



## Welcome to your newsletter

Welcome to the April edition of Planning and Regeneration News, the newsletter of Charnwood Borough Council's Planning and Regeneration Service.

We hope you find it interesting and if you would like us to consider issues in future articles please let us know, email [localplans@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:localplans@charnwood.gov.uk)

## Study of future growth in Leicester and Leicestershire is released

The Leicester and Leicestershire local planning authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership published a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) in January 2017.



The study investigated government household and population projections, the impacts of migration, births, deaths and where people work, along with market signals and economic trends and forecasts to assess the need for housing and employment land over the next 20 years to 2036.

The report says there is a need for 117,900 homes in Leicester and Leicestershire between 2011 and 2036 to meet the demands of a growing population. For Charnwood this equates to 994 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2036.

It also identifies a need for up to 40 hectares of land for office development, 19 hectares of land for manufacturing, and 13 hectares of land for warehouse and distribution floor space in Charnwood.

The study is an important part of the evidence base for Local Plans and the Strategic Growth Plan being prepared jointly by the city, county, borough and district councils and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP).

The HEDNA will need to be brought together with other pieces of evidence through the plan-making process to identify where new housing can be delivered and to set future housing and employment land targets.

Until the HEDNA has been tested through this process, the Council will continue to use the Charnwood Core Strategy and its requirement for 820 homes a year and 75 hectares of employment land between 2011 and 2028, to make decisions on planning applications and deliver strategic growth sites.

The executive summary and full HEDNA report can be found on the **Strategic Growth Plan website**.

# Barrow neighbourhood plan takes shape

A significant step has been made by Barrow upon Soar Parish Council which has formally submitted its Neighbourhood Plan to the borough council for consultation and independent examination.

The Plan has been developed by the local community and is based upon robust evidence and extensive consultation. It covers issues such as the countryside; local green spaces; the village centre; infrastructure; the road network; walking and cycling; housing provision and employment.

The pre-examination consultation started on March 10 and runs until Friday April 21 2017.



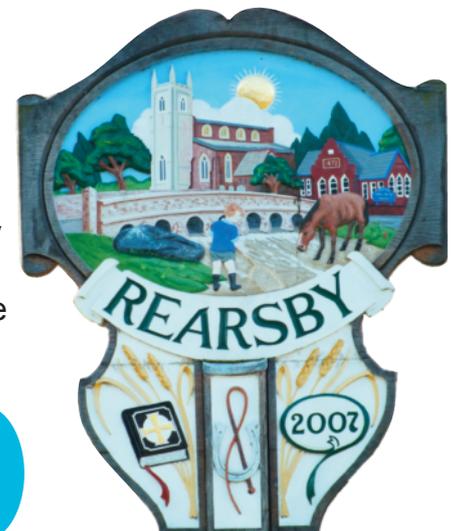
Once the consultation has ended, the borough council will appoint an independent inspector to examine the plan and the representations made during the six week consultation. Further information on the consultation can be viewed on the [Council's Local Plan website](#).

Barrow upon Soar are the second Parish Council to reach this stage in the development of their Neighbourhood Plan. They follow in the footsteps of Thurcaston and Cropston Parish Council who have completed their Neighbourhood Plan – it becoming part of the development plan in December 2016 and now being used to help make decisions on planning applications.



## Consultation in Rearsby

Rearsby Parish Council has also been working hard to complete a draft of their Neighbourhood Plan which is now the subject of a six-week pre-submission consultation which runs until the May 3, 2017. Once the consultation has ended the Parish Council will consider any representations that are made and amend their plan accordingly, if needs be. For further information on the Neighbourhood Plan, please visit the [Rearsby Neighbourhood Plan website](#).



*Did you know that the parishes of Sileby, Quorn and Queniborough have recently been designated as neighbourhood areas, taking the total number of designated neighbourhood areas in Charnwood to nine?*

# Regeneration for Watermead

An Action Plan for Watermead Regeneration Corridor was endorsed by Cabinet in March 2017. The Action Plan sets out a series of projects that together support the regeneration of Thurmaston, help to restore the remaining mineral workings and maximise the potential of the Country Park. The projects include:

- establishing a unified management structure for Watermead Country Park
- new pedestrian links between the County and City administered parts of the Country Park
- improving east/west connectivity across Thurmaston and improving entrances to the Country Park
- redevelopment/reuse of buildings within Thurmaston Village Centre, including the Old School
- bike hire, boat trips and moorings
- a new Country Park visitors' centre
- public realm improvements to Thurmaston Village Centre
- options testing for redevelopment opportunities in Pinfold and Bridge Industrial Estates in Thurmaston
- habitat enhancements
- using the Country Park for the staging of events

Watermead Regeneration Corridor  
Regeneration Framework  
Prepared for Charnwood Borough Council  
November 2016



The Regeneration Action Plan for the Corridor has been prepared through stakeholder engagement and the Council is now working with partners to deliver the Action Plan. The next steps are to establish the governance arrangements that will enable projects within the Regeneration Framework to be delivered. The [Regeneration Framework can be viewed here.](#)

## Reducing our impact on the environment

The Charnwood Carbon Management Plan 2015 to 2020 looks to reduce the Council's emissions by 20% by 2020 and reduce the cost of energy.

As part of this agenda the Council also has a Climate Local Action Plan and participates in a project called Green Impact, run by the National Union of Students which encourages changes in behaviour to reduce the impacts people and organisations have on the environment.

The Green Impact Awards have been running for three years with officer teams from the Council working their way through a series of challenges and activities. Whilst Green Impact is primarily designed for office based activities, lead members have asked officers to prepare and launch a members Green Impact pledge – asking if they would commit to undertaking a single action within their community, at home and in their interactions with the Council during a period of six months.

**nus**

The scheme is intended to show how borough councillors can influence change within their community.

**green impact**

Green Impact can of course also be of use to town and parish councillors. If you are interested in knowing more about Green Impact or the changes you could make please contact Maria French, Sustainability Officer on 01509 634802 or at [Maria.French@Charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:Maria.French@Charnwood.gov.uk)

## Lettings board order is renewed

An order which prevents the display of letting boards in the Storer Road area of Loughborough was renewed by the Secretary of State on December 22.

The 'Regulation 7 Direction' Order lapses every five years and has been renewed a number of times which shows the support and importance the Inspector has placed on the control of letting boards in Loughborough.

The renewal of the Order will support compliance with the 'Voluntary Code' whereby the Council has an agreement with letting agents and landlords that they do not display letting boards in the traditional fashion but instead display a smaller board, A3 in size, flat above the front door of the property. This results in a reduced impact of the letting boards on the street scene and character of the area.

The Enforcement Team will continue to monitor the situation, particularly as the planning restrictions laid out in the 2011 Article 4 Direction Order (used to help control houses in multiple occupation) begin to take effect. They will also monitor surrounding areas to see if they should be included in the Order in future.

*Did you know there are 2,503 HiMOs in Loughborough with the highest concentration in the wards adjacent to the university?*

## Progress being made with urban extensions

The Council continues to work in close partnership with the promoters of the North East of Leicester Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) to deliver much needed new homes.

The SUE is identified in the Core Strategy as a strategic development site and will deliver 4,500 new homes and 13 hectares of employment land.

The S106 legal agreement for the SUE was signed during July 2016 and planning permission formally issued on the August 4, 2016. The phase one proposals have been subject to a Design Review Panel during the summer of 2016 which have helped to inform the detailed design elements of the proposals.

Physical works are planned to start on site by the autumn of this year, with the first residents moving in during the summer of 2018.

The West of Loughborough SUE is also included as a strategic development site in the Core Strategy and will deliver 3,000 new homes and 16 hectares of employment land.

The Council is working closely with the promoters of this SUE to progress its delivery. A resolution to grant outline planning permission was given during September 2015 and the S106 agreement for the SUE is planned to be signed in Spring 2017.

Significant work has been undertaken on ecology, landscaping and highways and site preparation will start in early 2018, with the first housing completions expected in spring 2018.

The activities undertaken to date demonstrate the significant progress being made on the delivery of the SUEs and much needed homes in Charnwood.



# Government paper on housing market

The Government has published a new Housing White Paper which sets out its plans to reform the housing market and boost the supply of new homes in England. The White Paper, which was published on February 7, sets out the support the Government will provide to enhance the capacity of local authorities and industry to build new homes.



What does the White Paper say?

For local authorities the Government is offering higher planning fees and funding to help resource planning departments to deliver growth, a simplified plan-making process and more funding for infrastructure.

For private developers, the Government is offering a planning framework that is more supportive of higher levels of development, with quicker and more effective processing and determination of planning applications.

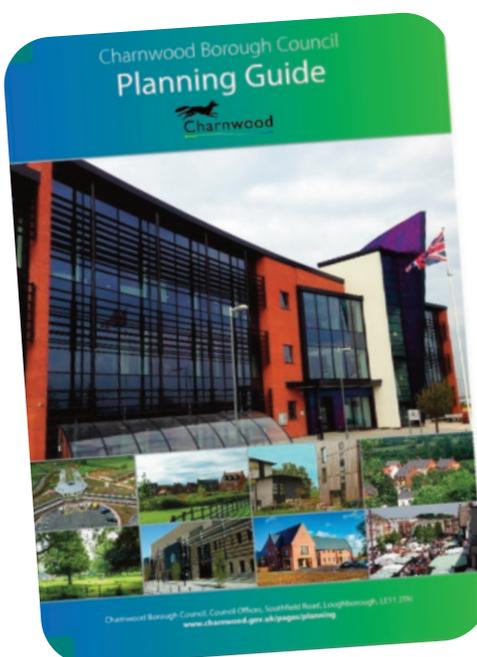
For local communities, the Government is offering a simpler and clearer planning process that makes it easier for them to get involved and shape plans for their area.

The government is also intending to make it easier for local authorities to take action against those who do not build homes after planning permissions have been granted.

For housing associations and other not for profit developers, the Government has already announced funding worth a total of £7.1 billion through an expanded Affordable Homes Programme and will also provide clarity over future rent levels.

The Government is consulting until the May 2, 2017 on a range of specific planning proposals that are intended to deliver the reforms from the White Paper. The proposals are set out in Annex A of the Housing White Paper which can be [viewed online](#).

*Did you know that since the 1970s, there have been on average 160,000 new homes built in England each year? The consensus is that we need 225,000 to 275,000 homes a year to keep up with population growth and start to tackle years of under-supply.*



## Updated planning guide

The Council has published an updated Planning Guide which gives a useful and helpful introduction to the planning and building control processes.

The guide, which was published in December, takes account of the most up to date planning regulations and is a useful reference document for any general planning-related queries.

The guide also includes advertisements for various construction related services and therefore provides a useful starting point for both submitting proposals and getting work underway once proposals have received the necessary approvals.

A copy of the guide can be [viewed online](#) and hard copies are available on request.

# Showcasing Charnwood to businesses

Over 3,800 business people attended the recent Love Business Expo 2017 held at Donnington Park exhibition centre in February.

It is the largest business exhibition in the East Midlands and Charnwood Borough Council was among the exhibitors.

Officers from the Planning and Regeneration service were joined by colleagues from Regulatory Services on a stand to promote

how the Council can support businesses in Charnwood and to promote the borough as an ideal place for business investment and relocations. Also helping to promote the borough at the event were Strategic Director Eileen Mallon and the Head of planning and Regeneration Richard Bennett, plus councillors.

As part of the Council's drive to increase inward investment, the stand featured a wide range of information, including a pack specifically put together for the exhibition, explaining the borough's range of sites for commercial development, its attractiveness to potential investors and what businesses can expect from our planning services. There was also information available on how businesses already located in Charnwood can be supported by the Regeneration and Economic Development Team and through the 'Better Business For All' initiative.

For further information, please contact Christopher Grace, Regeneration and Economic Development Officer on 01509 634 534.



## Enterprise Zone will have a big impact

During February 2017, Marcus Jones MP announced the designation of a new enterprise zone in Loughborough and Leicester which is expected to have a major impact on the delivery of growth and jobs in Loughborough over the next 25 years.

The new zone is branded as a science and innovation enterprise zone and includes Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park, Charnwood Campus (ex Astra Zeneca) and Leicester's Waterside and Pioneer Park, alongside the National Space Centre. The project is being delivered through a consortium of site owners and local authority partners under the overall direction of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership.

The key benefit of an Enterprise Zone is the provision made for the local retention of 100 per cent of business rates accrued from development within the enterprise zone over 25 years. This is expected to deliver a fund of about £410 million which will be ploughed back into essential infrastructure to enable the delivery of the enterprise zone sites and to support the wider Leicestershire economy. Other benefits of an Enterprise Zone include relief from business rates for five years, superfast broadband and local authorities are encouraged to offer a more flexible or responsive planning regime.

The first big achievement for the new Enterprise Zone will see local company 3M move its headquarters and some laboratory based functions onto the Charnwood Campus site. This will help to contribute towards creating a new centre of excellence for life science and biomedical sector businesses.

The Enterprise Zone announcement also marks a significant step forward in delivering a Core Strategy priority commitment.

## Inspectorate backs the Council in most appeals

Planning appeals against decisions made by the development management team range from enforcement appeals and small scale householder applications through to major applications such as at Nanpantan Road, Loughborough.

During the period between April 1 2016 and February 28 2017, the Planning Inspectorate supported the council in refusing planning permission on 26 (84 per cent) of the appeals decided, only allowing five (16 per cent) of the appeals contrary to the decision of the Council.

There are three types of appeals process including the written representations method; the informal hearing method; and the public inquiry method.

The first method relies on written submissions and is by far the most common method of appeal. In the informal hearing method, the Planning Inspector leads a topic led discussion between the appellant and the Council. In the public inquiry method, evidence is given under oath and is cross examined by legal representation.

Appeal decisions can be very important in informing future planning decisions the Council may make.

For example, the appeals considered at the recent Nanpantan and Seagrave Road public inquiries were dismissed by the Inspectors – this reaffirmed the Council's view that it has identified sufficient sites to meet its housing requirements for the next five years. This means that the Council has better control over where new development takes place and ensuring that these are in accordance with the Council's Core Strategy rather than development coming forward in a haphazard way.

*Did you know that between April 1 2016 and February 28 2017, the Development Management team had 31 appeals decided by the Planning Inspectorate?*

## Collaborative working with other authorities

The building control team is responsible for ensuring that buildings are properly designed and constructed to ensure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of people using them.

All buildings need to comply with the current building regulations which cover design, construction and alterations.

The team inspects plans for new buildings to check compliance with regulations and periodically visits the site during construction to ensure approved plans are adhered to.

The team have been working with both North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council on a number of collaborative working arrangements providing support and emergency cover for a range of duties including out of hours dangerous structures call out and site inspections.

For further information on the services provided by the building control team please visit the Council [website](#) or email [building.control@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@charnwood.gov.uk) or call 01509 634924.

## 150 comments about planning document

New draft guidance on housing was published by the Council for a six-week consultation during January and February 2017.

The draft Housing Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on affordable housing, housing mix, houses in multiple occupation and student accommodation. It has been informed by a series of stakeholder events and a range of studies and will provide support to the policies in the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan.

A total of 81 representations were made on the Housing Supplementary Planning Document – amounting to around 150 individual comments. Officers are currently preparing the Housing SPD for reporting to Cabinet in May.

# Consultation planned for masterplan

Consultants have been commissioned to assist in the preparation of a new masterplan for Loughborough town centre.

Over the past three months the consultants have hosted a series of workshops with town centre businesses, stakeholders and service providers. The workshops have focused on developing a shared vision for the town centre, defining key character areas and identifying potential improvements to the public realm.



The workshops have also focused on options to encourage investment in new shops, businesses and homes around the Devonshire Square / Granby Street Car Park area, on the remainder of the former Baxter Gate Hospital site and on vacant land off Pinfold Gate.

As part of the masterplan work, the consultants will also look at measures to effectively animate, manage and promote the town centre in partnership with Love Loughborough and others making Loughborough the destination of choice.

The outputs from the workshop sessions are now being consolidated into a draft Masterplan which will be consulted upon for six weeks during the early summer.

For further information on the Masterplan, please contact David Hankin, Team Leader Regeneration and Economic Development on 01509 634727 or at [David.Hankin@Charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:David.Hankin@Charnwood.gov.uk).

## Stronger performance over the year

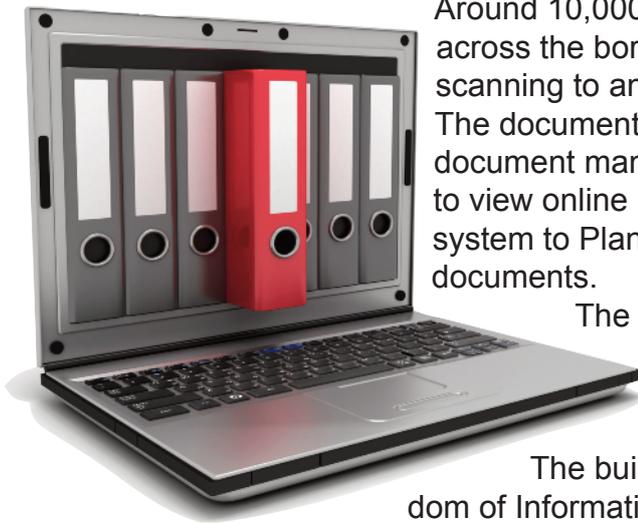
As we head into the final month of the financial year the development management team can look back on an improving and increasingly strong performance over 2016-17. Performance is surpassing most of their targets at the end of Period 11 (February), with the majority of customers receiving their decisions when expected (and often before).

So far this year 84 per cent of major applications have been dealt with within target timescales. These are schemes which include 10 or more houses, large industrial units or developments on a site of one hectare or more. At 84 per cent, this is significantly above the Government's 50 per cent threshold for designation as a Standards Authority, above the team's own target of 65 per cent, and nine per cent better than this time last year.

Similarly with minor applications, 251 out of 303 (83 per cent) have been determined within target time or an extended period agreed with the applicant, while 864 out of 949 (91 per cent) of "other" planning applications have been decided on time. Both are comfortably above the Government's combined 65 per cent threshold for 'Non-Major' development and ahead of the team's internal targets of 80 per cent and 90 per cent respectively.

When compared with the position at the end of February 2016 the improvement is even more evident, with performance on minor applications being 23 per cent higher than this time last year, and 14 per cent better on 'others'. This is something the team not only wants to maintain but also to continue to improve on in the coming months, in order to provide the best possible service.

## 10,000 paper files are being converted to digital



Around 10,000 files containing important records of building works across the borough have been boxed up and sent off site for scanning to an electronic format.

The documents will be added to the Planning and Regeneration's document management system and made available for customers to view online using building control explorer. This is a similar system to Planning Explorer where customers can view planning documents.

The new approach will allow customers to view key documents at their convenience and will also free up staff resources which otherwise would have been tied up responding to email and phone enquiries.

The building control team receives a high volume of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulation re-

quests for information which takes up officer time.

The new system means that this information will be publicly available and reduce the time officers spend gathering the information.

Less paper files also means that further accommodation space can be freed up for use as part of the Southfields Accommodation Project. The scanning process will take approximately four months and cost approximately £25,000.

## Five-year housing land supply backed by appeals

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to provide a five year supply of land for housing.

The Inspector at the Core Strategy Examination concluded that the land planned for by the strategy would meet the need for homes in the borough and this position has been supported by three recent appeal decisions at Nanpantan Road in Loughborough (January 2017), Swan Street in Seagrave (January 2017) and Seagrave Road in Sileby (March 2017).

These decisions are important because if the Council was unable to show a five year supply of land for housing it would be much more difficult to control unplanned development in locations that do not support the Council's vision in the Core Strategy.

The Seagrave Road, Sileby appeal decision is also an extremely important decision in setting out how much weight should be given to new evidence, in this particular case the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) which was published a few days before the public inquiry hearing sessions commenced.

The Inspector concluded that the HEDNA requires further testing through the local plan making process, that the Council could demonstrate progress on a new local plan that would take in to account the HEDNA evidence and that there was sufficient land available at the moment. This means that the housing figures identified in the Core Strategy remain up to date.

The Inspector also concluded that some weight could still be attributed to the saved policies of the 2004 Charnwood Local Plan.

This brings confidence to the plan-led system and not allowing new untested evidence to result in newly adopted local plans being ignored. The [appeal decision can be viewed here](#).

**If you have any feedback about this newsletter, possible future articles or the Planning and Regeneration Service in general, then please email [localplans@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:localplans@charnwood.gov.uk)**