

CHAPTER 4: POPULATION AND HOUSING

Introduction

- 4.1 The Borough has the highest population of any district in the County outside the City of Leicester. As one of the fastest growing areas of the County it has experienced a population growth of over 40% in the last 30 years.
- 4.2 Housing is the principal land-use in the built up areas. In 1991 the dwelling stock consisted of about 57,000 dwellings. Of these about one-third were located in Loughborough, the main urban area, and over half were located in Shepshed and other settlements alongside the Soar and Wreake river valleys. Less than 10% of the total were located in the extensive rural areas of the Charnwood Forest, the Wolds and the rural South East. This distribution reflects the pattern of growth in recent times. In the areas which have undergone significant growth the individual character and identity of settlements and their surroundings have faced continuing pressure to accommodate change. It is important that the amenities and character of existing and planned residential areas are safeguarded and enhanced.
- 4.3 There are spread across the Borough pockets of older housing lacking in modern amenities and located in areas themselves in need of enhancement. Such housing areas are most evident in Loughborough. In recent years the Borough Council has endeavoured to improve the condition of the dwelling stock and the quality of residential environments in the most disadvantaged areas. There remain opportunities for further improvements.
- 4.4 Many people in the Borough are unable to afford to buy or to rent accommodation. There are also other people with particular needs not adequately provided for in the general housing market; the frail elderly, the mentally and physically impaired, gypsies and travellers, and students. Trends in household formation indicate a continuing rise in smaller households, particularly those containing one person. The needs of these various groups merit consideration in the preparation of this Plan.

Government Guidance

- 4.5 PPG3 'Housing (March 2000) provides the guiding principles for considering housing within the planning system. It sets out the key Government objective that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home. The PPG indicates that local planning authorities should plan to meet the needs of the whole community, including those in need of affordable or special needs housing, and provide wider housing opportunity and choice and a better mix in the size, type and location of housing. Regional Planning Guidance (RPG8) highlights a substantial need for additional affordable housing in the East Midlands which should be redressed at the local level in the light of local housing needs surveys. PPG3 also advises local planning authorities to avoid developments which make inefficient use of land (less than 30 dwellings per hectare), promotes the re-use of previously developed land within urban areas in preference to the development of greenfield sites, and encourages the creation of more sustainable patterns of development. The importance of good design in new housing is emphasised along with the need to promote more sustainable patterns of development by concentrating most additional housing within urban areas, maximizing the re-use of previously developed land, assessing the capacity of urban areas to accommodate more housing, and adopting a sequential approach to the allocation of housing land. This should start with previously developed land and buildings within urban areas, then urban extensions and finally new development around nodes in good public transport corridors. The PPG suggests that planned extensions to existing urban areas are likely to prove the most sustainable option after sites within urban areas. On new settlements the guidance suggests that in the right location and with the right concept, they can make a contribution, but that they will infrequently be a viable option due to their scale and the time required to develop them.

The Leicestershire Structure Plan

- 4.6 The Structure Plan requires the provision of approximately 8350 dwellings over the period 1991-2006 in Charnwood. The Plan requires that the majority of new development should be focused on settlements adjoining the City of Leicester (in Charnwood these are Birstall and Thurmaston), Loughborough, Shepshed and settlements in the three transport choice corridors (the Midland Railway Line and the A6 between Loughborough and Leicester, and the railway line between Melton Mowbray and Leicester). The densities of development, and the type of housing provided should reflect the increasing needs of households requiring smaller dwellings.

The Charnwood Perspective

- 4.7 A picture of population and trends is provided by information from the 2001 Census. It highlights matters of relevance to housing issues.
- 4.8 Between 1991 and 2001 the Borough's population grew by around 5% to about 153,400 people. Over the same period the County's population grew by about 6%.
- 4.9 This overall change masks variations for different age groups. The increase in elderly people is the largest of any age group. By 2001 19% of the Borough's population were over 60 years of age. These figures confirm the greater representation in the overall population profile of the elderly who may be expected to generate a greater need for sheltered housing and homes offering differing degrees of care.
- 4.10 Over three quarters of households are recorded as living in owner-occupied accommodation. About 9.5% rent from the local authority and about 2.5% rent from a housing association.
- 4.11 The Census indicates that over 27% of households were single person. The surge in single person households reflects ageing of the population, rising divorce rates, and changes in lifestyles with people choosing to live alone. Only 0.4% of households lacked the basic amenities of a bath/shower and toilet. Car ownership has increased to the extent that less than 19% of households had no car, whilst nearly 36% had 2 or more cars. Charnwood has the largest population of ethnic minority groups in Leicestershire representing 8% (12,267) of the population. Figures indicate that about 15% of residents have a limiting long term illness.

Aims and Objectives

- 4.12 For housing the Local Plan provides a policy framework which meets the following overall aim:
- "To identify sufficient land, in appropriate locations consistent with the Structure Plan to provide for projected housing needs in the Borough over the period up to 2006 on sites capable of producing the wide range of types and styles which the market requires including elements of rented, shared ownership or low cost housing for those of limited means and access housing specifically designed for the needs of an ageing population."
- 4.13 The policies and proposals address the following objectives with regard to housing issues:-
- i) to accommodate the presently unallocated element of strategic housing requirements by a combination of new land releases and allowance for unidentified (windfall) sites;
 - ii) to encourage sustainable developments in terms of environmental and resource conservation and integration with transport policy;
 - iii) to secure the implementation of new housing areas served by the appropriate level of infrastructure, services and facilities;
 - iv) to allow for affordable accommodation to meet proven local needs in locations acceptable in planning terms to serve towns and villages;
 - v) to allow for particular needs, in appropriate locations, of the frail elderly, the mentally and physically impaired, students, travelling people and gypsies in appropriate locations;

- vi) to achieve within available resources improvements in the condition of properties lacking in modern amenities and housing areas which merit environmental enhancement;
- vii) to maintain and enhance the character and standards of amenity within primarily residential areas.

New Housing Provision

- 4.14 The Structure Plan requires about 8,350 dwellings to be constructed in Charnwood between 1991 and 2006. This level of provision acknowledges that environmental constraints limit the ability of the Borough to meet its projected natural population increase. Provision is made for 1,500 dwellings, which would have been needed to meet natural increase requirements within Charnwood, to be accommodated in other Districts.
- 4.15 A substantial proportion of the overall requirement of 8,350 dwellings was already provided for as follows:

	DWELLINGS
Strategic Housing Requirement 1991 to 2006	8,350
<u>Less</u>	
Completions 1991 to March 2003	6,034
Balance to be found	2,316
Expected completions on small sites (less than 0.4ha) (3 x 65)	195
Expected completions on committed large sites	1,570
Additional urban capacity	100
Therefore the Plan needs to provide	451

- 4.16 Since 1991 some 6,034 dwellings have been completed on a variety of sites throughout the Borough. A realistic assessment of the likely contribution from large site commitments suggests that this source will provide a further 1,570 dwellings up to 2006. In identifying sites to meet housing requirements, PPG3 requires local planning authorities to make an allowance for windfalls. These are previously developed sites, large or small, which unexpectedly become available. Structure Plan Housing Policy 4 indicates that an allowance should be made for unidentified sites when making provision for housing requirements so that the need to release further greenfield sites is minimised.
- 4.17 The Council has made an allowance for the contribution from small sites of less than 10 dwellings. Based on an assessment of past trends and future potential an allowance of 65 dwellings per year on small sites for the remainder of the Plan period is made.
- 4.18 A review of urban capacity has also been undertaken in relation to sites in excess of 10 dwellings. This has taken account of planning applications awaiting determination on a range of brownfield sites. The assessment of housing land supply allows for an additional urban capacity of 100 dwellings to be built in the remainder of the plan period.
- 4.19 After taking account of these various factors there remains an outstanding balance of approximately 451 dwellings to be found. This requirement is met through the allocation of a range of previously developed and greenfield sites.

New Housing Allocations on Previously Developed Land

4.20 POLICY H/1

The previously developed sites listed below as identified on the Proposals Map, are allocated for new housing development provided layout, density, design, landscaping, access and parking details are in accordance with other policies of the Plan:

		Net Residential Area		Approx No of Dwellings to 2006	Net Density Approx	
		Ha	Acres		Ha	Acres
H/1(a)	Land off Nottingham Road, Barrow upon Soar	1.0	2.5	30	30	12
H/1(b)	Land at Empress Road, Loughborough	0.6	1.5	30	50	20
H/1(c)	Former Factory Churchside/ Forest Street, Shepshed	1.0	2.4	40	40	16
	TOTAL	2.6	6.4	100	38	15

(See also in particular Policies ST/3, EV/1, EV/8, EV/17, EV/20, EV/36, H/4, H/7, H/16, TR/5, TR/18, RT/3, RT/4, RT/5, RT/6, RT/11, RT/12)

- 4.21 PPG3 encourages local planning authorities to make more efficient use of land by maximising the re-use of previously developed land, assessing the capacity of urban areas to accommodate more housing, and adopting a sequential approach to the allocation of land for housing. In identifying additional land to meet strategic housing requirements the Council has sought to maximise the potential for development on previously developed land and buildings. Technical report 8 details the urban capacity study which has been undertaken to identify the scope for development on such sites.
- 4.22 Where sites identified in the study are available and considered capable of development within the Plan period they have been allocated and are identified on the Proposals Map. There will also be the potential for further unidentified windfall sites to come forward in the remainder of the Plan period. The urban capacity study has helped to inform an assessment of additional potential from this source and this is outlined in paragraph 4.18 above.
- 4.23 The allocated sites are varied in their size, type and location. In total they will provide some 100 dwellings. Development proposals for the sites will need to accord with other policies in the Plan dealing with design, layout and density of development, access and parking. Because of the urban location of a number of sites, there is the potential for high density developments, particularly where sites are located close to existing town or district centres. The policy assumes higher density development for sites in these locations.
- 4.24 Because of the former uses associated with some of the sites, there may be potential contamination problems that would need to be assessed. In line with Policy EV/36 where it is suspected that contaminated land could be involved, conditions will be attached to any planning consent or a legal agreement sought to ensure that full site investigations are carried out prior to development.
- 4.25 Where a need for improved infrastructure or community facilities, including education, is identified in association with a development, reasonably related contributions may be sought from the developer in line with Policy ST/3. These could include improvements to public transport, and walking and cycling facilities where a need is identified.
- 4.26 In considering proposals for the development of these sites, the Council will apply the recreational space standards specified in Policies RT/3 to RT/5. Where a need for additional provision is identified but cannot be provided on site, a contribution towards the improvement of nearby sport and recreation or open space facilities may be sought.
- 4.27 Many of the allocated sites are in locations where there is an identified need for affordable housing provision and are well located to help to address that need. For these sites in areas of need, meeting the size thresholds set out in Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing, an element of affordable housing provision will be sought. Policy H/4 sets targets for the provision of an element of affordable housing on allocated sites. For the smaller sites, whilst a specific element of affordable housing provision cannot be sought, there is the potential for these sites, by virtue of their location, to provide smaller units of open market housing that may help to meet an element of affordable housing needs.

- 4.28 After allowing for additional windfall potential and specific allocations on previously development land, there remains a need to allocate greenfield sites to meet the strategic housing requirement.
- 4.29 Through the specific allocations on previously developed land set out in this policy and the assessment of additional urban capacity, the Plan aims for some 47% of the strategic housing requirement of 8,350 dwellings to be provided on previously developed land. Although this is below the national target of 60% it is considered that, in the context of Charnwood, this represents a challenging target.

New Housing Allocations on Greenfield Sites

4.30 POLICY H/2

The greenfield sites listed below as identified on the Proposals Map are allocated for new housing and related ancillary uses subject to the criteria specified for each site:

		Net Residential Area		Approx No of Dwellings to 2006	Balance after 2006	TOTAL Approx	Net Density	
		Ha	Acres				Ha	Acres
H/2(a)	Land north of Bradgate Road, Anstey	3.3	8.1	30	70	100	30	12
H/2(b)	Land between Cotes Road and Willow Road, Barrow upon Soar	12	29.7	60	300	360	30	12
H/2(c)	Land at Brook Street, Burton on the Wolds	1.6	4.0	42	6	48	30	12
H/2(d)	Land at Peartree Lane, Loughborough	3.3	9	30	70	100	30	12
H/2(e)	Land at Meynell Road, Quorn	0.8	2.0	30	0	30	38	15
H/2(f)	Land at Little Haw Farm, Shepshed	1.7	4.2	30	20	50	30	12
H/2(g)	Land East of 19 Barkby Lane, Syston	2.7	6.7	30	50	80	30	12
H/2(h)	Land at Barkby Road, Syston	11.3	27.9	88	252	340	30	12
H/2(i)	Land at Wysall Lane, Wymeswold	2.3	5.7	30	40	70	30	12
	TOTAL	39	97.3	370	808	1178	30	12

(See also in particular Policies ST/3, EV/1, EV/17, EV/20, H/4, H/7, H/16, TR/5, TR/13, TR/18, RT/3, RT/4, RT/5, RT/6, RT/11, RT/12)

- 4.31 The development site selection process has been guided by the approved strategy for the location of development in Charnwood set out at paragraph 2.63. It has been further informed by the thorough examination of development possibilities afforded by the preparation of the report "Sustainability and the Impact of Major Development Options" and guidance in PPG3 on the sequential approach to development. A further influential factor has been the findings of the Borough Council's Housing Needs Study which, when combined with details of the distribution of the existing stock of rented housing, has provided the most effective tool to date in identifying the relative needs of communities across the Borough for the provision of affordable housing.

- 4.32 The Deposit Draft plan allocated the bulk of the housing requirement in two sites adjacent respectively to the urban areas of Loughborough and Greater Leicester in accordance with the strategic aims of the Structure Plan which seeks to reinforce urban concentration. Planning permission for these strategic sites has now been granted. Both sites derive considerable advantage from the extension of existing good quality public transport services already operating within the urban areas offering residents access to genuine transport choice. Located at either end of the bus based transport choice corridor between Leicester and Loughborough, the two sites in tandem have secured related investment in improvements to the transport system which should help to deliver an attractive bus link with competitive journey times advantageous to existing users and all communities lining the route. The potential for the encouragement in a modal shift to buses is unparalleled in the Borough. The development north of Birstall involves a mixed-use development including housing, employment, shopping, leisure and educational facilities which fully accords with national policy guidance.
- 4.33 The remaining allocated Greenfield sites provide for a mix of development opportunities on urban edge sites, at nodes within good public transport choice corridors and also provide for identified rural housing needs. Allocations at Loughborough and Shepshed are in accord with the aims of the Structure Plan which seeks to direct most development to the main urban areas.
- 4.34 The allocations at Barrow upon Soar and Syston represent sustainable development opportunities by virtue of their location in relation to established stations on the rail based transport choice corridor and proximity to District Centres with a wide range of local services and facilities. Because of their access to good public transport and a wide range of local services and facilities, these settlements represent the most sustainable locations for further development in the Borough outside the main urban areas. The site at Barrow Upon Soar will secure the provision of a perimeter road between Cotes Road and Nottingham Road. This will provide environmental and highway safety benefits by distributing local traffic and relieving congestion in the village centre. The developments at Syston will provide elements of affordable housing provision in an area of identified need.
- 4.35 Allocations in Wymeswold and Burton on the Wolds, outside the urban areas and transport choice corridors, account for approximately 9% of the housing allocation. These allocations are directed in part towards the enablement of elements of affordable housing to address demonstrable local needs but also make an important contribution to the achievement of the strategic housing requirement.
- 4.36 In combination the 9 sites allocated provide for a wide range and choice of new housing opportunities across the Borough, well related to existing or proposed employment areas. For the most part areas of particular importance to the preservation of the rural landscape or by virtue of their role in safeguarding the physical separation of settlements, are retained. A degree of compromise in some areas is inevitable but in all cases the site selection exercise must be informed by a synthesis of all relevant material in which no single factor can be permitted to become the determining factor.
- 4.37 An assessment of the likely contribution from each site in the remainder of the plan period up to 2006 has been made on the basis of an assessment of past build rates on large sites, and discussions with developer interests. This assessment suggests that on a number of sites an element of the proposed development will take place beyond the current plan period. This is a function of the expected build rates for the sites. The Modifications Inquiry Inspector acknowledged this overspill as a necessary consequence of additional greenfield allocations he identified as being required to enable the strategic target to be met. The additional greenfield sites are sites that have been supported for allocation by both Local Plan Inspectors. They involve development in sustainable locations in accordance with strategic guidance. The potential for the developers to progress these key sites should not be restricted by phasing. It is important that there is commitment to the delivery of these sites in total so that the developers involved can plan for the necessary infrastructure associated with these major developments.
- 4.38 Monitoring will take place on an annual basis and will be published as Housing Land Availability reports looking at planning permissions and completions on sites, identifying progress on urban capacity and Greenfield housing sites.

- 4.39 In line with PPG3 the densities proposed for the allocated sites seek to make the best use of the available land. For the previously developed sites within Loughborough, higher densities have been assumed to reflect their location within the urban area. For the purposes of the Plan and the calculation of housing land supply, densities of around 30 dwellings per hectare have been assumed in accordance with PPG3.
- 4.40 The following paragraphs set out in further detail the measures required to minimise the impact of the development of the allocated sites upon the landscape, infrastructure and local amenities. The policy guidance differentiates between those matters which are requirements and any planning obligations which may be sought. The aim is to achieve new developments which contribute to a balanced mix of land uses, sustain the range of community needs and minimise any adverse off-site impact upon amenities, facilities and infrastructure. The site-specific matters need to be considered together with other general requirements for recreation space, landscaping and affordable housing. The Borough Council may seek to negotiate legal agreement(s) with landowner/developer interests and any other body as appropriate to secure necessary provisions at the appropriate stage of a site's development.

Land north of Bradgate Road, Anstey

4.41 POLICY H/2(a)

Planning permission for the residential development of land north of Bradgate Road, Anstey will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) a layout, design and density of development is provided which substantially retains existing hedgerows and which is sympathetic with this edge of village location. This will include substantial block planting and landscaping to a minimum depth of 20 metres on the northern and western boundaries;**
- ii) the public footpath and bridleway is retained as part of the development;**
- iii) the form and layout of the development safeguards the amenities of existing properties around the site, particularly on Link Road;**
- iv) provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority.**

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development:

- a) improved recreational facilities in the village;**
- b) traffic calming along Bradgate Road.**

(See also in particular policy H/2 & H/4)

- 4.42 An allocation of land at this location made in the Draft 'South West Charnwood Villages Local Plan' was previously rejected because of access difficulties. Vehicular access from Bradgate Road may require land not controlled by the developer or the local planning authorities to achieve visibility. However other options to provide access may be acceptable to the highway authority for the scale of housing proposed.
- 4.43 The site proposed is considered to be substantially free from environmental constraints, especially with development being limited to the lower, southern area of the site. Extensive landscaping and woodland planting will need to extend towards the footpath boundary to the north of the site, and the bridleway running through the site must be retained.
- 4.44 Development as proposed will result in the capacity of the village school being exceeded if additional accommodation is not provided.
- 4.45 Previous studies have identified a deficiency of recreational provision in Anstey. A contribution may be negotiated from this scheme to the improvement of the village's recreational facilities. In order to slow vehicle speeds and enhance highway safety a contribution may be negotiated for traffic calming measures along Bradgate Road designed to meet the highway authority's standards.

- 4.46 A contributory factor supporting the allocation of this site is the need to meet identified housing needs in the Forest sub-area of the Borough. The Borough Council's Housing Needs Survey identified significant need in this area, with many respondents expressing a preference to live in Anstey. An element of affordable housing will therefore be negotiated as part of the proposed development.

Land between Cotes Road and Willow Way, Barrow upon Soar

4.47 POLICY H/2(b)

Planning permission for the residential development of land between Cotes Road/Willow Road, Barrow upon Soar will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) a local distributor road and segregated cycle route is provided from a junction on Cotes Road north of No. 148 Cotes Road, to Willow Road, with the road to be designed as a perimeter road to the new housing area;**
- ii) a layout design and density of development is provided which is sympathetic with the sensitive edge of village location. This will include substantial block planting and landscaping to a minimum depth of 20 metres and public amenity open space extending in total, in accordance with Policy RT/12, over some 6ha on the northern and eastern site boundaries;**
- iii) the bridleway along Strancliffe Lane is retained as part of the development;**
- iv) vehicular access to the housing areas is taken primarily from the new distributor road;**
- v) provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority.**

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development:

- a) improved off-road parking provision or improved transportation links serving Barrow upon Soar railway station;**
- b) improvements to the Cotes Road/Barrow Road and Barrow Road/Nottingham Road junctions and the A60 approach to Loughborough;**
- c) improved community/health facilities;**
- d) traffic calming along Cotes Road and Nottingham Road;**
- e) creation of safe pedestrian and cycle links from the development to the village centre and schools.**

(see also in particular policy H/2, H/4, TR/4)

- 4.48 This site is well placed to achieve a new designed edge to the north and east of Barrow upon Soar and the provision of a new perimeter road between Cotes Road and Nottingham Road by the extension of Willow Road. The perimeter road has been re-routed further north than the Consultation Draft Plan proposal to meet Cotes Road to the north of existing housing. This new road will help distribute local traffic, relieve congestion in the village centre and extend the benefits of the Nottingham Road to Melton Road Link. In order to minimise the adverse impacts of construction on existing residential areas the various components of the development and supporting infrastructure will need to be phased in accordance with a programme agreed with the local planning authority in consultation with the highway authority.
- 4.49 Whilst the re-routed road brings more developable land within the site much of the additional land is elevated and prominent. A carefully designed scheme, with substantial woodland planting, will be required to create a strong and defensible edge to development and to minimise the impact of the new road on the landscape. Development must not breach the

prominent east to west ridgeline to ensure that the rural character of the approach to the village from the north is safeguarded.

- 4.50 The development will need to include informal recreation land together with pedestrian and cycleway links to Cotes Road and Nottingham Road, incorporating the retention and enhancement of the bridleway along Strancliffe Lane. Development as proposed will result in the capacity of the village school being exceeded if additional accommodation is not provided.
- 4.51 The traffic generated from about 360 dwellings in this location could add to problems on the A60 access to Loughborough via Cotes Road. Contributions may be negotiated for improvements to the Cotes Road/Barrow Road and Barrow Road/Nottingham Road junctions, traffic calming in the village, and improvements to the A60 access into eastern Loughborough and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new housing to the village centre and schools to improve transport choice accessibility. The site has been allocated partly because Barrow upon Soar meets the transport choice requirements for rail. The site is at the edge of the 1km catchment area for the station and a contribution may be negotiated to improve off-street parking provision in the vicinity of the station as a means of improving its accessibility. Given the scale of development a contribution may be negotiated for improved community/healthcare facilities in the village to cater for the resultant increase in population.

Land at Brook Street, Burton on the Wolds

4.52 POLICY H/2(c)

Planning permission for the residential development of land at Brook Street, Burton on the Wolds will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) **the main vehicular access is taken from Melton Road with only limited frontage development to Brook Street;**
- ii) **a substantial landscaped buffer to a minimum depth of 20 metres is provided on the site's northern and eastern boundaries;**
- iii) **the public footpath is retained as part of an open space network linking towards the ponds on the northern site boundary with land in the north-western corner of the site retained in open uses;**
- iv) **the ponds area is reclaimed as a wildlife and amenity feature together with the retention of existing hedgerows on the site;**
- v) **development is avoided on the steeply sloping portion of the site fronting Nos 36-38a Brook Street;**
- vi) **the existing agricultural uses are ceased together with the demolition of the associated buildings and clearance of the site prior to any new development.**
- vii) **provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority.**

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions towards traffic calming measures along the B676 through the village.

(See also in particular Policy H/2 & H/4)

- 4.53 The key concern in the Wolds sub area is to secure affordable housing provision to meet local needs identified in the Borough Council's 'Housing Needs Survey'. The proposed site is centrally placed within the sub-area and able to help meet the affordable housing needs of the North Wolds communities. Development of this site could be achieved with least environmental harm and conforms well with the existing settlement form.
- 4.54 Given the character of this site at the village edge any housing scheme must incorporate measures to safeguard the setting of the village in views from the north and east, and provide for the retention of important landscape features within the site. The steeply sloping portion of the site fronting onto Brook Street will remain undeveloped as part of an open space network

focused around the existing pond and public footpath across the site. The removal of existing uses occupying the site will secure a related local environmental improvement.

- 4.55 In order to slow vehicle speeds and enhance highway safety a contribution may be negotiated for traffic calming measures along the B676 through the village designed to meet the highway authority's standards.

Land at Peartree Lane, Loughborough

4.56 POLICY H/2(d)

Planning permission for residential development of land at Peartree Lane, Loughborough will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) vehicular access is taken from the A6, or alternatively Wain Drive;**
- ii) if access is taken from Wain Drive, highway improvements will be required to the junction of Barsby Drive with Warwick Way to incorporate a right turn lane and provision made for traffic management measures along Barsby Drive and Braddon Road;**
- iii) the provision of routes for cyclists and pedestrians within the development area linking into adjacent existing and planned footpath network, and from the Gorse Covert open space to a suitably designed junction with the A6 at Peartree Lane;**
- iv) the provision of 4.6 hectares of structural landscaping including public open space extending from the existing Gorse Covert open space up to Peartree Lane, and a substantial landscaped buffer to a minimum depth of 20 metres along Peartree Lane;**
- v) the provision of a substantial landscaped buffer to a minimum depth of 20 metres on the site's northern boundary with the A6, incorporating suitable acoustic screening; and**
- vi) provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority.**

In addition, the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions towards:

- (a) improved provision for bus services accessible from the development;**
- (b) provision for the extension of the footpath/ bridleway at Peartree Lane northwards and the provision of a safe crossing facility on the realigned A6 for pedestrians and cyclists;**
- (c) the provision of a footpath/ cycleway southwards through the Gorse Covert area of open space to Maxwell Drive.**

(see also in particular Policies ST/3, H/2, H/4)

- 4.57 This site adjoins the Loughborough urban area and is close to the A6 with its existing regular bus services and segregated cycleway linking into the town centre. It is also close to the proposed employment allocation at Dishley Grange. It therefore enjoys a number of strategic locational advantages.

- 4.58 Because of the sloping nature of the site and its relationship with the Green Wedge to the north-west, any development will need to be sensitively planned. There is the opportunity through careful design and layout to provide a well designed landscaped edge to the town. The allocation proposes development on the lower lying land below the 55 metre contour, substantial planting along the A6 frontage and along Peartree Lane, and the extension of the existing open space network from Gorse Covert to Peartree Lane. In combination this will provide a strong landscape definition for the northern edge of the town and assimilate the proposed housing development in what is a sensitive location, and will help meet the informal

recreational needs arising from the development. Landscaping along the A6 site boundary will need to incorporate suitable acoustic screening.

- 4.59 Ideally vehicular access to the site should be taken from the A6. If this is not feasible the development will need to be accessed from the existing residential network via Wain Drive. In this case improvements to the junction of Barsby Drive with Warwick Way to incorporate a right turning lane will be required along with traffic calming along Barsby Drive and Braddon Way in order to accommodate the additional traffic arising from the development.
- 4.60 The development will result in the capacity of the local school being exceeded if additional accommodation is not provided. Contributions to additional school places will therefore be sought.
- 4.61 The site is well located with easy access to the A6 corridor close to existing bus services along Braddon Road. Contributions may be negotiated from the development to improve the provision for buses serving the site.
- 4.62 It is important that there is easy access from the site for pedestrians and cyclists to nearby shopping and employment opportunities. The extension of the pedestrian cycle route through Gorse Covert northwards past the site to the realigned A6, including a safe crossing facility will provide a key route between the main industrial areas off Derby Road, Gorse Covert and the main schools and residential areas.

Land at Meynell Road, Quorn

4.63 POLICY H/2(e)

Planning permission for the residential development of land at Meynell Road, Quorn will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) **substantial block planting and landscaping to a minimum depth of 20 metres is provided along the northern and western boundaries of the site adjacent to Meynell Road and the school playing fields;**
- ii) **a form and layout of development is provided which retains existing trees and hedgerows on the site and safeguards the open setting of this part of the village;**
- iii) **vehicular access to the site is provided from Meynell Road;**

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development;

- a) **improved provision for buses along the A6 transport choice corridor;**
- b) **environmental enhancement in the village;**
- c) **creation of safe pedestrian and cycle links from the site towards the village centre.**

(see also in particular Policy H/2)

- 4.64 A triangular area of land south of the realigned Meynell Road has been severed from a larger field by road construction. The portion of this site to the east of a strong hedgerow is already edged by development on two sides. In this area a carefully designed layout accessed from Meynell Road, and providing a strong edge treatment along the Meynell Road frontage would create a firm edge to development. By restricting the developed area the open character of this part of the village is better retained. A contribution may be sought to provide better cycle and pedestrian links from the site to the village centre to improve access for people not using their cars, living in this area.
- 4.65 Contributions may be negotiated from this development to improve transport choice accessibility by the implementation of measures for better bus provision along the former A6, and or traffic calming measures and environmental improvements elsewhere in the village.

Land at Little Haw Farm, Shepshed

4.66 POLICY H/2(f)

The development of land at Little Haw Farm, Shepshed, will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) vehicular access is taken from Anson Road;
- ii) existing hedgerows and trees within the site and forming the northern boundary with Tickow Lane are retained;
- iii) the form and layout of the development safeguards the amenities of existing properties around the site; and
- iv) provision is made for cyclists and pedestrians within the site including a safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle route through the site to link Anson Road with Tickow Lane.

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions towards:

- (a) improved provision for buses; and
- (b) the provision of a footpath/ cycleway from the site to the junction of Tickow Lane and McCarthy Road.

(see also in particular Policies ST/3, H/2, H/4)

- 4.67 This 1.7 hectare site adjoins the north western edge of the urban area of Shepshed. It lies close to existing employment areas and a range of local facilities, including shops, open spaces and a primary school. A regular bus service also passes the site along Anson Road running between Leicester and Loughborough via the centre of Shepshed. The site therefore enjoys strategic locational advantages that combine to offer a realistic opportunity to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car.
- 4.68 The site slopes gently downwards beyond the existing skyline development on Little Haw Lane and is well contained by mature treed hedgerows along its northern and western boundaries. Any development must respect the site's sloping nature and ensure that the visual enclosure of the site is maintained by the retention of existing hedgerows along Tickow Lane and within the site. The Council will also expect the developer to make adequate arrangements to secure their long term maintenance.
- 4.69 The density of development on the site should maximise the site's locational advantages while maintaining its important landscape features. It will also be important to ensure that the proposed dwellings and existing properties close to the site will not suffer a loss of amenity through overlooking and an unacceptable sense of enclosure or degree of overshadowing. Policy H/2 indicates a development of some 50 dwellings at a density of 30 dwellings per hectare in accordance with PPG3 density standards.
- 4.70 Anson Road is a minor approach road linking into the urban area. Development on the site should be accessed from it. The layout of the development should make provision for a safe and secure footpath and cycleway route to link Anson Road with Tickow Lane. Contributions will be sought to extend this route to the junction of McCarthy Road with Tickow Lane.

Land East of 19 Barkby Lane Syston

4.71 POLICY H/2(g)

Planning permission for residential development of land east of 19 Barkby Lane, Syston will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) vehicular access to the site is taken from Barkby Lane;
- ii) provision is made for highway improvements to the junction of Barkby Lane with Melton Road;

- iii) **provision is made for the extension and widening of the existing footpath on Barkby Lane incorporating street lighting;**
- iv) **a 20 metre landscaped buffer and suitable acoustic screening is provided alongside the railway line;**
- v) **the provision of additional planting to strengthen the existing hedgerows forming the western and northern site boundaries;**
- vi) **houses with windows facing the railway line are provided with suitable sound insulation;**
- vii) **provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority;**

In addition, the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development:

- a) **traffic management measures along Melton Road, Syston in the vicinity of the site;**
- b) **improved community and recreational facilities in the town.**

(see also in particular Policies H/2 and H/4)

- 4.72 This site lies on the southern edge of Syston and is bounded by the railway line to the east and existing housing to the north and west. The release of the site for housing has strategic advantages because of its location close to the Leicester urban area and Syston railway station. Development could take place without unnecessary intrusion into the wider area of open land lying to the south of Barkby Lane, designated as an area of Green Wedge separating Syston from Thurmaston.
- 4.73 With suitable landscaping and acoustic screening to the railway line, it is considered that a development of some 80 dwellings would be appropriate on this site in accordance with PPG3 density standards. Access should be provided from Barkby Lane and associated improvements will be required to the junction of Barkby Lane with Melton Road. These improvements will need to address the currently restricted visibility at this junction.
- 4.74 As with other housing allocations in Syston, this development will generate the need for additional education provision. The capacity of existing schools is inadequate and additional primary school accommodation needs to be provided.
- 4.75 Contributions may also be sought towards traffic management measures along Melton Road and to remedy any deficiencies in recreational facilities, allotment land and community facilities at Syston which would be made worse by the increase in population arising from this development.

Land at Barkby Road, Syston

4.76 POLICY H/2(h)

Planning permission for residential development of land at Barkby Road, Syston will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) **vehicular access to the site is taken from a new roundabout junction on Barkby Road;**
- ii) **provision is made for highway improvements to the junction of Barkby Road with Melton Road;**
- iii) **provision is made for traffic management measures along Queniborough Road, along Pembroke Avenue, Goodes Lane and through Barkby;**
- iv) **provision is made for pedestrian and cycle links to Central Avenue, Orchard Way and Lincoln Drive/Ruskin Avenue;**

- v) **substantial block planting and landscaping is provided to a minimum depth of 20 metres on the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site, and between the site and the adjoining Ridgemere Centre;**
- vi) **a form and layout is provided which ensures a high standard of amenity for residential properties within the site and safeguards the amenities of existing properties adjoining the site;**
- vii) **provision is made for additional school places generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority.**

In addition the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions to address the following matters generated by the development:

- a) **improved community and recreational facilities in the town;**
- b) **provision of additional allotment land;**
- c) **improved transport choice along the A6007 Melton Road.**

(See also in particular Policy H/2 and H/4)

- 4.77 Development in this location would not impinge upon attractive countryside, areas of local separation or Green Wedge. The site includes the southern part of the Ridgemere Centre and an adjacent nursery. Given the open nature of the landform a strong landscape framework will be required particularly along the eastern boundary with the countryside.
- 4.78 The site meets transport choice requirements although it is at the margins of the 1km catchment area for Syston railway station, and is served by bus services. In developing the site traffic management measures and local highway improvements will be required to mitigate the impact of traffic generated in Syston and through Barkby. Improved access by foot and cycle will also be needed. A contribution may be sought to improve the site's accessibility by bus and to encourage the provision of quality bus services and wider transport choice along the A607, Melton Road.
- 4.79 This development will generate the need for additional education provision. The capacity of existing schools is inadequate and additional primary school accommodation needs to be provided. In addition contributions may be sought to remedy any deficiencies in recreational facilities, allotment land and community facilities at Syston which will be made worse by the increase in population.

Land at Wysall Lane, Wymeswold

4.80 POLICY H/2(i)

Planning permission for the residential development of land east and west of Wysall Lane, Wymeswold will be granted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) **the design and layout of the site and associated highway works preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and respect the rural character of this part of the settlement;**
- ii) **substantial block planting and landscaping to a minimum depth of 20 metres is provided on the northern edge of the development;**
- iii) **the provision of additional planting to strengthen the existing hedgerows forming the eastern and western and part of the north-eastern site boundaries;**
- iv) **provision is made for additional school spaces generated by the development to be assessed in detail in consultation with the Director of Education, Leicestershire County Council and the local planning authority;**
- v) **the public footpath is retained as part of the development.**

In addition, the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions towards the provision of traffic management measures along the A6006 through Wymeswold, and Wysall Lane in the vicinity of the site.

(See also in particular Policies H/2 and H/4)

- 4.81 Wymeswold is one of the larger rural settlements in the Wolds area where some limited housing growth would be appropriate to help serve and sustain the Wolds communities. New housing development in the village would offer the prospect of securing an element of affordable housing to meet pressing local housing need, assist in providing choice in housing location across the Plan area, and contribute to the strategic housing requirement for the period to 2006. A site of some 2.3 hectares on either side of Wysall Lane is allocated for 70 dwellings in accordance with PPG3 density standards.

Implementation of Housing Allocations

- 4.82 Development briefs will be prepared to provide detailed guidance for the development of each site and to specify the distribution and balance of land uses. The briefs will usually be prepared by the local planning authority in consultation with prospective developers and will be intended to be attached to, and form part of, any planning permission. Planning permission will not normally be granted until the submission and agreement of a satisfactory planning solution in which a developer proposes to comply with any requirements set out in the site specific policies for each site, and other material considerations which may emerge.
- 4.83 The exact nature and extent of contributions from individual developments to improved transport choice, local highway and other infrastructure, and related community and environmental benefits will be a matter for negotiation between landowners/developers and the local planning authority having regard to current government guidance on planning obligations
- 4.84 Each new development will be expected to provide a range of accommodation, including an element of affordable units to meet local needs. Provision will also be needed for recreational facilities, appropriate landscaping and any infrastructure and community facilities which are necessary and related to the development. A developer will be expected to fund or provide these requirements in association with site development.
- 4.85 Provision of open space, landscaped areas and recreation/leisure facilities will need to accord with areas shown on the Proposals Map. Such provision will need to be accompanied by arrangements agreed with the Borough Council for their long term management and maintenance. This will normally be through the transfer of land to the Borough Council. For small areas of open space, recreation facilities, childrens play space or landscaping which are principally for the benefit of the development itself, the payment of a commuted sum for future maintenance may be sought.

Density

4.86 POLICY H/3

Planning permission will be granted for new housing layouts where the density proposed makes efficient use of land resources, safeguards the character and amenities of established housing areas, allows for appropriate open space provision and landscaping and reflects the demographic characteristics of the population.

High density developments will be permitted on sites within or adjoining Loughborough Town Centre or other District Centres, or other locations within existing limits to development well served by public transport.

Low density developments will not be permitted unless the development would complement the distinctive character of a locality or create a special feature as part of a new housing area.

(See also in particular Policy H/1, H/2)

- 4.87 It is accepted there will be variations in the density of new developments to reflect different site characteristics and different needs.
- 4.88 In the past a net density of 25 dwellings/hectare has been assumed as an average for the yield of housing sites. This has led to an underestimate of housing provision over time and also represents an inefficient use of land that cannot be sustained. PPG3 requires local planning authorities to encourage housing development which makes more efficient use of land and to seek greater intensity of development at locations with good public transport accessibility. For the allocated sites in the Plan, a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare is indicated in accordance with PPG3. Where sites are well located in relation to existing town or village centres well served by public transport, higher densities have been assumed. Under Policies H/1 and H/2 some 1,278 dwellings are provided in total on a mix of greenfield and previously developed sites covering 41.6 hectares, resulting in an average density of 31 dwellings per hectare.
- 4.89 Other developments coming forward during the Plan period on sites within or adjoining Loughborough town centre or the district centres as identified in the Proposals Map, or locations within urban areas well served by public transport, will be expected to achieve high net densities. High density development will normally be at 40 dwellings per hectare (16 dwellings per acre) or more.
- 4.90 In overall terms it is expected that the increasing element of smaller households identified in the 2001 Census and other demographic studies, together with the focussing of development in transport choice locations should be reflected over the plan period in increasing densities of development. Actual densities achieved will be monitored annually to enable analysis over time of changing densities, and to inform the appropriate policy responses.

General Guidance on Provision for Affordable Housing

4.91 POLICY H/4

The Council will institute, and keep under review assessments of needs for affordable housing and other specialist housing needs. The Borough Council will seek to negotiate the provision of affordable housing to meet the targets specified on the following allocated sites which are considered suitable for affordable housing and are located in areas where an affordable housing needs has been identified:

H/2(a)	Land North of Bradgate Road, Anstey	approximately 15 dwellings
H/2(b)	Land between Cotes Road and Willow Way, Barrow upon Soar	approximately 55 dwellings
H/1(a)	Land off Nottingham Road, Barrow upon Soar	approximately 5 dwellings
H/2(c)	Land at Brook Street, Burton on the Wolds	approximately 10 dwellings
H/1(b)	Empress Road, Loughborough	approximately 5 dwellings
H/2(d)	Land at Peartree Lane, Loughborough	approximately 15 dwellings
H/1(c)	Former Factory, Churchside/ Forest Street, Shepshed	approximately 5 dwellings
H/2(f)	Land at Little Haw Farm, Shepshed	approximately 8 dwellings
H/2(g)	Land east of 19 Barkby Lane, Syston	approximately 12 dwellings
H/2(h)	Land Barkby Road, Syston	approximately 55 dwellings
H/2(i)	Land at Wysall Lane, Wymeswold	approximately 15 dwellings

- 4.92 Advice in PPG3 and Circular 6/98 makes it clear that where a need for affordable housing has been established, it is a material consideration that can properly be taken into account in determining planning applications. For the purposes of this policy, affordable housing is defined as both low cost market and subsidised housing, irrespective of tenure or ownership (whether exclusive or shared) or financial arrangements, available to people who cannot afford houses generally available on the open market in the local area. Households in affordable need are considered to be those households whose annual income represents less than 40% of the average purchase price of a terraced property in the area. This is based on evidence of incomes and house prices available from the 1995 Housing Needs Survey.
- 4.93 The 1995 Housing Needs Survey sought to identify housing needs in the area over the five year period to 2000. The results of this survey, coupled with an analysis of the Council's Housing Waiting List, experience of the Council's housing officers and a study of the existing stock of affordable housing, have been used to establish the scale of affordable housing need in the Borough.
- 4.94 The findings of the Housing Needs Survey are summarised in the document "Analysis of the 1995 Housing Needs Survey". The survey looked at those respondents expressing a need for housing and the amount that they could afford for housing. The analysis compared this income information with local property prices to estimate the number of households which would be unable to afford market prices and therefore would be likely to be in need of affordable housing.
- 4.95 Based on average house prices and rent levels locally in 1996, the analysis concluded that those households responding to the survey expressing a need for housing and having income levels below £15,000 per year or being able to pay less than £60 per week rent, would find it difficult to buy or rent on the open market. On this basis it was concluded that some 537 households were in immediate need of affordable housing and a further 1,500 had a need over the 5 year period to the year 2000, amounting to a total need of some 2,037 dwellings.
- 4.96 In terms of the distribution of this need the survey suggested that some 700 (34%) of those households wished to live in the Loughborough area, 154 (7%) in Syston, 122 (6%) in Birstall and 73 (4%) and 72 (4%) in Barrow upon Soar and Quorn.
- 4.97 As at March 1996 there were some 890 households registered on the Council's Housing Waiting List. Some 60% of these applicants were elderly, 20% were families and 20% singles and couples. In terms of distribution, 207 applicants (23%) wished to live in Loughborough, 106 (12%) in Birstall and 133 (15%) in Syston.
- 4.98 Analysis of trends in recent years suggests that in the region of some 300 applicants register on the list each year. Relets within the Council's own housing stock accommodate approximately 290 households from the list a year. As a result numbers on the list have remained relatively static, with new registrations being balanced by relets.
- 4.99 In its Housing Strategy Statement submitted as part of the HIP bid, the Council made a commitment to reducing its housing waiting list, particularly for families. This will only be possible through an increase in the affordable housing stock, as currently relets in the existing stock are only maintaining the list at its present level. The Housing Strategy Statement indicated a target of providing accommodation for 125 families a year to reduce the scale of the waiting list. This accommodation could be provided through purchases of existing properties as well as new build.
- 4.100 The Housing Needs Survey can only provide an indication of the scale of housing need in the Borough. Whilst a response rate of 40% was achieved, the age profile of respondents did not reflect the profile for the Borough as a whole, with a disproportionately high number of elderly respondents. However, the information obtained does provide an important indicator on the nature and scale of housing need in the Borough that can be compared with other information sources including the Council's Housing Waiting List. On the basis of the information from the Housing Needs Survey and the Waiting List, it is considered that there are at least 1,000-1,500 households in need of affordable housing in the Borough.
- 4.101 The existing stock of affordable housing can be identified from the 1991 Census and information on housing completions over the last six years. The 1991 Census showed some 11,712 rented properties in the Borough, of which the majority (7,150, 61%) were Council

properties. Of the total stock of rented accommodation, some 48% was in Loughborough. Including Shepshed, this figure becomes 57%. In some Loughborough wards over 47% of households are in the rented sector. It is in the southern parishes where the proportion of rented households falls below 20%.

- 4.102 Since 1991 permission has been granted for some 500 additional Housing Association properties, making up 10% of permissions over this period. Over 60% of these new properties were in the Loughborough area.
- 4.103 For the Council's housing stock, evidence shows that on average some 400 properties become available for reletting each year, amounting to some 5.6% of the stock. The effect of these relets in the existing stock is to keep the housing waiting list static. However relets in the Council and other rented sectors will meet some of the identified need within the Borough.
- 4.104 Whilst in terms of numbers, the greatest housing need appears to be in the Loughborough area, this is also the location with a large supply of rented accommodation. In relative terms, housing need is likely to be more acute in settlements where the mismatch between need and available stock is the greatest. Comparing the potential for relets within those settlements where a significant level of need was identified in the survey indicates that, in relative terms, housing need is most acute in Birstall, Quorn and Syston. In Birstall it would take almost 6 years to meet the identified need through relets of existing stock compared with some 2 years in Loughborough. These findings bear out Housing Officers' experience which suggests that the needs of housing waiting list applicants in Birstall and Syston are the more critical because of the limited supply of rented housing.
- 4.105 Circular 6/98 suggests that local authorities should seek to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of types of housing within areas. The targets specified in the policy seek to secure an element of affordable housing in those areas of identified need and where there is an existing limited stock of affordable housing.
- 4.106 It is recognised that the amount of affordable housing that can be secured on allocated sites is limited when compared with the scale of need identified. The targets specified take into account the scale of need in the locality, the size of the site and its suitability for affordable housing. Guidance in Circular 6/98 suggests that affordable housing should only be sought on developments of 25 dwellings or more or residential sites of 1 hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings. The allocated sites identified meet these size thresholds, are in areas of need and are well located in relation to local services, facilities and public transport. Based on the economics of site provision and experience of negotiating affordable provision elsewhere, the targets represent no more than 15-20% of the development capacity of sites. The Borough Council has considered whether lower thresholds should be set for those rural settlements in the Borough with populations of 3,000 or less. For the smaller rural settlements it is considered that the rural exceptions policy as detailed as Policy H/4 provides the appropriate mechanism to secure affordable housing. For other settlements there is insufficient evidence to justify the application of lower thresholds. Many of these settlements are within 3km of other settlements where either affordable housing will be negotiated on allocated sites, or windfall sites will provide opportunities to secure affordable housing.
- 4.107 The Borough Council will either seek to negotiate a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or impose conditions to secure the levels of affordable housing specified.
- 4.108 The demand for social housing is analysed each year for the Housing Strategy Statement. It is also intended that the Housing Needs Survey will be regularly reviewed and repeat surveys undertaken where necessary to ensure that the information remains up to date and relevant.

Affordable Housing on Unallocated Sites

4.109 POLICY H/5

For housing developments not allocated in the Plan which come forward in areas of identified need, the Borough Council will seek to negotiate an element of affordable housing provided:

- i) the site is close to a range of local services and facilities and easily accessible by public transport, and;**

- ii) **the provision of affordable housing would not prejudice the achievement of other key planning objectives identified in relation to the development of the site and;**
- iii) **the development incorporates a range and mix of housing types.**

- 4.110 The scale of affordable housing sought on allocated sites will not meet the scale of need identified by the Housing Needs Survey and the Council's Housing Waiting List. Where additional windfall housing sites come forward in areas of identified need, the Council will seek to secure an element of affordable housing. Provision will only be sought on sites that meet the size thresholds detailed above, and will be at a scale commensurate with the remaining identified need, taking into account the suitability of the site and the economics of provision.
- 4.111 Where the affordable housing secured on sites is to be managed by a registered social landlord, this is likely to be an effective way of controlling occupancy to ensure that the accommodation remains available to those in need. In circumstances where a registered landlord is not involved, the Borough Council will seek to enter into a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to ensure that affordable housing is available for local people in need and is secured in the long term. Local people in need will be considered to be those people in households whose annual income is less than 40% of the average purchase price of a terraced property in the area, who live within 3 kilometres of the site and are:
- on the Council's housing waiting list or register of another registered social landlord, or;
 - living in sub-standard accommodation, or;
 - sharing with other households, or;
 - employed within the local area, or;
 - immediate relatives of people who have been living in the local area for at least five of the last ten years.
- 4.112 If no occupiers are found within these categories, eligible people from elsewhere in the Borough will be considered.
- 4.113 For affordable housing involving low cost market housing, these eligibility criteria and the need to ensure housing is secured in the long term will not apply.
- 4.114 Whilst the provision of affordable housing on suitable sites is the preferred option, the provision of a financial contribution from a developer towards the provision of affordable housing in or near the settlement concerned may also be considered.

Affordable Housing in the Rural Areas

4.115 POLICY H/6

In those areas where market housing sites would not be suitable or are not able to provide affordable housing to meet local needs planning permission will be granted on an exceptions basis for small-scale schemes providing for affordable housing.

This exceptions policy will apply to sites where housing would be contrary to normally applicable policies and when all the following criteria are met:

- i) **a local need within approximately 3km of the site for a specific scale, type, tenure and price range of affordable housing has been identified by the Borough Council, or through an appropriate local survey, the format of which has been agreed by the Borough Council;**
- ii) **the proposed scheme is shown to be economically viable on the basis of building the affordable housing without any enabling development;**

- iii) **the scale, location, details of development are compatible with the form, function and character of the settlement and the local environment;**
- iv) **the affordable housing could not be provided on allocated sites, or through infill, redevelopment or conversion within established limits to development located within approximately 3km of the site;**
- v) **the benefits of the affordable housing are guaranteed for the local community in the long term preferably by the involvement of a registered housing association or local trust to manage the housing and the signing of a secure agreement between the Borough Council and relevant parties.**

4.116 This policy allows for small scale “exceptions” affordable housing schemes to serve people or families who are unable to afford to buy or rent a dwelling in their village at the prevailing market values but who could buy or rent genuinely affordable housing. To be acceptable proposals must provide solely for local needs identified on the basis of the Borough Council’s ‘Housing Needs Survey’ or equivalent evidence. Mixed schemes of high value market housing and affordable housing on the same site will not be acceptable within this policy.

4.117 In general sites will only be released on an exceptional basis in villages of less than 3,000 population where there is no realistic alternative means to provide the required affordable accommodation. The majority of new allocations and market housing sites are allowed for in and around Loughborough, Shepshed, settlements adjoining Leicester, in the Soar Valley south of Loughborough, and in the Wreake Valley. In these settlements affordable housing is not usually expected to be needed on exceptions sites. The need for exceptional releases is much more likely in the more rural parts of the Borough comprising the Wolds, the Charnwood Forest and the South-east Charnwood villages where the infrequent turnover in housing and higher prices commanded by rural property is more likely to deny low income groups access to the normal housing market.

4.118 People eligible for such “exceptions” schemes include:

- i) first time buyers;
- ii) retired people or people with disabilities who have lived or worked locally for at least 5 of the past 10 years;
- iii) those living in poor, sub-standard accommodation;
- iv) those sharing with other householders;
- v) people who are statutorily homeless and/or on the council’s housing waiting list;
- vi) immediate relatives of people already living in the local area for at least five of the last ten years.

All these groups could qualify for an “exceptions” housing scheme if people, by reason of their occupation, should need to remain in a specific area and are unable to buy/rent locally, or can demonstrate personal reasons for needing to live in a particular settlement. Local needs must be identified on the basis of detailed survey work taking into account the views of the relevant Parish Council or Parish Meeting.

4.119 Implementation of the policy will inevitably create pressure to release land in sensitive locations where housing would be contrary to normally applicable policies to protect, for example, important open spaces or the countryside. Schemes will only be permitted where they are shown to be acceptable in terms of impact on the local environment and community.

4.120 Any site could help meet needs in the vicinity in addition to, or in the absence of, more local needs. A distance of about 3km is considered appropriate to ensure good accessibility and to retain community links. Such a catchment area approach increases the likelihood of meeting needs throughout the Borough.

4.121 If ‘affordable’ accommodation under such schemes were ever likely to be left vacant because prospective occupiers did not pass the test of meeting genuine local need, consideration could be given to letting the accommodation on a temporary basis.

- 4.122 The affordable accommodation would be best secured in the long term through a legally binding agreement, usually a planning agreement.
- 4.123 To ensure the accommodation stays appropriate to meeting local needs the Council will normally, when granting planning permission, remove permitted development rights for extensions which could over time change the intended nature of the affordable accommodation.

Access Housing

4.124 POLICY H/7

The Borough Council will seek to negotiate with developers to provide dwellings specifically designed as mobility or wheelchair housing on new housing developments, including mixed use developments or changes of use of existing buildings, in areas where there is clear evidence of a local need. The best locations will be those located close to shops and public transport routes and on areas of level ground.

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would result in the loss of this type of residential accommodation.

- 4.125 'Access' housing is a term covering accommodation with specific design features allowing homes to be accessible to able-bodied and disabled people alike. A national survey by O.P.C.S (Prevalence of Disability Amongst Adults, Report 1, H.M.S.O, 1988) found 14% of all adults have at least one disability. The 2001 Census indicates about 15% of Charnwood residents have a limiting long term illness. Many of these will have some mobility problems and there is currently little access housing in the Borough.
- 4.126 Revisions to the Building Regulations aim to secure reasonable access for occupiers to be able to invite disabled people to visit, and to enable occupiers to stay longer in their homes should they experience declining mobility. However, they do not make provision for all new dwellings to facilitate independent living for people with disabilities.
- 4.127 It is desirable that new residential developments provide an element of adapted dwellings and ground floor elements of other accommodation to appropriate standards to meet local needs. In some cases needs can be met by attention to detail in conventional housing design and layout. People who use wheelchairs will generally require single storey accommodation with corridors and doors set wide enough for wheelchair access and above standard space to ensure full manoeuvrability.
- 4.128 The provision of such housing will be negotiated on suitable sites where there is evidence of local need. More work is needed to establish needs and standards locally for access housing. The proportion of access housing sought on sites will be based on an assessment of local needs and the suitability of the particular site in terms of its physical and locational characteristics.

Transit Site, Railway Terrace, Loughborough

4.129 POLICY H/8

Planning permission will be granted on land off Railway Terrace, Loughborough for a 10 pitch transit site for caravans occupied by gypsies and travellers, provided the following criteria are met:

- i) **vehicle access is taken from Falcon Street;**
- ii) **clear separation is maintained from existing housing areas and other activities;**
- iii) **landscaping, planting and screening measures are introduced to help assimilate the overall site in its surroundings and provide buffers between different uses on the site and the adjacent railway line;**

- iv) **a full assessment is undertaken to establish the extent of any site stability or landfill gas problems. Where problems are identified measures will need to be implemented to resolve them.**
- 4.130 There is at present no authorised provision for gypsies within the Borough although they are frequent visitors to the area. So far as Charnwood is concerned the County Council's 1992 study identified the need to provide one transit site of 10 pitches in the Loughborough area. In order to meet this need a transit site is proposed on part of the reclaimed landfill site off Railway Terrace on the north eastern edge of Loughborough.
- 4.131 A site in this location would comply with guidance in Circular 1/94 that gypsy caravan sites be located in areas frequented by gypsies and offer reasonable access to shops, schools and essential services. The transit site will need to be quite separate and discrete from existing and proposed activities in the locality. To this end independent access would be beneficial. Densely planted woodland will provide strong screening around the site. This and other landscaping will help separate, and minimise conflict between, different land uses on the site. Careful consideration needs to be given to ensure there are no problems related to site stability or landfill gas generation from the old landfill site. A survey to identify any risk and any measures necessary to resolve any identified problems will need to be included in any proposal.

Assessment of Gypsy Site Proposals

4.132 POLICY H/9

In the determination of planning applications for gypsy sites elsewhere in the plan area the Borough Council will take into account the following criteria:

- i) **a necessity is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Borough Council for a specific scale and type of accommodation;**
 - ii) **the proposed scheme is in a location and of a form sympathetic to the character and appearance of the surrounding area;**
 - iii) **the site has safe and convenient access to the main road network;**
 - iv) **adequate screening and landscaping can be provided to avoid visual intrusion;**
 - v) **the site is within reasonable travelling distance of schools, shops and other community activities;**
 - vi) **the proposed layout makes provision, where appropriate, for mixed residential and business uses.**
- 4.133 Circular 1/94 provides general guidance on the provision and location of sites, site characteristics and services. New provision will only be permitted to meet specific needs identified through a full quantitative assessment examining amongst other things traditional patterns of movement and demand for temporary and permanent accommodation.

Assessment of Travelling Showpeople Site Proposals

4.134 POLICY H/10

In the determination of planning applications to provide sites for travelling show people the Borough Council will take into account the following criteria:

- i) **any storage, maintenance or other non-residential elements would not significantly harm the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring properties or other uses;**
- ii) **site must have safe and convenient access to the main road network;**
- iii) **adequate screening and landscaping must be provided to avoid visual intrusion;**

- iv) **the site must be readily accessible to schools, shops and other community facilities.**

(See also in particular Policy TR/18)

- 4.135 Although there is no duty on local authorities to provide accommodation Circular 22/91 'Travelling Showpeople' states the needs of these people should be considered in local plan preparation, bearing in mind suitable sites would need to accommodate a mixture of residential, storage and maintenance uses.
- 4.136 This type of mixed use could be appropriate in a primarily residential area, provided any scheme demonstrates existing residential amenities could be safeguarded, and the site offers satisfactory access to the main road network.
- 4.137 The occupation of a travelling showpeople's site will be restricted, preferably by the signing of a legal agreement, to members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain and their immediate relations.

Houseboats

4.138 POLICY H/11

Planning permission will be granted for permanent mooring facilities and structures at locations within the defined limits to development and at marina sites, and for temporary facilities at other locations along the river and canal corridors where proposals:

- i) **provide proper vehicular and pedestrian access and car parking;**
 - ii) **do not restrict navigation along the waterway;**
 - iii) **provide adequate services and facilities;**
 - iv) **are of a design and layout sympathetic to the natural waterside environment and neighbouring uses and are not intrusive in the landscape or townscape;**
 - v) **safeguard the amenities of potential users of the moorings from any adverse effects from adjoining land uses and activities.**
- 4.139 The Borough is traversed by the Grand Union Canal and navigable sections of the rivers Wreake and Soar. These are assets for water-based recreation, and have potential to accommodate residential moorings in appropriate locations.
- 4.140 Proposals for residential and non-residential moorings will be considered in the policy context for the area in which they are located. Outside the urban area the Borough Council would prefer to see linear moorings for non-residential craft to encourage recreational use. Locations would need to be agreed with British Waterways.
- 4.141 Provision for houseboats will only be appropriate in environmentally acceptable locations and where the navigation would not be restricted in any way.

Student Halls of Residence

4.142 POLICY H/12

Planning permission will be granted for new buildings or the re-use of non-residential properties specifically for student accommodation at locations on, or readily accessible by cycle, public transport or on foot to, the university and college campuses.

Planning permission will be granted for developments which include reduced parking standards where it can be shown that there would be no adverse impact in the vicinity of the site.

(See also in particular Policies H/18 and TR/18)

- 4.143 The number of students attending Loughborough's University and Colleges is expected to increase during the plan period in accordance with Government policy to encourage one in three individuals to enter higher education by the year 2000. This will require more student accommodation. It should be noted that residential developments for student accommodation provided under this Policy will not be counted as making a contribution to meeting the overall housing requirement for the Borough.
- 4.144 The Town's higher education establishments will be expected to maximise the amount of accommodation provided on campus and so help reduce pressures on housing areas to accommodate students. Where sites are required off-campus they should have good access for non-car modes and be close to the campus.
- 4.145 As students generally have below average levels of car ownership the Borough Council may accept reduced parking standards where there would be no harmful knock-on effects such as excessive on-street parking. The Borough Council will seek to negotiate restrictions on the use of cars by residents and limiting the occupation of the properties to students in term time.

Houses in Multiple Occupation without On-site Supervision

4.146 POLICY H/13

Planning permission for the conversion of properties within primarily residential areas to hostels, self contained flats, cluster flats or to any use within Class C1 (hotels) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) will be granted provided the proposal would not:

- i) **introduce a potential source of noise and disturbance greater than that normally associated with a dwelling to the detriment of neighbouring residential amenities which could not be mitigated by careful planning of room layout and the use of sound insulation; and/or**
- ii) **adversely affect the general character and appearance of the surrounding area; and/or**
- iii) **necessitate associated extensions or external alterations inconsistent with the appearance of the property or its setting to the detriment of the street scene or neighbouring residential amenities; and/or**
- iv) **lead to a concentration of such uses damaging to the character and amenity of a street or residential area; and/or**
- v) **provide an external layout, design, and space standards which do not meet the needs and safety of residents, including people with mobility problems.**

(See also in particular Policy TR/18)

- 4.147 The existing housing stock offers opportunities to provide more accommodation for small households in flats, or for people living in a property sharing facilities. It should be noted that where a dwelling house is used by up to six individuals living as a household planning permission is not required. This policy applies to other types of multiple occupation.
- 4.148 In more densely developed areas with typically small terraced housing and little scope for off-street car parking the additional activity generated by multi-occupation households might be expected to be particularly intrusive to the detriment of neighbouring residential amenities. Such problems are likely to be greatest in the older housing areas of Loughborough, in close proximity to the University and other higher education sites where there are already concentrations of houses with multiple occupancy.
- 4.149 Elsewhere more generous space standards surrounding houses might be expected to diminish the potential for disturbance to acceptable levels. However each scheme would need to be considered on its merits having regard in particular to the relationship of a property to other dwellings and the number of bed spaces proposed.

- 4.150 The type of property best suited to conversion is likely to be a large two or three storey house, preferably detached, although larger three bed semi-detached houses with generous gardens and adequate off-street car parking might also present conversion opportunities. In general terms conversions are not usually feasible or desirable in smaller properties.
- 4.151 It will be important to provide garden space to meet the needs of the residents of the accommodation. The quantity and quality of garden space provided should have regard to the proximity of, and access to, parks and other public open space, the age group and mobility of residents, and the permanence of the residents in the property.
- 4.152 The level of car parking provision required should relate to existing standards having regard to the intensity of the use, the availability of car parking provision in the locality, and the age group and mobility of the residents. The overall intention should be to safeguard the local environment in terms of traffic generation and highway safety.
- 4.153 Where properties are approved for conversion they will also be required to provide satisfactory standards of accommodation having regard to the Borough Council's standards for the control of 'Housing in Multiple Occupation' (H.I.M.O's) for which powers for enforcement are available under the Housing Acts. Internal arrangements should be designed and constructed to minimise potential noise disturbance. Where appropriate conditions will be imposed on planning permissions to ensure adequate noise attenuation measures are provided.
- 4.154 If during the plan period the Borough Council considers there is unacceptable pressure for conversions in any location further detailed policy statements may be prepared. The conversion of a large number of houses in any locality to more intensive residential use is likely to unacceptably harm the residential character of an area and the balance of the community.

Care in the Community – Nursing, Residential Care, Rest Homes and Sheltered Housing (Class C2) Involving On-site Supervision

4.155 POLICY H/14

Planning permissions for nursing, residential care, rest homes and sheltered housing, and extensions to such homes, at locations within primarily residential areas will be granted provided the proposal would meet all the following criteria:

- i) provide an adequate amount of accommodation for warden/staff;**
- ii) provide adequate communal garden space;**
- iii) be located within easy reach of local shops and other facilities;**
- iv) provide an external layout, design and space standards to meet the needs and safety of residents including those with mobility problems and to minimise potential noise disturbance to and from adjacent properties;**
- v) ensure any development is of a scale, mass, design and detailing appropriate to the character of an area;**
- vi) not harm the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers;**
- vii) would not lead to a concentration of such uses damaging to the character and amenity of a street or residential area.**

Where sheltered housing is proposed it will be subject to a legal agreement restricting occupation to people over 60 years of age.

(See also in particular Policy TR/18)

- 4.156 The implementation of the Government's 'Care in the Community' programme will transfer people from institutions into housing accommodation within the community. Due to greater longevity there is also likely to be a need for further special homes and accommodation for the elderly.

- 4.157 In considering proposals care will be taken to ensure that the impact of schemes, individually and collectively, does not detract from the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and the wider residential area. Schemes will need to provide a suitable living environment, especially for long term residents, and help secure their integration into the local community.

Self-Contained Residential Annexes

4.158 POLICY H/15

Proposals for self-contained residential annexes in the form of extensions to existing dwellings which require planning permission will be permitted where they meet local plan guidance on extensions and provided they cannot be occupied as a separate dwelling.

Where an extension is not achievable for design or physical reasons planning permission will be granted for the conversion of an existing outbuilding or erection of a new building within the curtilage of the existing dwelling where such an annex:

- i) is compatible with the site and its surroundings; and**
- ii) is not of a form which could be occupied as a separate dwelling.**

Where an annex is in the form of a building which could be independently occupied but would not be acceptable as a separate dwelling a condition will be attached to ensure that occupation of the building is tied to the main dwelling.

- 4.159 People are living longer and often wish to retain some independence whilst being close to their family. On occasion the provision of self-contained accommodation in the form of 'granny flats or annexes' to existing dwellings can meet this specific need.
- 4.160 Schemes will only be appropriate where they are acceptable in planning terms, and permanently retained as part of the existing dwelling unit. The preferable means of achieving an annex would be by extension of an existing dwelling. If an extension is not achievable for design or physical reasons then conversion of an existing outbuilding is more acceptable than a new building.

Design and Layout of New Housing Developments

4.161 POLICY H/16

All new housing developments will be expected to achieve high standards of design and layout. On allocated sites and within the Primarily Residential Areas defined on the Proposals Map planning permission will be granted for residential purposes (Class C3) provided the design and layout:

- i) respects the character and appearance of the streetscene, adjoining residential areas and overall settlement form particularly in terms of scale, massing, materials and setting;**
- ii) takes account of the effect of variations in site levels and utilises elements of design, plot orientation, spacing of dwellings and landscape to foster energy conservation and create for occupiers and neighbours appropriate standards of privacy, access to natural lighting to primary rooms, exposure to direct sun lighting of garden areas and protection from sources of noise, excessive traffic movement or other disturbance;**
- iii) creates attractive and distinctive open spaces and play areas linked by pedestrian and cycle routes and garden spaces to function as a strong open space system for public and private use, recreation and amenity purposes;**
- iv) uses the landform and existing features in and around the site such as woodland, trees, hedges, streams, ponds, important buildings and structures imaginatively as the focus for new development;**

- v) **would not result in the loss of significant trees, land or landscape features of high amenity value nor other sites of historical or ecological value worthy of retention;**
- vi) **creates an individual sense of place with an identity based on attractive and distinctive townscape which makes imaginative use of key and corner dwellings individually and in groups, uses hard and soft landscaping measures creatively to define, contain, diversify and add interest to the overall layout and screen any potentially intrusive features, and provides attractive built frontages, walls and landscape areas onto roads, footpaths and other public areas;**
- vii) **creates a designed informal edge softening the visual impact of development onto areas of open land;**
- viii) **minimises the opportunity for crime by creating a safe and secure living environment;**
- ix) **provides a safe community environment based on attractive pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, and circulation space for residents and the general public especially those with disabilities and children;**
- x) **which accesses the majority of dwellings from a road network with vehicle speeds restricted to be compatible with pedestrian and road safety by appropriate design and traffic calming measures;**
- xi) **does not involve the loss of garages, parking space, social community, recreational or other facilities for which there is a need in the area;**
- xii) **would not prejudice the comprehensive development of a wider area;**
- xiii) **would not locate a housing area so close to an existing or proposed employment area falling within Classes B2 to B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or to any other use to the extent that the nature of the processes or activities undertaken therein would be detrimental to residential amenities.**

4.162 All new housing development will need to give full regard to its local surroundings particularly where proposals impinge upon sensitive buildings, areas or landscapes. The Borough Council will be concerned with the scale, the density and layout of buildings and structures and the appearance and treatment of spaces around buildings. The aim will be to ensure that new housing is accommodated without harming the local character and identity of a settlement or locality. There will be scope for innovative design solutions where it would achieve positive improvements to a locality and particularly where the traditional character has been lost or diminished.

4.163 Housing developments apart from complementing the character of a locality will also need to provide attractive and safe living environments for residents. The layout of housing areas should engender feelings of security by enabling the maximum casual supervision of a development by residents and passing pedestrians, cyclists and motorists during the day and by night.

4.164 The Borough Council will prepare design briefs to guide the development of all major housing and employment proposals and schemes in sensitive locations.

4.165 It is anticipated that within the defined primarily residential areas opportunities will continue to arise on small infill sites, vacant or underused land and through the redevelopment of redundant land and property. In combination these sites are expected to make a significant contribution to overall housing needs. Their early beneficial development will avoid the accumulation of vacant and derelict land, and diminish the need to allocate "green field" sites for development. However all such development must aim to provide a high quality residential environment for the benefit of the home owners and the occupiers of existing properties on adjacent land. The above criteria will be applied to ensure that development achieves these objectives and does not take place in unsuitable locations. Further advice on design matters is given in the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- 4.166 The provisions of the policy will be applied rigorously in all circumstances but especially so in respect of backland development. Backland development is typically residential development within the rear gardens of existing houses, although in some instances it may involve underused allotments or other vacant land within an established residential area. Pressure for development of this type is usually found in areas where the original housing layouts were spacious with long back gardens. Backland development by its very nature will be sensitive requiring particular care in its design and layout to avoid conflict with established residential amenities together with suitable vehicular access. Backland development enclosed on all sides by existing urban land use is likely to represent a further useful source of small scale housing from unplanned sites. However backland development in other circumstances is likely to intrude upon adjacent rural amenities and/or conflict with the established settlement form to the detriment of its particular character and appearance.
- 4.167 One particular form of backland development, “tandem development”, being the building of a single property immediately in front, or to the rear of an existing dwelling will be limited by the policy to those situations where the amenities of all surrounding dwellings, together with those of the original “host” property, can be adequately safeguarded and there is no opportunity for a more comprehensive scheme.
- 4.168 Sites for residential caravans and mobile homes will be acceptable in principle within the primarily residential areas. Planning applications for such development will be determined within the same policy context as that for conventional housing. When acceptable such development will be controlled and regulated by appropriate planning conditions and site licensing provisions.

Extensions to Dwellings

4.169 POLICY H/17

Where Planning permission is required for a residential extension to an existing dwelling or for a garage, permission will be granted provided the development meets all of the following criteria:

- i) it remains compatible in scale, mass, design and use of materials with the original dwelling;**
 - ii) it would not appear as an intrusive or incongruous feature in the streetscene to the detriment of visual amenities;**
 - iii) it would not prove detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties by reason of overshadowing, dominance, or substantial loss of privacy or light;**
 - iv) it would not involve the removal of areas of existing landscaping important to the character of the location.**
- 4.170 Many extensions to existing dwellings and ancillary buildings within associated garden areas do not require the specific grant of planning permission being deemed permitted development under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. However when a proposal exceeds the permitted development allowances or falls outside the criteria affording exemption, planning permission will be required. In these circumstances the Borough Council will act to ensure that development remains in keeping with the original property and the surrounding area without injury to the amenity of residents. Further detailed guidance concerning the design of extensions is given in the Borough Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Non-Residential Uses in Primarily Residential Areas

4.171 POLICY H/18

Planning permission will not be granted for non-residential development in ‘Primarily Residential Areas’ unless all the following criteria are met:

- i) the use can be accommodated without damaging the amenity of nearby residents or of the area by reason of noise, vibration, illumination, smell, fumes, soot, ash, dust, grit or other source of nuisance;
 - ii) the use can be accommodated in a building consistent in its scale, use of materials and massing of individual elements with the established form and character of adjacent residential areas;
 - iii) the use is of a scale and intensity compatible with a residential area;
 - iv) the introduction of the new use would not lead to a loss of off-street residential parking provision;
 - v) the use does not lead to a material increase in traffic generation, in particular of heavy goods vehicles onto residential streets.
- 4.172 On occasion opportunities arise to accommodate uses other than residential in established housing areas. Such alternative uses will only be acceptable where it is clearly demonstrated that there would be no material damage to the amenities and character of the housing area.
- 4.173 The most compatible uses would be small-scale, Class B1 uses, shopping facilities for purely local needs, or community facilities.

Residential Development at Locations Within the Limits to Development but Outside the Primarily Residential Areas

4.174 POLICY H/19

In locations within the Limits to Development but outside the Primarily Residential Areas planning permission will be granted for the extension, subdivision, replacement or change of use to residential institutions of existing dwellings provided the proposal meets the criteria for housing development and extensions set out in this Plan.

- 4.175 Small pockets of residential accommodation occur within areas where employment uses are predominant. In these situations the occupiers of properties will normally be allowed to modify, or replace, the housing element provided the proposed development would safeguard the character and amenity of the area and provide an acceptable living environment. The introduction of new residential accommodation in employment areas will not normally be appropriate as it could conflict with and constrain the employment land use potential and create unsatisfactory living accommodation for the occupiers.
- 4.176 Elsewhere within the limits to development new residential development will usually be restricted to locations in town and village centres where housing is an acceptable use, perhaps as part of redevelopment schemes.

The Ridgeway Area of Rothley

4.177 POLICY H/20

Within the Ridgeway Area of Rothley as defined on the Proposals Map, proposals for infill dwellings, and other development requiring planning permission, will not be granted unless they are in keeping with the unique, spacious and dignified residential character of the area having regard to all of the following criteria:

- i) the siting, design and layout of the development;
- ii) the shape and size of plot for any proposed new dwelling;
- iii) the need to protect privacy and residential amenities;
- iv) the need to protect existing trees;
- v) access and parking arrangements;

(See also in particular Policy CT/5)

- 4.178 The Ridgeway Area of Rothley is a remnant of an uncompleted early 20th century garden suburb development. It is an attractive local feature of historic and architectural interest.
- 4.179 Specific policy guidance, as included in the adopted Soar Valley Local Plan, has been successfully applied over the past 20 years to control development proposals within the individual housing areas. This guidance has strong local support.
- 4.180 It will be applied to ensure that all development proposals requiring planning permission such as houses, large garages and other buildings and structures are carefully assessed and only permitted where they would be in keeping with the traditional, spacious and dignified character of the residential areas. Proposals for tandem development would not be in keeping with the unique character of the area, and are unlikely to be permitted.

Improvement of Existing Housing Areas

- 4.181 The Borough Council will continue to encourage residents to improve their properties within the appropriate legislation and with the aid of available grants where properties qualify for assistance. Area based improvement will be achieved through the implementation of a phased program of environmental improvement schemes, such as traffic calming in those areas meriting priority treatment.
- 4.182 The Housing Act 1990 restructured the system of housing improvement grants and area designations. Previous area designation ('General Improvement Areas') are to be re-assessed against a new set of criteria from which 'Housing Renewal Areas' will be declared where appropriate. The identification of any such areas within the Borough will be undertaken as part of a review of the Borough Council's "Housing Renewal Strategy" originally adopted in 1977.
- 4.183 The Director of Legal and Environmental Services is responsible for dealing with unsatisfactory accommodation in the Borough, including the allocation of available grants.
- 4.184 Subject to available finance the Borough Council will continue a programme of housing improvement and area environmental improvements.

The Role of the Borough Council in Housing

- 4.185 The role of the Borough Council in housing has two main aspects:
- a legal duty to consider and assess the need for housing within the Borough:

Sources of data such as census information, the Housing Waiting List and the Borough wide Housing Needs Survey allow a detailed assessment to be made of the requirement for housing. This information is used to assist in allocating land for housing within the local plan and also to identify areas where affordable and special needs housing is required in the future.
 - the power to provide accommodation to meet the needs identified:

Although the Borough Council has an important role as a landlord, its main role is increasingly to enable other organisations to provide new housing, rather than providing the housing itself. This role is maximised by providing funding to housing associations and other providers to meet part of the cost of new affordable housing development. The Borough Council may also provide land for such schemes but this resource is now greatly reduced.

In future it is intended that the enabling role will be extended to make use of policy H/4, which relates to an element of affordable housing being provided on sites allocated for housing where there is an identified need.
- 4.186 Every year the Borough Council produces a Housing Strategy Statement. This identifies the housing needs within the Borough and explains how these needs are to be met. The Housing Strategy Statement demonstrates the Borough Council's commitment to working with a range of partners to improve the existing housing provision in Charnwood and, as the highest priority, to generate new housing for rent and sale.