek to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued community services.

Q10. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q10a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Delivering Development & Supporting Infrastructure

Intended policy outcomes:

- To secure the delivery of the required level of community infrastructure at the appropriate time in association with new development;
- To establish the justified levels of required infrastructure in time periods across the future plan period and set out in an Infrastructure Schedule;
- To provide clarity on the expected sources of funding for this - through Section 106 planning obligations, the Community Infrastructure Levy or other sources of funding;
- To demonstrate that the plan proposals are viable and deliverable.

Approach:

The proposed revised policy will provide an updated strategic approach to ensuring that future development is supported by the necessary community infrastructure. This new policy will conform to the new Local Plan spatial strategy and the development policies for Harborough as set out in policies elsewhere in the plan.

The Council is expected to take a decision about whether to consult on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for a Community Infrastructure Levy in spring 2013. This will relate to the funding of infrastructure identified in the Core Strategy Infrastructure Schedule. Negotiated planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 will continue to form a key element of delivery of the infrastructure required on a site by site basis but from April 2014 no more than five obligations can be pooled to fund an infrastructure project.

It is proposed that the new Local Plan will contain a revised policy linked to an Infrastructure Schedule which will be set out on a District-wide and a settlement basis and will:

- Make clear what level of infrastructure is needed at particular points across the plan period and when funding needs to be obtained, bearing in mind lead-in times.
- Be prepared in association with key providers such as Leicestershire County Council in order to ensure the support of those agencies responsible for delivering infrastructure.

Q11. Do you agree with the proposed approach? Yes / No

Q11a. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make in relation to the proposed approach?

Q12. Thank you for your participation in this consultation. Do you have any further suggestions to make with regards to what the new Local Plan for Harborough should contain?

Glossary of Terms

Area of separation: An area of open land or countryside which is protected in order to prevent coalescence of settlements and to maintain the character of the local landscape.

Community Infrastructure Levy: The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be a new charge which local authorities in England and Wales will be empowered, but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. CIL charges will be based on simple formulae which relate the size of the charge to the size and character of the development paying it. The proceeds of the levy will be spent on local and sub-regional infrastructure to support the development of the area.

Conservation Area: Areas of special architectural or historic interest, designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, whose character and appearance should be preserved or enhanced.

Core Strategy Infrastructure Schedule: This is set out at Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy. It is compiled in liaison with the relevant agencies and providers to assess the cost of facilities required by the proposed development and expected forms of funding.

Core Strategy: A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives for Harborough, together with a suite of delivery and place-based policies. The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in November 2011 following a public examination.

Green Wedge: A strategic area of largely undeveloped land between the Leicester urban area and the wider countryside aimed at guiding urban form to prevent the merging of settlements, provide access to the countryside and facilitate recreational opportunities.

Important Open Land (IOL): Open and undeveloped areas which have been identified in the Harborough District Local Plan (2001) for their contribution to the form and character of the settlement or locality.

Infrastructure: Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Key Employment Area (KEA): An existing office park, industrial estate, or larger individual employment site (or site allocated for these purposes) in B Class employment use that will be protected for employment generating use.

Limits to Development: Lines on maps identified in the Harborough District Local Plan (2001) to delineate the edge of the built up area of larger settlements within the District. Development proposals within the Limits to Development are in principle, considered to be appropriate, whilst

development proposals outside the Limits to Development are considered against policies relating to open countryside.

Local Development Framework (LDF): The Local Development Framework (LDF) was used to describe a suite of documents, including all the local planning authority's local development documents (such as the Core Strategy, Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and any Supplementary Planning Documents). The term was replaced by reference to a local planning authority's 'Local Plan' by the National Planning Policy Framework.

Local Green Space (LGS): A green area of particular importance to local communities which is identified for special protection through Neighbourhood Development Plans or Local Plans. The term was introduced by the National Planning Policy Framework.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. It forms part of the development plan and is the starting point for the determination of planning applications in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework): This document was published by the Government in March 2012. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs): NDPs are a new way of local communities becoming more involved in planning and decision-making through the Localism Act. The plan does need to be in broad conformity with national policies and the policies in the authority's local plan. It should focus on guiding development rather than stopping it. If adopted it will become part of the statutory plan for the neighbourhood and be used in making decisions on planning applications.

RSS / Regional Strategy: Regional Strategies (previously known as Regional Spatial Strategies), provided the region-wide basis for the preparation of local planning policy and identified the number of houses to be provided by each local planning authority within the region. Regional Strategies are being revoked.

Section 106 (S106): A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

Strategic Allocation: Land identified as a significant area(s) of growth of strategic importance to delivering the spatial strategy of the District and allocated through a Local Plan.

Strategic Development Area (SDA): Area of land North West of Market Harborough identified for future development within the Harborough District Core Strategy.

Sustainable Development: A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Sustainable Settlement: The scoping consultation document for the new Local Plan for Harborough proposes that housing targets would be identified for the sustainable settlements in the District. These are defined as: Market Harborough, Lutterworth; Broughton Astley; Thurnby, Bushby, Scraftoft; Rural Centres (as set out within Policy CS17); or a settlement which fulfils the requirements of a Selected Rural Village (as set out within Policy CS17).