

example, may not be regarded as such in Gainsborough. Each proposal will be assessed on its individual merit.

B13 An increased use of public transport and other modes would reduce the number of vehicles on the road and, as a result, help to reduce levels of congestion and pollution. The location of new development within or adjacent to existing urban areas and with a convenient public transport service may also help reduce the need for any increased travel. This policy will help to support the strategy of the Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan.

B14 Although the Council cannot specifically request this, any form of public transport serving the site should be made available before the site becomes operational. In cases where public transport is not to be provided, the creation of the necessary infrastructure to cater for the future provision would be beneficial, ensuring that any future provision is as straightforward as possible.

B15 Where this policy is applicable to a proposed development, if the justification for the development includes an existing or expanded public transport service, details of the anticipated levels of service provision must be provided in order that any claims may be substantiated. If expansion of the service is not proposed, details of the capability of the existing public transport service to accommodate additional usage should be provided. For a new development which, without an existing or expanded public transport service, would cause a significant increase in journey lengths or numbers, specific details of arrangements to ensure convenient transport to and from the site must be provided in a development appraisal as indicated in Policy SUS 9 and/or an assessment as required by Policy SUS 2.

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON TRANSPORT

POLICY SUS 2 – TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS

Where development will have significant implications for transport, planning permission will not be granted unless:

- i. A transport assessment has been undertaken;*
- ii. The findings of and the proposals within the transport assessment are acceptable and can be easily implemented;*
- iii. A Travel Plan has been prepared as part of the planning application.*

JUSTIFICATION

B16 Certain developments may have specific implications for transport within the locality of the site. Where this is the case, PPG13 (Transport) requires a Transport Assessment to be undertaken. These studies replace the previously requested Traffic Impact Assessments. Developers will be encouraged to discuss their Transport Assessments with the Local Planning Authority and the Highways Authority before they are produced.

B17 Each Transport Assessment should reflect the scale of the development and the nature and extent of the transport implications that are expected. Proposals will have to show how accessible the site is by all modes of transport, when the majority of journeys to and from the site will take place, and details of any proposals to improve access to the site by public transport, cycling or walking will be outlined in a Travel Plan. The need for car parking linked to the development should be reduced. Developers of smaller proposals

need not go into as much detail in their assessments. For small- scale proposals the transport details could be included within the Development Appraisal required by Policy SUS 9.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

B18 Public transport is normally an efficient means of transporting large numbers of people and is effective as a means of reducing energy use. Because of its characteristics it is most advantageous in large urban areas. West Lindsey is for the most part rural, with areas only sparsely populated. The characteristics of the journeys required to be made by residents are therefore many and varied and often cannot be effectively catered for by public transport.

B19 However, National Policy in PPG13 (Transport) highlights the need to encourage public transport provision by allowing development which can be served by it. The Regional Spatial Strategy contains advice that Local Plans should accommodate proposals to improve public transport infrastructure.

POLICY SUS 3 – PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning permission will be granted for the development of public transport infrastructure, providing that:

- i. The development will be safe, convenient and of high quality;*
- ii. The development will provide, or form a necessary part of, a reliable network of routes.*

Planning permission will not be granted for any proposal which is likely to detrimentally affect any existing, planned or potential public transport network, route or facility.

JUSTIFICATION

B20 The use of public transport rather than the private motor vehicle can bring about benefits to the environment. The overall quality of a service, if it is perceived to be poor, can lead to that service not being used to its full potential. Such perceptions are usually caused by familiarity with the vehicles and infrastructure that are available. Old, unreliable vehicles and cold, poorly lit, unsafe, vandalised and inappropriate infrastructure and a lack of information do little to encourage the use of public transport.

B21 The upgrading of vehicles and facilities can encourage the use of public transport. Through the provision of a warm, safe, friendly and informative environment, people are more likely to be encouraged to use the services provided. The Council wishes to encourage proposals that will allow the upgrading of existing public transport facilities or the provision of new ones. The introduction of the InterConnect high-frequency bus routes across parts of West Lindsey are an example of a Local Transport Plan scheme the Local Plan First Review is seeking to complement through its land use policies.

CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES IN DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

B22 It is essential that, if the Council is to encourage cycling and walking as sustainable methods of transportation, safe and user-friendly environments must be provided wherever possible.

POLICY SUS 4 – CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES IN DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals unless the needs of cyclists and pedestrians have been considered and, where practicable opportunities exist, facilities for the safe and convenient passage of cyclists and pedestrians are incorporated into the development by:

- i. Provision of cycle and pedestrian routes which run separately from those routes used by motor vehicles;*
- ii. Provision of routes, which are not isolated, dangerous or difficult to use;*
- iii. Not jeopardising the potential for future provision of such routes if the proposed development is small in scale;*
- iv. Implementing other measures which would increase the safety of these users and give them an increased priority over motor vehicles.*

JUSTIFICATION

B23 Increased travel by cycle or foot reduces levels of pollution and levels of noise, and requires very little infrastructure. The provision of dedicated routes for cyclists and pedestrians enables them to travel in safety away from the danger of heavy and fast moving traffic, and therefore encourages more people to travel in this way. The Local Transport Plan for Lincolnshire is seeking to encourage greater use of walking and cycling in Gainsborough as part of its Community Travel Zone concept. This policy will complement this initiative and the Greenways national pilot scheme for the wider Lincoln area.

B24 If movement by cycle or on foot is to be encouraged; dedicated routes should be located and designed to link popular destinations whilst making people feel safe. Routes located within general public view reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour and vandalism, therefore making users feel more secure. They should be not be hindered by barriers or excessive changes of level.

B25 Small scale development will not normally be expected to contribute to an overall cycle or pedestrian route system. However, such developments should not be designed in a way which would jeopardise the provision of such routes should the site be expanded in the future. This may be the case if insufficient land is allowed for safe routes to be implemented.

CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES

POLICY SUS 5 –CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES

Through proposals for all educational, employment, recreation/leisure, tourism, community and retail developments, the provision of safe and secure cycle parking facilities will be sought.

JUSTIFICATION

B26 The provision of safe and convenient cycleways will encourage the use of cycling to reach various destinations as an alternative to motor vehicles. People choosing to use this form of transport require a safe and secure area in which to park their cycles, preferably under cover. A lack of provision of cycle parking at major developments may hinder the Council's aim to encourage an increase in the number of people that cycle to their destinations. Appendix 9 contains the minimum standards for cycle parking facilities that development proposals should incorporate. Cycle lockers already exist at Saxilby and Market Rasen railway stations and within Gainsborough town centre. However, further expansion of such facilities are required if this mode of transport is to be developed seriously.

POLICY SUS 6 – NOW DELETED

BUILDING MATERIALS AND COMPONENTS

B30 It is possible to significantly reduce the environmental impact of a building if the materials are carefully chosen. The production, use and disposal of materials account for significant quantities of energy and resource consumption.

POLICY SUS 7 - BUILDING MATERIALS AND COMPONENTS

When considering development proposals, planning permission will be given to proposals where they use building materials and components that have a low environmental impact.

JUSTIFICATION

B31 Research has been carried out into the relative environmental merits of building materials, making it possible to address this issue. Information, such as 'The Green Guide to Specification', published by Building Research Establishment is available stating the specific materials and components used for building that are less harmful to the environment in relation to others. This policy should be used in conjunction with other policies in the Plan relating to design and conservation. The use of recycled or reclaimed building materials will be encouraged. Where proposed development requires the demolition or removal of a building and/or building materials that have known historic value, there shall be a requirement on the developer to ensure that these materials are, where practicable, reused in new buildings or restoration within the District.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

B32 It is essential to consider all possible ways in which to create energy efficient homes and other developments. The location and layout of a development can affect the energy efficiency of a site and the buildings on it. When considering the location and the layout of a proposed development, orientations and designs that maximise energy efficiency will be supported.

POLICY SUS 8 – ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In considering planning applications, proposals that take into account energy efficiency in terms of location, layout and design will be encouraged. The following criteria should be considered:

- i. Place development in locations avoiding poor microclimate (hillcrests or frost pockets) making the most of south-facing slopes.*
- ii. The orientation of (especially) housing, to maximise solar gain.*
- iii. Locate buildings where there is minimal overshadowing by neighbouring buildings and trees to avoid loss of solar gain.*

JUSTIFICATION

B33 The orientation of houses would ideally face south to maximise solar gain. This will not always be possible to achieve therefore targets placing new dwellings on an orientation of at least 45 degrees of south should be aimed for. By limiting overshadowing from trees the intention is not to remove existing trees from a site, rather to design the layout of the buildings to avoid overshadowing.

B34 The design and location of development can have far reaching consequences for the use of energy. On a large-scale development a reduction of energy consumption is linked to a reduction in the requirements for travel. Thus, in locating new developments, their proximity to other land uses should be taken into account so as not to produce a new undue need to travel which cannot be accommodated on existing or improved public transport services.

B35 The arrangement and layout of a small scale development and uses within it that actively promote energy conservation include:

- Location of main rooms on the southern aspect of buildings to make full use of natural daylight and the warmth of the sun.
- Use of conservatories or glazed areas on the southern aspect to act as sun traps to encourage heat gain and retention.
- Landscaping, fencing or careful building location to allow shelter from strong winds and prevent excessive wetting of walls which causes chilling of the building.
- Avoidance of over-shadowing which blocks natural light.
- Implementation of high insulation standards, including cavity, roof and floor insulation and double or triple glazing.
- Use of materials, which do not use large amounts of energy in their production, are renewable and, preferably, manufactured locally to avoid transport requirements.

B36 When any new development is being considered the Council will also consider all relevant development control factors. In some cases it may not be necessary or acceptable to require energy conservation measures as these will result in a form of development, which is out of character with its location. The Council believes that, through careful and innovative thought processes, energy conservation measures and high quality design are however complementary.

DEVELOPMENT APPRAISALS

POLICY SUS 9 - DEVELOPMENT APPRAISALS

Planning applications dealing with 5 or more dwellings or any other proposal resulting in a net increase of floor space of 100m² require a Development Appraisal. This Development Appraisal should include reference to the following:

- i. Physical, economic and policy framework/context of the site;*
- ii. Analysis of existing site character and potential, or otherwise; for development;*
- iii. Access for vehicles and pedestrians;*
- iv. Layout and siting of development;*
- v. Design and external appearance of development;*
- vi. Size, numbers and density of development;*
- vii. Retention of existing site features;*
- viii. The relationship of the new proposal to the neighbouring uses;*
- ix. An Energy Statement indicating the energy efficiency measures proposed to reduce the energy used during the life of the buildings;*
- x. The likely impact of the new development on local services, facilities and infrastructure;*
- xi. Affordable housing provision where appropriate;*
- xii. Open space provision where appropriate;*
- xiii. Compensatory tree planting where appropriate;*
- xiv. Protection of amenity of surrounding uses;*
- xv. Protection and enhancement of ecological features;*
- xvi. Impact upon and provision of physical and community infrastructure;*
- xvii. Landscape measures;*
- xviii. Impact on the landscape;*
- xix. Protection and enhancement of historic buildings and features wherever possible.*

In sensitive localities, for example in the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or in the District's Conservation Areas, a Development Appraisal may be required for a lesser number of dwellings or a lower increase in floor space.

JUSTIFICATION

B37 It is essential to ensure that new development proposals are designed and developed in a sustainable and sensitive way. This policy aims to ensure a Development Appraisal accompanies significant new proposals and includes a consideration of the listed criteria. It is important to address the impact a new proposal may have on any neighbouring uses. If the new use will be detrimental to the existing use, development should not be allowed.

Similarly it is essential to ensure that the services and facilities in the locality can support any new proposal, and that an influx of population would not result in a strain on services and facilities.

B38 The Council recognises that the conservation of energy is a key sustainability issue. The environmental impact of any new development should be considered in terms of energy used during the life of the buildings. This is known as 'energy revenue', and its wastage is substantial. Every effort should be made by developers to use energy efficient building design, layout and materials in order to restrict energy use. The Energy Statement should include a comprehensive report of the efforts made by applicants to incorporate layouts and designs which exploit the potential for both renewable energy and energy efficiency. As stated in other policies within the plan it is required to provide affordable housing, open space and sometimes other factors in certain developments. Confirmation of inclusion of these aspects into the proposal should be included within the Development Appraisal.

B39 Development Appraisals will contain guidance on factors such as: movement of and access for vehicles and pedestrians; retention, where appropriate, of important site features, including land form, landscape and existing buildings and structures, design, layout and density of development in relation to settlement or neighbourhood character; open space provision, where appropriate, within the development site; landscape planting measures, infrastructure and site services and aspects of development which will not be acceptable without suitable mitigation proposals.

PLANNING LOSS

POLICY SUS 10 – PLANNING LOSS

Where a development is proposed which would in the opinion of the local planning authority, result in a planning loss for or to, any part of the community and/or the environment, planning permission or consent will not normally be granted for that development unless:

- i. Development proposals include provisions which will ensure that such planning loss is offset or minimised and is balanced against the need for development;*
- ii. The full requirements for on-site and off-site service and social infrastructure facilities and services, consequent upon the development are satisfied.*

JUSTIFICATION

B40 The planning process operates in the public interest and its aim to embrace securing efficiency and amenity in the development and use of land and the protection of the environment. In granting planning permission or in negotiations with developers and other interests that may lead to the grant of planning permission, the Council may seek to secure modifications or improvements to the proposals.

B41 The Council will aim to ensure that a new development or redevelopment is facilitated, while having regard to the interest of the local environment, the amenities and well being of the community and other planning considerations. As part of a development proposal the Council may expect developers to contribute to the cost of infrastructure and/or services which would not have been necessary but for the development proposal. Payments to

offset or mitigate the harm to the environment and amenities of the community may also be expected to form part of the development proposal, for conservation, building conservation or landscape protection. Payments should be reasonably directly related in scale to the benefit, which the development proposal would derive from the facilities to be provided, and to the scale of planning loss or harm likely to be caused by the proposal.

B42 Planning loss can relate to a wide range of impacts likely to be caused by the development proposal, including pollution, traffic congestion, and danger from traffic, noise, visual intrusion, damage to the landscape, to wildlife and to the heritage of the area.

ENERGY GENERATION / RENEWABLE ENERGY

B43 Through the Local Plan First Review the Council seeks to reflect the recent international thrust to conserve energy and embrace renewable energy creating methods.

POLICY SUS 11 – ENERGY GENERATION / RENEWABLE ENERGY

Development of energy generating operations even which maximise the efficient use of fossil fuels or renewable energy sources will not be permitted where they would result in significant harm to local amenities, the environment or to the character of the countryside or landscape.

In assessing any renewable energy proposal regard will be had to all of the following factors:

- a. The sustainable benefits associated with the renewable energy proposal;*
- b. The impacts of the proposal on the landscape character, the countryside generally, amenity, quality of life, the built environment, the highway network and the natural environment including wildlife interests;*
- c. The potential impact upon civil aviation and military safeguarding zones, NATS Radar, Meteorological Radar and Telecommunications;*
- d. The availability of a realistic and practical connection to the electricity network;*
- e. The cumulative impact of proposals;*
- f. Regard to National and Regional targets for Renewable Energy.*

JUSTIFICATION

B44 Wind power is perhaps the most promising renewable energy resource nationally. However, the geographical scope for wind farms is restricted primarily to those areas of the highest or most reliable wind speeds. In West Lindsey these areas are found in the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but where the environmental impact of these structures is likely to be high. This factor should be considered when assessing potential sites for wind farms or turbines. It is recognised that although Policy SUS 11 encourages the development of renewable energy resources, no development is without environmental impact. Full consideration of the policies in the Natural and Built Environment chapter dealing with landscape protection must be fully assessed against any proposal. Any proposal must also take account of military and civil airfield safeguarding zones where tall structures are not generally permitted.

B44a In considering renewable energy proposals different considerations may apply depending upon the nature of the proposal being promoted. Lincolnshire offers significant potential for bio-mass proposals but probably less potential for on-shore wind energy.

WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING

POLICY SUS 12 – WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING

Permission will be granted for the use of sites which are designed for receptacles for the collection of materials for recycling or proposals whose main purpose is the recycling of appropriate materials provided they do not result in significant harm to local amenities or a detrimental impact on the streetscape or environment.

JUSTIFICATION

B45 In the right conditions recycling makes good environmental and economic sense. It leads to:

- The conservation of natural resources;
- Energy saving in production and transport;
- Reduction in the risk of pollution as well as saving costs in pollution control.

B46 This policy is aimed at encouraging recycling points to be provided within new developments. New superstores and supermarkets, with dedicated car parks should have recycling facilities for glass, cans, plastics and newspaper, to encourage energy conservation through recycling and to help avoid the need for additional car journeys to recycling points. Recycling points should be properly screened and sited to minimise disturbances to any adjacent land uses.

HAZARDOUS PROPOSALS

B47 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) notify the Council as to what areas of land or zones in the District are affected by hazardous substance installations or sites. The HSE has to be consulted when a planning application is submitted for certain proposals to develop land in these "hazardous areas". Other important consultees include: the Civil Aviation Authority, Water Companies, the Environment Agency and the Ministry of Defence. Local Planning Authorities take safety factors into account when dealing with applications for development involving a major hazard. This policy also deals with any other hazardous proposals.

POLICY SUS 13 – HAZARDOUS PROPOSALS

Development will not be permitted which would create a relationship between hazardous or potentially hazardous uses and their surroundings such as to entail risk to health or the amenity of residents or to the public generally or to the environment.

JUSTIFICATION

B48 Planning has an important part to play in ensuring that ordinary development is segregated from hazardous areas or proposals wherever possible and that the effect of hazardous development on the environment is contained.

B49 Various commercial, including agricultural, processes involve the use of potentially hazardous, health threatening and environmentally damaging materials. There is the risk of harm resulting from accidental uncontrolled release of such materials, particularly to people in the vicinity.

FLOOD RISK AREAS

B50 Local Plan Policies reflect land use issues, which are of public priority. This includes a safe environment where proper precautions are taken against risks that flooding can pose.

B51 The issue has become increasingly important given the expected rise in sea levels, possible increases in storm severity and other changes in weather patterns arising from anticipated climate change. The publication of PPG25 and emerging Draft PPS25 on Planning and Flood Risk have also increased the need to consider this issue as an element of sustainability.

POLICY SUS 14 – FLOOD RISK AREAS

Where a risk from flooding is identified from the Environment Agency or any relevant flood risk study new development, including the intensification of existing development or proposals to raise the level of the land, will not be permitted unless:

i. An adequate assessment has been made of that risk including whether the proposed development is likely to be affected by the risk of flooding and whether it will increase flood risk elsewhere;

ii. Where it would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; or there is flood risk to the development, its possible effects in terms of flood flows, flood storage capacity and run-off implications are acceptable;

iii. Any mitigation measures proposed to deal with these effects and risks are adequate, effective and acceptable and are appropriate to maintain or enhance the biodiversity value of any associated land and are implemented prior to development commencing;

iv. Any proposed mitigation is maintained for the lifetime of the development;

v. It is demonstrated that reasonable alternative sites are not available at a lower risk of flooding. Development generating surface water run-off likely to result in adverse effects, such as increased risk of flooding, changes in ground water levels, or river channel instability will not be permitted unless:

a. The development's surface water management system accords with sustainable drainage system principles and has been designed as an integral part of the development layout; and

b. The system will effectively control and adequately mitigate or attenuate any adverse effects from surface water run-off on the natural and built environment; and

c. Measures are in place to ensure maintenance of the drainage system, and the appropriate attenuation measures are in place prior to development commencing.

JUSTIFICATION

B52 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out on behalf of the Council to identify the areas where development is proposed in West Lindsey which are potentially liable to suffer from flooding as required by PPG25 (Development and Flood Risk). For a variety of reasons some development has already taken place in these areas.

Consequently people and property in the areas are at potential risk from flooding, further development in these areas will not be permitted. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment only covers the allocated sites within Gainsborough, Market Rasen and within the Lincoln Policy Area because these locations are the only ones where development is actually being proposed within potential flood risk zones. As an initial step all sites in other areas across the District were de-allocated if they were in the Environment Agency Indicative Floodplain. Since the production of the Local Plan First Review the Environment Agency has published new flood maps highlighting factors such as the degree of risk and the relevant flood zone in accordance with PPG 25. The Council will always take account of the most up-to-date information available and will request site specific assessments where this is highlighted as necessary by the Environment Agency.

B53 Built development in flood risk areas may impede or divert the flow of floodwater to reduce the capacity of the available flood plain. The Council will allow only those uses, or built development, where it can be shown that it must be located in the flood risk area and it can be shown how the flood risk can be managed. On advice from the Environment Agency the Council will impose conditions requiring the most rigorous flood defence measures. Development must observe the Environment Agency's and/or Internal Drainage Board's separation distance from the defences (which varies between 8 and 9 metres in West Lindsey) and which is based on Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Board requirements which seeks to enable access to the important strategic watercourses.

B54 Full information on flood risk is contained within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment carried out by JBA Consultants on behalf of the Council. This study looks at not only Gainsborough and Market Rasen in detail but also the Lincoln Policy Area, which covers part of West Lindsey, parts of North Kesteven and the whole of Lincoln City. This assessment has been carried out in collaboration and partnership with the Environment Agency, Lincoln City Council, North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council.

B54a The Local Plan First Review has been highly constrained in its allocation strategy by the levels of existing commitments given the much reduced housing targets effectively imposed by the Secretary of State. Given the high levels of existing commitments it has not been possible to apply a PPG25 derived sequential test to the selection of new sites as in most cases very few non-committed sites have been carried forward. In Market Rasen no new sites have been identified in areas at risk of flooding. In Gainsborough all new brownfield sites are located within PPG25 Zone 3 due to the need to prioritise brownfield sites in order to meet Government targets as to assist the regeneration of the town as required by the Regional Spatial Strategy. Given the circumstances a PPG25 sequential test was not felt to be a practical option for selecting sites in Gainsborough. The Council acknowledges that detailed site specific flood risk assessments may be required for a number of the key development sites in Gainsborough to consider flood risk mitigation measures.

DERELICT, UNDER - UTILISED AND PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

B55 The reclamation and reuse of derelict, under-utilised and previously developed land is, in general, accorded a high priority in Central Government and Regional Strategies. In the

East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy it is proposed that, where possible reclaimed sites should be developed in preference to greenfield sites. It is also a key priority of the Council to promote regeneration through the development of previously developed sites.

B56 The Council supports measures which lead to environmental improvements in West Lindsey. Industrial decline has left derelict buildings and, in some areas, the closure of airfields has created disused or under-used sites. The economic regeneration of the market towns of Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor relies heavily upon the redevelopment of previously developed sites.

POLICY SUS 15 – DERELICT, UNDER- UTILISED AND PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND.

Development will be permitted if it will bring derelict, under-utilised and previously developed land back into acceptable beneficial use or involves the reuse of existing developed buildings except where to do so would conflict with other policies.

JUSTIFICATION

B57 Land is a finite resource and it is a priority to revitalise and bring into beneficial use under-utilised and disused land. Proposals for development on such areas can reduce pressures for regeneration on greenfield sites and aid regeneration in older built-up areas, to the wider benefit of local communities. PPG3 (Housing) sets out a national target for the re-use of previously developed land. The Local Plan First Review has set a target of 40% of housing development on previously developed land by 2016.

B58 There are potential 'windfall' sites across the District, mainly within the built-up area of settlements which can accommodate new development. However, the Council should not create problems associated with 'cramming' and over-development. Areas that are left vacant, under-utilised or derelict often lead to inappropriate and problematic uses. The visual impact of such areas can be detrimental and often reinforces the blighting impression of long-term neglect.

B59 The Council has economic objectives and Best Value performance targets to try to meet with regard to the use of previously developed land for new development. This policy together with those on the release and phasing of housing land are key aspects to ensure that the land use strategy of the Local Plan First Review reflects these wider objectives.

B60 It is important to recognise that this policy must be considered in conjunction with all other policies relevant to the specific proposal in the Local Plan First Review. It is often clear that not all derelict, under-utilised and previously developed land is necessarily suitable for development.

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CHAPTER C - THE MARKET TOWNS

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INTRODUCTION

C1 West Lindsey has three towns as identified in the Lincolnshire Structure Plan Review: Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor. These are Market Towns and act as focal centres for shopping, education, employment, leisure and numerous other services and facilities for their local population and the wider hinterland of many smaller settlements.

C2 The three towns play an essential role in the economic, social and environmental well being of the District. The Council, through the Local Plan First Review and other strategies, is looking to focus investment and regeneration activities within the three Market Towns. It is a priority for the Council to ensure there are a full range of services and facilities in the towns including jobs, shops, schools, health care, tourist facilities and homes to satisfy the needs of the local community.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

C3 Each individual town has its own strengths and weaknesses; therefore, the aims, objectives and vision for each town are presented separately on the following pages. The objectives will be met by the Council through the Local Plan First Review in conjunction with other corporate documents, including the Sustainable Community Strategy and its implementation through the Local Strategic Partnership.

NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

C4 Central Government Policy in PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) and PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) sets out the need for market and other towns and villages to be the main service centres in rural areas. The Government remains committed to encouraging regeneration in the market towns to strengthen their important role within rural areas.

C5 The Countryside Agency envisages a new role for Market Towns for the 21st Century. Revitalisation should return them to their once thriving role within rural England, as local capitals and service centres for residents, businesses and the surrounding communities.

C6 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) includes Market Towns as a regional priority for development in rural areas because of their pivotal role within a District like West Lindsey. RSS8 also emphasises regional priority areas for regeneration in peripheral and isolated rural towns. Gainsborough has been identified as one of only three priority towns within the East Midlands for economic, social and environmental regeneration.

C7 The Lincolnshire Structure Plan Review provides the strategic guidance for the Local Plan First Review. It identifies the three towns within the Plan and seeks to focus development in these areas because of their role in serving the needs of the wider hinterland.

MARKET TOWNS

POLICY MT 1 - MARKET TOWNS

The Market Towns of Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor will be a priority for regeneration and investment activity. Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that assist in the social and environmental regeneration or economic development of the three Market Towns providing proposals are also consistent with other policies in the Local Plan First Review.

JUSTIFICATION

C8 The Council firmly believes that guiding suitable development into the three Market Towns will help the regeneration process and improve the quality of life for local people. They are a regeneration priority because, in line with Central Government guidance, there should be a clustering of services and facilities in order to serve both the town and its wider hinterland. The Council is undertaking work on a Master Plan for Gainsborough which in due course is anticipated to form the basis for an Area Action Plan to be produced as part of the future Local Development Framework.

GAINSBOROUGH

C9 Gainsborough is the largest town in the District and acts as the principal service centre. It is situated on the eastern bank of the River Trent and is Britain's most inland port dating back to the 6th Century when it was known as 'Gainas'.

C10 In recent times Gainsborough has suffered from a decline in its traditional industries; as a direct result there has been the closure of a number of large factories in the town. The loss of an industrial base for Gainsborough has seen the subsequent deterioration in the fabric of the town that includes some of the housing stock. As a consequence of the physical decay there has been a decline in the social fabric of the town. The result of the physical and social decline of Gainsborough has left a number of sizable vacant previously developed sites around the core of the town. These sites will be looked upon not as a scar on the fabric of the town and a reminder of what was once a thriving industry, but as an opportunity to develop into new businesses or other uses to bring with them investment and jobs.

C11 Gainsborough faces a sizeable regeneration challenge and work has already begun. A good example of this is the creation of the Riverside Walk and the conversion of Whitton's Mill into an imaginative and high quality social housing scheme. More recently re-development of the former Britannia Works site on Beaumont Street has generated a major retail revival with the new and exciting Marshall's Yard retail and leisure complex within the town centre.

C12 Gainsborough has been identified by The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) as a priority town for regeneration because of the amount of previously

developed land and pockets of deprivation. The Local Plan First Review is looking to set out a clear land use context for this regeneration activity.

C13 Gainsborough has a number of attractive features which are nestling within the town centre itself or on the outskirts. The Grade 1 listed Old Hall, situated on Gladstone Street, is one of the most impressive 15th Century timber built medieval manor houses found within the UK. It has many prestigious historical connections including King Richard III, King Henry VIII and his fifth wife, Katherine Howard.

C14 There are also strong religious connections with Sir William Hickman, who allowed John Symthe his group of separatists to secretly worship in the manor house before leaving on the "Mayflower" to the New World in 1620, and John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Architecturally, it has changed little over the years and today offers an exciting school's programme to the good quality schools within Gainsborough along with special events and exhibitions, as well as guided and taped tours.

C15 Gainsborough has many religious connections including the Parish Church of All Saints with its eight pinnacled medieval tower. This is the only remaining example of an 18th Century 'city church' within Lincolnshire. The United Reform Church of 1896 situated on Church Street pays homage to the Pilgrim Fathers who left for America in the 17th Century. Furthermore, the Friends' Meeting House built in 1704 is an example of Quakerism within Gainsborough.

C16 The Model Railway Club has a scaled down version of the East Coast Main Line from Kings Cross to Leeds Central. There is also the Sands Venue in the Town Centre which caters for live music and the Trinity Arts Centre on Trinity Street which offers a venue for both live music and cinematic performances. Both venues draw in audiences from the wider surrounding area. Gainsborough also has the 'Bend in the River, a contemporary art gallery located on Bridge Street on the riverside.

C17 Gainsborough is reputed to be 'Saint Oggs' in George Eliot's novel, "The Mill on the Floss" of 1860. The now demolished Ashcroft Mill on the Riverside was said to be the model for 'Tulliver's Mill' in the novel.

C18 There is good public transport provision in Gainsborough, with two railway stations well located for many local people to give access to regular services to the north, south, east and west. There is a bus station within the town centre that allows travel to many surrounding settlements and into neighbouring Districts.

C19 The regeneration of Gainsborough will not occur as a result of an overnight transformation. Development projects will need long term input in order for them to be successful. The process has already started and the Council is keen to ensure that this gathers pace by attracting much more development interest in the town. The weekly markets on Tuesdays and Saturdays encourage more people into Gainsborough. The additional shoppers will in time attract more well-known retailers to locate within Gainsborough particularly through the additional town centre floorspace opportunities presented at the new Marshall's Yard retail and leisure complex.

C20 Gainsborough's prime location on the picturesque River Trent and its close proximity to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB together with the industrial heritage all indicate that Gainsborough has the potential to become a very desirable place in which to live, work and visit.

GAINSBOROUGH - AIMS & OBJECTIVES

C21 The aims and objectives for the future of Gainsborough are therefore:

- To introduce, implement, encourage and achieve the overall regeneration of Gainsborough by bringing back into valuable use vacant, previously developed land and buildings and by guiding appropriate development to the most suitable sites.
- To encourage high quality and imaginative design with clear guidance regarding the design of buildings, streetscape and open space to be required in the future.
- To complete the regeneration of the Riverside which will be a catalyst to wider regeneration in the town.
- To facilitate heritage-led regeneration activity. By making use of the redundant industrial sites and buildings to create desirable conversions into a number of appropriate uses, taking example from Whitton's Mill and other schemes and by encouraging good design on vacant sites, especially where they affect the setting of an historic building.
- To ensure an adequate supply of housing with choice and opportunity for all who need a home by allocating suitable sites and ensuring a mix of housing types including an element of affordable housing where needed.
- To redevelop and regenerate areas of housing within the town where vacancy rates are high and the general environment is of poor quality.
- To revitalise the town centre with the encouragement of mixed-use development and the creation of better links to public transport.
- To limit the outward spread of the town onto greenfield sites until, at least, major progress has been made on regeneration of its brownfield potential.

MARKET RASEN

C22 Market Rasen is the second largest of the three Market Towns in the District and stands on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the eastern part of the Plan Area. The Council has commissioned a Strategic Review for Market Rasen to see how all of its policies can positively benefit the town.

C23 As early as the 13th Century the town had an active market place: today there are weekly markets. The local produce and specialty food is easily acquired in the town throughout the year. Market Rasen now caters for the day-to-day needs of a large rural hinterland because of its services and facilities. Therefore, although set in a remote location in terms of proximity to a city or large town, it can sustain the development of further residential dwellings to increase the population using its shops and other facilities.

C24 Market Rasen has the potential to have an excellent public transport system due to the existence of the railway links to Lincoln and beyond. Market Rasen railway station is very well located being only 5 minutes from the centre of the town. Market Rasen is an ideal location for a rural transport hub focussed upon the station because it lies in the centre of a block of countryside which is 30 miles by 45 miles and has no other railway station. The East Midlands Development Agency and the Council are looking to develop such a transport hub to aid the town's regeneration and to reduce social exclusion.

C25 Within Market Rasen there is a concentration of local people who cannot drive or who do not have access to a car. In rural areas non-drivers seek out the market towns to live in so that they have access to all the services and facilities which they need both within the town itself and a transport network which will take them further afield.

C26 The proximity of Market Rasen to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB makes it a prime centre for tourism related development. The beauty of the Lincolnshire Wolds can easily

be accessed from the town with its variety of services and facilities, which can sustain visitors. There are over 70 Listed Buildings and a Conservation Area contributing to its attraction as a tourist town. The Council is actively developing a tourism-led regeneration project for the town.

C27 The Market Rasen racecourse has been an important feature in the town's history, dating back over 75 years. In 1998 national television returned to the racecourse and raised the profile of the town and attracting new visitors.

C28 On the eastern edge of the town lies Willingham Woods, which is a perfect setting for walking and cycling. There are many circular cycling routes from Market Rasen which use the National Cycling Route. The Viking Way long distance footpath also passes near the town and runs north to Caistor or east towards Tealby.

MARKET RASEN – AIMS & OBJECTIVES

C29 The aims and objectives for the future of Market Rasen are therefore:

- To increase the railway services through the town to create a frequent and fast public transport service to enable people to travel in a sustainable way.
- To ensure the encouragement of tourism by enabling appropriate tourism - related development to take place.
- To maintain and enhance the town centre to create a viable and attractive range of shops and services to sustain and entertain residents and visitors by encouraging mixed-use development in key service areas of the town.
- To ensure an adequate supply of housing with choice and opportunity for all who need a home by allocating suitable sites and ensuring a mix of housing types including an element of affordable housing where needed.
- To encourage new business development to ensure residents can access jobs in close proximity to where they live and to ensure the economic well-being of the town.
- To maintain and enhance the heritage of the town.

C30 Through continued positive planning these objectives can be achieved to improve the quality of life of the residents and the economic and environmental well-being of the town.

CAISTOR

C31 Caistor is a small market town perched on the edge of The Wolds and is thought to have originated during the early Roman occupation so the historical value of Caistor lends itself naturally to an attraction for its heritage. The Council has commissioned a Strategic Review for Caistor to see how all of its policies can positively benefit the town.

C32 Caistor has a distinct character of its own with a significant number of Listed Buildings in the market town. Its history dates back to Roman times and this is part of its character along with the role it plays as a service centre to the surrounding settlements.

C33 The existing townscape has deteriorated over time but this lack of attention has meant that historical buildings have retained their character and original features. This market town has great potential to be restored to its former grandeur.

C34 Finding suitable sites for new housing in Caistor presents a problem due to the built form of the market town and the topography of the surrounding countryside. Enabling an

increase in population is important for the long term development of Caistor to help create the social and economic mass required to let the market town develop and flourish.

C35 The town's centre as a service area is arguably poor. It provides only a small range of shops and facilities to sustain and entertain residents or visitors. Vacant shop units could be better utilised to create a mixed-use centre with shops, bars, restaurants and residential accommodation surrounding the existing square. It is this potential that the Council and local residents are looking to capitalize on through heritage-led regeneration.

CAISTOR – AIMS & OBJECTIVES

C36 The aims and objectives for Caistor are therefore:

- To promote the town as a heritage attraction by revitalising the decaying Listed Buildings around the town.
- To facilitate heritage-led regeneration.
- To maintain and enhance the town centre to create a viable and attractive range of shops and services to sustain and entertain residents and visitors by encouraging mixed-use development around the central square in the town.
- To ensure an adequate supply of new housing with choice and opportunity for all who need a home by allocating suitable sites and ensuring a mix of housing types including an element of affordable housing where needed.
- To encourage new business development to ensure residents can access jobs in close proximity to where they live and to ensure the economic well-being of the town.
- To harness the economic potential of tourism-related development.

C37 Caistor needs to see some investment in its heritage to ensure the potential is not being lost. It would bring many of the Listed and other historic buildings back to their former glory, by encouraging their re-use, where appropriate. There is currently in place a heritage regeneration project, the Caistor Townscape Heritage Initiative, with the aim to do just this.

C38 An improvement in the economic well-being of Caistor may be a catalyst to further environmental improvements not only for the market town centre but for the wider area of the rest of the town as a whole.

CONCLUSION

C39 The Council envisages market towns in which people are happy to live, work and play in a sustainable and safe environment with a thriving economy together with a range and choice of housing and a diversity of leisure, retail and cultural facilities to occupy residents. The aim is to create places where people want to remain living and indeed choose to relocate to from outside of the market town.

C40 In the past the market towns have suffered from the concentration of functions into neighbouring larger centres outside the District, and from local policies which scattered development opportunities into surrounding rural villages. As a consequence, the market towns have lost much of their vitality and viability. The aim of the Local Plan First Review is to reverse the decline suffered by the District's market towns due to loss of industry or competition from larger towns or cities, by regenerating an extensive range of facilities on offer, and enhancing the positive aspects of each town.

CHAPTER 1 – RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS (RES)

Other links in the Interactive Local Plan:

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- [Strategy](#) (Document 1)
- [General Policies](#) (Document 2)
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INTRODUCTION

1.1 The environment around us has a direct impact upon our quality of life. It is therefore the function of the Local Plan First Review to provide a framework to ensure that appropriate standards are in place to meet the aspirations of individuals to be able to plan for their own future in terms of their own residential environment whilst safeguarding the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. A high quality living environment is a key national and local priority.

1.2 As a result there is need to set a balance between the aspirations of the individual and minimising the impact of their proposal as much as possible on neighbours and the wider locality. This chapter contains a broad variety of policies specifically relating to residential environments to deal with a range of proposals from the erection of domestic householder extensions through to the conversion of properties in the open countryside into residential uses and the provision of dwellings in the open countryside. Policies relating to housing design and the provision of recreational facilities as well as criteria relating to mobile home parks are also contained in this chapter of the Local Plan First Review. Housing Allocations are contained within Chapter A – Strategic Framework, in Document 1.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3 The aims and objectives of the policies in the Residential Environments chapter are:

- To set a balance between the aspirations of the individual in terms of their own residential environment whilst safeguarding the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- To provide affordable housing to help create inclusive communities which provide wider housing opportunities and choice.
- To ensure the provision of sufficient play space/recreational facilities in new developments to meet the needs of the inhabitants.
- To promote good design in new housing developments in order to create attractive, high quality living environments in which people will choose to live.

NATIONAL, REGIONAL & STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

1.4 It can be argued that the provision of housing is the central theme in any Local Plan. Central Government guidance on housing and the associated residential environment is

contained in PPG3 (Housing) which aims to “*promote good design in new housing developments in order to create attractive, high quality living environments in which people will chose to live*”. This guidance is mirrored in both the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) and in the Lincolnshire Structure Plan Review.

1.5 PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) is concerned with development and planning issues in the countryside. It provides criteria for the provision of dwellings for full-time agricultural and forestry workers who must live on site for the operational requirements of the unit and also criteria relating to the conversion of buildings in the open countryside into residential uses.

1.6 PPG17 (Sport and Recreation) provides specific advice relating to the requirements for play space and recreational facilities in housing developments. The balance between new development and social and community infrastructure is vital to achieve through the Local Plan process.

1.7 The Regional Spatial Strategy and the Lincolnshire Structure Plan Review provide criteria on the provision of affordable housing “*in order to help create inclusive communities which provide wider housing opportunities and choice.*” The Local Plan First Review also has to complement the Council’s Housing Strategy to secure the implementation of affordable housing policies.

HOUSING LAYOUT AND DESIGN

1.8 New housing often has the greatest impact on the character, layout and form of settlements. The appearance of proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are an important policy consideration.

1.9 Central Government in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (2000) (Housing) state that “*strict control over design and layout is expected in areas, which are deemed to be particularly sensitive to new development*”, such as Conservation Areas and the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Whilst good design is encouraged, it is not the wish to stifle innovation, originality, initiative or creativity. It is the view of the Council that high quality design is important in all proposals wherever they are located.

POLICY RES 1 – HOUSING LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Planning permission will be granted on appropriate sites for new residential development provided that proposals are satisfactory with regard to:

- i. The nature of the local environment in terms of siting, layout, density, scale, massing, materials, design and detailing;*
- ii. The provision of key features which will be in keeping with and which enhance the character of the settlement or locality such as hard and soft landscaping (e.g. hedges, walls, trees);*
- iii. The provision of, in accordance with other policies in the Local Plan, adequate open space provision;*
- iv. The provision of satisfactory parking and access to and from the site;*
- v. The impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties;*

vi. The provision, where necessary and in accordance with policies in the Local Plan, of adequate buffer zones with landscaping measures;

vii. Retention of important site features such as trees, hedges, ditches, roadside verges, walls and other aspects of the local topography important to the settlement.

The Council will seek to achieve an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare across the District by applying the following density standards to housing proposals:

Town Centres:

Minimum of 50 dwellings per hectare.

Elsewhere:

Minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare unless, exceptionally, specific design limitations justify less.

Factors favourable to achieving development at the highest possible density will be considered to be, if it:

- a. Contributes to a more sustainable pattern of development by being close to a concentration of employment, a town centre, or a regular public transport service; or*
- b. Provides housing for special needs such as small units for single persons or dwellings for elderly or disabled people.*

To achieve development at a higher density, the amount of car parking and open space within the curtilages of dwellings required on each site through the operation of other policies, may be reduced in consultation with the Local Planning Authority.

JUSTIFICATION

1.10 PPG3 (Housing) states that new housing development of whatever scale should not be viewed in isolation. Consideration of design and layout must be informed by the wider context having regard to neighbouring buildings, townscape and the landscape of the wider locality. The character of rural areas is particularly sensitive to the impact of development. It is important that development should be in keeping with, and make a positive contribution to, the physical character of the town and/or the landscape setting in which it is located.

1.11 Applicants applying for planning permission should be able to demonstrate how they have taken into account the need for good layout and design. It will be expected that development proposals shall be accompanied by a written design statement setting out the development approach to be adopted. These should take references from the Lincolnshire Design Guide for Residential Areas, the Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Landscape Character Assessment Report. It is recognised that design preference is to a certain degree subjective and that it is important to allow scope for individual choice about architectural style indeed a certain amount of variety is desirable.

1.12 Specific aspects of layout that must be considered include the provision of car parking on site which should meet with the current car parking standards contained in Appendix 9. The proposal must also take account of the document Planning Out Crime in accordance with Circular 5/94. The Council will also have full and due regard to Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act in all its decision-making.

1.13 PPG3 (Housing) indicates that housing proposals should make the best use of land and low density proposals under 30 dwellings per hectare should be avoided. Emerging policy in PPS3 (Housing) seeks to make even more efficient use of land by increasing

housing densities even further. This policy has taken the principles of the emerging PPS3 into account. The Council is of the view that housing densities need to reflect the nature and the character of the settlement in which they are located. Densities in excess of 30 dwellings per hectare would be out of character in some villages. The Council aims through this Plan to achieve an average of 30 dwellings per hectare across the District as agreed with Government Office for the East Midlands.

THE NEED TO PROVIDE BALANCED COMMUNITIES - RANGE OF HOUSING PROVISION

1.14 In general, the needs, likes and level of affluence of households dictate the type and location of housing. Therefore, it is always important in all new housing schemes to provide a choice of properties to target all housing aspirations which will help to create vibrant and mixed communities. The density of proposals is also important to help achieve sustainable development patterns.

POLICY RES 2 – RANGE OF HOUSING PROVISION IN ALL HOUSING SCHEMES

Planning permission will be granted for proposals containing a range of housing types, sizes, styles and densities including low cost and smaller homes. Where proposals fail to provide an appropriate mix of housing then permission will be refused.

JUSTIFICATION

1.15 Providing a range of housing types maximises choice, helps satisfy the many differing housing demands and helps to cater for local needs. Central Government Policy contained in PPG3 (Housing) and PPS3 (Housing) is specific in that it states that new housing developments should avoid the creation of large areas of housing of similar characteristics as they do not generally create mixed and balanced communities. A variety of housing types, sizes and densities including the provision of smaller homes should be provided in all housing schemes whatever their size. The Council will look to achieve not only a range of housing provision within the site but will also consider the range of housing in the wider locality. Proposals should add to the mix of housing in the wider locality as well as providing a mix within the development site. Providing a wider and more balanced range of housing is a key objective of this Local Plan First Review.

1.16 The density of a proposal is also of paramount importance. Traditionally, housing proposals tended not to make the best use of land and provided for low density forms of development. However, Central Government Policy in PPS3 (Housing) places an emphasis on increasing densities to improve sustainable patterns of development.

BACKLAND AND TANDEM DEVELOPMENT

1.17 Areas of open land often within the curtilages of residential properties and other premises which lie behind existing buildings, away from the highway, are commonly referred to as 'backland'.

1.18 Development proposals on backland which consists of the new building in the rear part of the curtilage of an existing residential property either using an existing access or providing a new access alongside the existing building is known as 'tandem' development.

POLICY RES 3 – BACKLAND AND TANDEM DEVELOPMENT

Backland or tandem development will not be permitted where it will lead to one or more of the following:

i. A significant and adverse effect on the living conditions of the occupier of the existing property which is sited to the front of the proposal by virtue of:

a. Overlooking and loss of privacy;

b. A significant reduction in any rear garden space or amenity area within which the proposed development would be located;

c. A significant level of nuisance resulting from the movement of vehicles to and from proposed development past existing residences;

ii. It would adversely affect the general quality and character of the area in which the proposal would be located by virtue of:

a. Increasing the density of development in that area to an unacceptably high level;

b. Resulting in the loss of features both natural and man-made to the detriment of the character of the locality;

c. Leading to an unacceptable proliferation of vehicular accesses on to a street to the detriment of highway safety and to the character of the street scene;

iii. It would result in the loss of open space important to the form and character of the settlement or it would adversely change the form, structure or character of the part of the settlement in which the proposal is located.

JUSTIFICATION

1.19 There will be very limited circumstances in which backland or tandem development may be acceptable. This is because the general character and amenity of the built environment needs to be protected. In many cases, such proposals may result in a loss of character and amenity in the immediate vicinity of a proposal, particularly that of adjoining residential properties. In general, it will be more acceptable for new planned development off a single vehicular access of adequate size, to be built on backland than a series of unrelated and ad hoc single proposals. Significant impact upon the overall character of the settlement can also arise from such proposals.

1.20 One form of backland development which requires the most careful treatment is known as tandem development. This is where a separate new dwelling is proposed in the back garden of an existing curtilage, either sharing an existing access or proposing a new access alongside the existing dwelling. There will normally be a presumption against such development. It usually results in a great reduction in the amenity of the original dwelling through overlooking and general nuisance, particularly nuisance from vehicular traffic. If such development is allowed to accumulate it can lead to a proliferation of new vehicular

accesses to the detriment of road safety through increasing vehicle conflict and increased danger to pedestrians.

1.20a This form of development is often detrimental to the visual appearance of the street scene as it may result in the loss of hedges, trees, walls etc and to a loss of valuable open space and landscape features. Though a single case may on its own merits be acceptable when judged against other considerations, such development may set a precedent for similar examples of which the cumulative effect would be unacceptable because of their effect on the amenity and character of the area. Proposals also need to be judged against policies STRAT 4 to STRAT 8 dealing with Windfall and Infill Housing and policy STRAT 9 which relates to the Phasing and Release of Housing Land.

PROVISION OF NEW RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN CONNECTION WITH ALLOCATED HOUSING SITES

1.21 Recreation is a significant element of modern life, with rising demand for the provision of facilities. A rural District, like West Lindsey, must look to the towns and the cities within and around the District for many of its “built” recreation facilities, just as the urban areas look to the countryside for much of their natural and water-based recreational facilities. Rural communities however expect to have a certain basic level of local provision, particularly sport facilities.

1.22 Central Government Policy in PPG17 (Sport and Recreation) directs that Local Plans should contain provision for new recreational facilities where there are deficiencies, and policies should be prepared in the context of a district sport and recreation strategy. Strategic policy also reflects this national objective and encouragement is given to the provision of new recreational facilities.

1.23 The need for recreational space can range from small children’s play areas to large multi-use recreational fields and associated built facilities. Policies need to ensure that a minimum standard of informal or formal recreation or open play space is provided within existing settlements and within new developments.

1.24 Developers will be expected to take account of factors which could influence the type, location and amount of land to be provided. These factors include:

- The nature of the proposed residential development.
- Distribution and type and quality of existing recreational land or facilities, available within reasonable walking distance of the proposed development.
- Quality and location of the proposed recreational facility.
- Any expressed preference or need arising from consultation with the local community.
- The need to retain existing landscape features or provide new landscaping where necessary.

1.25 The need for recreation and community provision in new development is recognised. Large new housing developments have significant effects on existing facilities, due particularly to the demands an increased population has for existing, and sometimes inadequate, space and facilities. In settlements where there are no or inadequate recreational areas, the increase in new homes would place an unacceptable burden on these settlements, and it is a function of the Local Plan First Review to consider the

provision of new recreational facilities in association with development. New facilities should be capable of serving not only the new, but the existing residents of an area.

POLICY RES 4 – PROVISION OF NEW RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN CONNECTION WITH ALLOCATED HOUSING SITES

Development of residential uses on the following housing sites where the development will create or add materially to a concentration of people in a location lacking or deficient in accessible outdoor recreational and sporting facilities will be permitted provided the development proposals include specific provision for, or contribution towards, provision of outdoor recreational and sporting facilities to overcome the constraint which would be exacerbated by the development, in compliance with the recreational standards referred to in Policies RES 5 and CRT 2:

- i. Bishop Norton sites BN1, BN2, BN3, BN5 and BN6;*
- ii. Market Rasen sites MR3 and MR5;*
- iii. South Kelsey sites SK4, SK8 and SK9.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.26 The sites identified in the policy are those contained Policy STRAT 2 for housing development. They are all in locations however where there are either no formal or informal recreational facilities or there are inadequacies in such facilities. These sites were originally allocated as package proposals together with recreational space and would not otherwise have been acceptable.

1.27 To allow development on these sites without the provision of recreational facilities would exacerbate problems that already exist with either the lack of provision or inadequate provision. In Circular 05/05 (Planning Obligations) the advice given is that, in situations where infrastructure, problems exist prior to the submission of proposals for development, it would be inappropriate to permit development which exacerbates the situation. It is therefore the view of the Council that in the locations specified that development should not proceed without the associated recreational element being provided.

1.28 In view of the further advice contained in Circular 05/05, the Council wishes to make it clear that in all cases identified in the policy it is likely that a planning obligation agreement will be necessary. This is so that the requirement to provide land, equipment and ensure maintenance is clearly understood by all those involved.

1.29 The usual approach of the Council will be that recreational areas and facilities should be provided and transferred at no cost (other than associated conveyancing costs) to the relevant Parish or Town Council. If this is not possible then it will be necessary to establish a trust or other legal entity to ensure the future management and maintenance of the land. It will be necessary to ensure that the means are available to allow this maintenance. This often involves the provision of initial funding to the body charged with maintenance.

PROVISION OF PLAY SPACE/ RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

POLICY RES 5 – PROVISION OF PLAY SPACE/RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Development proposals for new residential development including sites allocated within the Local Plan First Review will be permitted as long as informal recreational land or play space and/or associated equipment and/or built facilities are provided conforming to the minimum requirement for recreational land which is:

- i. 3% of the total site for developments of up to 20 dwellings or up to 1 hectare;*
- ii. 5% of the total site for developments of over 20 dwellings or between 1 and 3 hectares;*
- iii. 7.5% of the total site for developments of between 3 and 5 hectares;*
- iv. 10% of the total site for development of over 5 hectares.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.30 Where large housing sites are proposed, it will be relatively easy to identify the need for new, often substantial areas of recreational land or facilities. However it is the smaller sites that are often ignored. Incrementally, the continued development of small sites can result in a similar growth in housing numbers and place an equal strain on existing facilities, which are often not designed to cope with the gradual growth of population such sites allow.

1.31 Most housing proposals will require a small area of recreational land and, more often than not, this is likely to take the form of play space. However, in some circumstances, it may be justified to combine the development of one or more sites with the provision of a larger recreational area. It will be important in these instances for the developer to liaise closely with the existing community to determine needs.

1.32 In addition to the provision of land, the Council may also require the provision of play equipment, safety surfaces, hard playing surfaces, fences and/or other built facilities where it is considered such items are a fair and reasonable expectation. This requirement will take into account the nature, size and density of a particular housing site, and the fact that such sites are not useful to communities unless surfaces, facilities and equipment are available.

1.33 The Council expects that the recreational areas provided under Policy RES 5 will be dedicated to the relevant Parish or Town Council. If this is not possible it may be necessary to form a trust or similar legal entity to ensure the future maintenance and management of the site. It will be expected also that a sum of money, sufficient to achieve the recreational objectives set down in the Local Plan First Review and subsequently agreed, will be provided by the landowner and/or developer. In most cases it is likely that a Section 106 Planning Obligation will be required so that the obligation to provide land, equipment, and maintenance is clearly understood by all relevant parties.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION

1.34 Central Government sets out its commitment to ensuring the provision of affordable housing in PPS3 (Housing). A community's need for affordable housing is considered to be a material planning consideration and should be taken into account when determining planning applications. West Lindsey is committed to the aim of ensuring that local people have the opportunity of a decent home, which meets their needs locally and at a price or

rent that they can afford. This policy should be applied jointly with Policy RES 2 – Range of Housing Provision in All Housing Schemes, which together seek to achieve the provision of balanced and mixed communities.

POLICY RES 6 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Where there is a demonstrated need the provision of affordable housing will be sought, the Council will seek to negotiate in the region of a 25% contribution towards affordable housing on sites meeting the following criteria:

- i. In settlements of over 3000 population, on sites accommodating 15 or more dwellings, or on sites greater than 0.5 hectare, the provision of affordable housing will be negotiated to ensure an appropriate number of affordable dwellings are supplied;*
- ii. In settlements with a population of fewer than 3000 and on sites accommodating 2 or more dwellings, provision of affordable housing will be negotiated to ensure a reasonable number of affordable dwellings are supplied.*

The housing provided under this policy should always be available as affordable housing for local people. Therefore, planning permission will be granted subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be negotiated, to ensure that:

- a. The initial and subsequent occupiers will be people from the local community in housing need;*
- b. The affordable status of the dwellings can be guaranteed to remain in perpetuity.*

Permitted development rights will be withdrawn so that control may be exercised over the enlargements or alterations proposed to the dwellings in ways which would change their affordability for future occupiers.

JUSTIFICATION

1.35 List of settlements over 3000 in population based on the 2001 Census (parish population):

Gainsborough 16,869

Market Rasen 3,230

Nettleham 3,514

Saxilby with Ingleby 3,679

Welton 3,821

1.36 The West Lindsey Housing Needs Survey 2002 identifies a total of 1,671 households in need of affordable housing. The 2003 Joint Housing Needs and Stock Condition Survey for West Lindsey identifies there is an annual need for 55 affordable units, out of the 350 dwellings required per annum by the Lincolnshire Structure Plan Review. Given this need which is likely to rise over the plan period, a target level of 25% affordable housing provision on all housing developments will be sought to allow current and future levels of housing need to be met.

1.37 The thresholds set out in this policy relate to the findings of the independent Housing Needs Survey 2002, carried out by Fordham Research. The survey suggests the need for West Lindsey to widen its scope and flexibility to be able to utilise smaller sites in order to meet the need for affordable housing. Due to the rural nature of the District, it is not considered unreasonable to lower the threshold at which affordable housing will be required. The Rural White Paper suggests that *“there is no reason why, in the small villages if there is evidence of need and subject to financial viability, they [Local Authorities] should not seek to match every new market house with an affordable home.”*

1.38 PPS3 and PPS7 both indicate that housing in rural areas should be looking to meet the needs of the local communities. In many rural areas house prices now exceed those that can be reached by those in need in these communities. The definition of a threshold does not preclude developers from providing affordable housing on sites that are below the threshold given in Policy RES 6.

1.39 It has been a long standing national housing and planning objective that *“a suitable home should be made available to every family at a price within their means.”* In this context, a housing need occurs if the market cannot provide a dwelling to suit that need at a price within the means of a household in need of a home. Thus, a definition of affordable housing has been derived from this basis for the purpose of the Local Plan First Review:

“Housing provision of a type and standard within the financial means of people who are in unsuitable accommodation for their needs, or who are homeless. The suitability of the various forms of housing, including both social-rented housing and intermediate housing, will be judged on the ability to meet need. Affordability will be assessed, at the time of negotiation, and in relation to the local market conditions.”

1.40 Social rented housing is the most important tenure in providing affordable housing in West Lindsey. However, the provision of intermediate housing will also be considered to provide flexibility in deciding the most appropriate type of affordable dwelling provision. Generally, the households which the Housing Needs Survey identifies can only have this need met through the provision of social rented housing due to the ability to access housing benefit. This type of housing provision will therefore remain the priority for negotiation undertaken in response to Policy RES 6. PPS3 (Housing) includes the following definitions:

- Affordable Housing – Non market housing, provided to those whose needs are not met by the market, for example homeless persons and key workers. It can include all social rented housing and intermediate housing.
- Social Rented Housing – Rented housing owned by Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords or other persons as allowed for in the Housing Act 2004 which are controlled by the Housing Corporation.
- Intermediate Housing – Housing at prices or rent above those of social rent but below market prices or rents. This can include shared equity products (sometimes known as ‘HomeBuy’). Intermediate housing does not include low cost market housing.

1.41 The basis for providing affordable housing is the presence of a demonstrable need for such housing in an area. Where such need is demonstrable an appropriate number of affordable dwellings of a type and size which will suit the need demonstrated will be negotiated. Local need will be defined in relation to the needs of the community rather than the individual when determining if new local needs housing is to be provided. The Council is satisfied that the 1998, 2002 and 2003 Housing Needs Surveys have demonstrated a consistent need for affordable housing across the District.

1.42 A local housing need is a housing need which arises in and can be satisfied in a particular area; the smallest such area or place will usually be a medium sized village or parish or a small group of settlements or parishes. Such a place can be seen as a community or set of communities to which the term 'local people' or 'people with local connections' can be applied. A local person can be defined as following:

- Existing local residents.
- Immediate family dependants of long established local residents.
- Those providing important local services and needing to live in or near the community.
- Persons not necessarily resident locally but having long-standing links with the community.

1.43 The extent of the provision of affordable housing that is reasonable will be defined on the need locally, the location of the site, its size and the character of its surroundings. Local need has been identified through the Housing Needs Survey 2002 and again in 2003 and will be continually assessed and established by the Rural Housing Enabler who will carry out local parish surveys. This information will serve to update local need information throughout the life of the Local Plan First Review.

RURAL EXCEPTIONS HOUSING

1.44 The economic and social well-being of rural communities depends on the ability of these communities to retain local people on all levels of income and experiencing a wide range of social circumstances. Many people with close ties to rural communities find themselves unable to purchase or rent properties within the rural part of the Plan area. This is partly due to the escalation of house and land prices, low wages and the depletion of public sector stock.

1.45 Many rural areas face difficulties in securing an adequate supply of land for affordable housing to meet local needs. Arrangements to ensure housing is available for local need can be made. Sites may be considered for affordable housing which would not normally be given planning permission. These 'exceptions' sites will be additional to the provision for normal housing demand. Specific sites are not identified in the Plan. The provision of such sites for affordable housing is not aimed at encouraging individual dwellings in rural areas. They can only be permitted where the facilities are in place to serve the needs of those living in the affordable dwellings.

1.46 These exception provisions do not override long established national and local planning policies controlling development in the open countryside.

1.47 Three principles underlie this exception policy. They are:

- A demonstrable need must be present which can be met by the proposal.
- It will only be applied exceptionally where the need cannot be satisfied in any other way.
- The housing built must be available for local needs in the long term and controllable so that it cannot return onto the open market.

1.48 Local need would normally be demonstrated by means of a parish survey undertaken independently by the Rural Housing Enabler in conjunction with the local community. The importance of such proposals is increasing given the reduction in allocated sites in rural

areas, which is in turn removing the ability to deliver affordable housing on the back of allocated sites under Policy RES 6.

POLICY RES 7 – RURAL EXCEPTIONS HOUSING

Over and above the housing requirements identified in Policy RES 6, small-scale developments which provide affordable housing for local people will be permitted as an exception to other planning policies if the following criteria are met:

- i. A particular local need is identified, which cannot be accommodated in any other way, as evidenced by the latest District-wide Housing Needs study (and supplemented by an initial parish-wide survey);*
- ii. The site is in or adjoining the settlement;*
- iii. The proposal is of a scale appropriate to the locality and the number of dwellings is no greater than the identified need;*
- iv. The settlement concerned or the immediate area has the local services and facilities to serve the proposed development;*
- v. The proposed housing will be afforded by local people identified as having a housing need and will remain so for all subsequent occupiers;*
- vi. The development shall comply with other relevant policy relating to siting, scale, layout, design, materials, access, parking and landscaping.*

This Policy will apply to small rural communities, therefore sites on the fringe of the Urban Area of Lincoln, Gainsborough, Market Rasen (including Middle Rasen) and Caistor and the villages identified as Primary Rural Settlements will not be considered appropriate.

Where it can be conclusively established that it is necessary to create extra funds over and above those available from free and low-cost land, to overcome specific and agreed infrastructure or access constraints, or that the provision of low cost dwellings for local needs is not realistic or practicable without extra subsidy, a limited element of open market housing may be permitted within an overall scheme provided that:

- a. All the requirements set out in clauses i to vi of this policy can be satisfactorily met;*
- b. The number of open market dwellings included in the scheme shall be no more than that required to provide the necessary number of local needs dwellings at low cost and shall not be more than 50% of the total number in the scheme;*
- c. It can be ensured that all development profits from the open market housing element of the proposal over and above a reasonable return on building costs are employed in subsidising the local needs housing part of the approved scheme*

JUSTIFICATION

1.49 This policy will allow, in exceptional circumstances, the construction of affordable dwellings in rural locations to meet local need, which would not be provided by other means. The definition of affordable and local need can be found in Policy RES 6.

1.50 Such sites are to be within or immediately adjoining settlements. Schemes on land outside the existing built curtilage of the settlement will only be permitted when it can be demonstrated that suitable land does not exist within the main body of the settlement. It is essential that normal development control requirements should not be overlooked, and sites are located in a sustainable location where residents can access the basic life service facilities that they require.

1.51 The long term affordability of houses built will, under this policy, be controlled by means of a planning condition or planning obligation to ensure that affordable status is maintained in perpetuity, in order to allow the community to continue to benefit from the affordability in the long term.

1.52 It is expected that if the land for affordable housing is provided at low or nil cost, then adequate subsidy will be available to allow the scheme to proceed. It is often the case, however, that the form of subsidy is not sufficient to allow a scheme to go ahead. The amount of funding that is available is limited and it may prove necessary, in some circumstances, to allow very carefully prescribed cross-subsidy schemes, in order that the objective of development of local needs housing can be achieved.

1.53 Such schemes would involve a number of dwellings for sale, either on an open market or on a shared ownership basis. For such schemes to be acceptable the income generated from sales must be used in its entirety to subsidise the local needs housing. Before such scheme is allowed to commence, the Council would need to be satisfied that:

- The minimum number of dwellings necessary to support the scheme has been established and only that number will be permitted.
- There is local support for such a scheme, normally through the relevant local council.
- The Local Housing Authority is satisfied that the scheme meets a demonstrated housing need.

REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

1.54 The aim of this policy is to allow for the creation of housing accommodation which is better adapted to meeting present and future housing needs as long as the quality of the environment is maintained and enhanced. Residential development in the countryside is strictly controlled. It is essential to ensure that the effects of re-development do not damage the character of the area.

POLICY RES 8 – REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

Planning permission for a replacement dwelling in the open countryside will be granted if all the following criteria are met:

- i. The present dwelling has a lawful residential use;*

- ii. The size of the new building is similar to or smaller than that of the dwelling to be replaced;*
- iii. The new building is of a design which is built in a similar scale, mass, materials and architectural details to the vernacular character of the dwellings in the locality;*
- iv. The new dwelling or any new or improved vehicular access is not more visually intrusive or harmful to the appearance and the character of the surrounding countryside than the original dwelling and access provision;*
- v. The dwelling has safe access, and does not create or aggravate highway safety problems;*
- vi. The existing dwelling is demolished prior to the occupation of the replacement dwelling;*
- vii. The structural condition and/or the design of the existing property makes retention impracticable and/or undesirable;*
- viii. The existing building is not of historic or architectural interest.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.55 Central Government Policy indicates that residential development in the countryside should be restricted. It is therefore essential that evidence exists of any residential use on a site.

1.56 If it is apparent that the residential use of a site has been abandoned, then permission will not normally be granted for new residential development. This would introduce a new use into the countryside contrary to the aims of protecting the countryside for its own sake.

1.57 Information on the structural state of the existing building will be necessary as part of an application for its replacement. If the existing building is in a good state of repair then the retention of the building with modest extensions would be more appropriate than its replacement. On rare occasions the replacement of an existing residential building may be justified solely because that which exists is of a poor design. When this is the case, the replacement dwelling must be of better quality or more appropriate design than the building which it is intended to replace in terms of local materials and vernacular style.

1.58 Sensitive planning control is necessary to ensure that the cumulative effects of the redevelopment do not damage the character and appearance of the countryside. It is important to bear in mind that demolition of a property should not create any presumption that permission will be granted for more intrusive re-development. Care should be taken over the design of features such as entrances and access roads and the location of the dwelling on the plot. Lack of attention to detail can result in the new building being far more prominent than that which previously existed on site, and the Council will pay careful attention to any proposal to replace traditional small cottage-style properties. In assessing what would form a suitable replacement dwelling the Council will have regard to the issue of overall housing mix within the District and the role that smaller properties play.

CONVERSION AND RE - USE OF BUILDINGS FOR A RESIDENTIAL USE IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

1.59 Traditional Lincolnshire farm buildings can be found throughout the District. Most of the buildings make a positive contribution to the local environment due to their built form and use of traditional materials. Those in, or on the fringes of settlements, often form substantial farm complexes which, because of their traditional character and layout, make a significant contribution to the village scene. Other traditional non-residential buildings include redundant churches, chapels and schools, as well as other non-agricultural buildings. Vacant buildings in more isolated locations are often a traditional and accepted element in the landscape. Some of these are listed.

1.60 As a result of changing circumstances, some rural buildings are now unused, or will become unused in the future. This can happen through a number of circumstances such as changes in agriculture, re-organisation due to insufficient use e.g. churches, or by a building falling into a state of disrepair.

1.61 New house building in the open countryside is strictly controlled but it is realised that existing non-residential buildings in the countryside can contribute towards the identified housing needs of the District. PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) provides criteria on the re-use of redundant buildings in the countryside.

POLICY RES 9 – CONVERSION AND RE-USE OF BUILDINGS FOR A RESIDENTIAL USE IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

In the open countryside planning permission will be granted for the conversion of individual buildings to dwellings if all the following criteria are met:

- i. The conversion serves to retain a building of significant architectural or historical interest or is important to retain the character of the building and the local environment;*
- ii. The Local Planning Authority consider other uses are inappropriate or unacceptable or not feasible;*
- iii. The building is capable of conversion without the need for substantial rebuilding, or for significant alterations or extensions which adversely affect the character of the building, its setting or the countryside;*
- iv. Every reasonable attempt has been made to secure a suitable business or community re-use for the building.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.62 Residential conversions can often have a detrimental effect on the fabric and character of farm and rural industrial buildings, particularly where they have an historic importance. The creation of a residential curtilage can undermine the countryside character of an area. Garden and house features such as patios, washing lines, car parking, sheds and small scale details can erode the rural character of a rural building and of the wider countryside landscape.

1.63 As a result PPS7 makes it clear that residential uses in the open countryside will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Residential re-use will not be allowed unless the applicant has made every reasonable effort to secure suitable business or other re-use, and a statement of the efforts which have been made should accompany any planning application. This especially applies to the conversion of a large grouping of barns, agricultural and industrial-type buildings. Proposals involving the conversion of multiple buildings in the countryside are unlikely to be acceptable.

1.64 Applicants will need to provide evidence that the building concerned has been actively marketed at a realistic price for a suitable period to satisfy criterion 'iv' of the policy.

1.65 West Lindsey has very significant numbers of rural buildings spread across its sparsely populated countryside. Therefore if all such buildings were converted to residential use then this would undermine the housing strategy of the Local Plan First Review in terms of housing numbers and the priority to focus development into the towns. Therefore, only buildings of significant architectural or historic interest will be considered acceptable for conversion under this policy.

1.66 In cases where buildings have become so derelict that they can be brought back into use only by complete or substantial reconstruction, such proposals will be considered as new build.

AGRICULTURAL & FORESTRY HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

1.67 One of the few circumstances in which isolated residential development in the countryside is justified, is when accommodation is required to enable a farm or forestry worker to live near their place of work for distinct operational reasons.

POLICY RES 10 – AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Planning permission will only be granted for an agricultural or forestry worker's dwelling in the open countryside provided that:

- i. A dwelling, and its proposed siting on an agricultural or forestry holding are essential to the efficient and operational running of the enterprise;*
- ii. The need is for accommodation for a full-time worker;*
- iii. The unit and the agricultural or forestry activity concerned have been established for a minimum of 3 years and profitable for at least 1 year, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so;*
- iv. No other housing accommodation is already available locally, whether occupied or not, to meet the need;*
- v. The necessary accommodation cannot be provided by the conversion of a building on the holding;*
- vi. The new dwelling is sited with any farmstead or other group of rural buildings on the holding;*

vii. The new dwelling is no larger in size than is justified by the needs of the enterprise or more expensive to construct than the income of the enterprise can sustain;

viii. The new dwelling does not cause significant environmental or landscape impact.

If planning permission is granted for a dwelling for an agricultural or forestry worker on a holding in the countryside, the occupation of the dwelling will be limited to the following people: "a person solely or mainly working in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and any resident dependants."

Only in exceptional circumstances shall an occupancy condition be removed. If it is demonstrated that the long term need for the agricultural dwelling no longer exists in the locality, and the dwelling cannot be sold with the occupancy condition attached at a price reflecting the occupancy condition and the local market conditions, then consideration may be given to removing the condition.

JUSTIFICATION

1.68 The policy objectives underpinning restricting housing development to that which is essential for the efficient operation of agricultural or forestry enterprises relate to protection of the landscape quality of the countryside from the harmful intrusion of unnecessary sporadic building development. A further objective is the maximisation of efficiency and cost-effectiveness in servicing housing in rural areas by concentrating new development within settlements. To achieve these objectives a policy for agricultural and forestry workers dwellings in isolated locations should be restrictive and not permissive.

1.69 It will have to be proven that an essential need exists for a dwelling, the essential need being that of the agricultural or other use of land to which this policy is applicable and not that of the owner-occupier. Applications will need to be accompanied by a statement demonstrating the animal husbandry or other operational reasons highlighting why a dwelling on site is required. The issue of security will not be an acceptable reason under this policy. PPS7 sets out details of a Financial and Functional Test which any proposal submitted under policy will have to meet.

1.70 Locating the new development close to existing buildings will reduce the effect that it has on the character of the countryside.

1.71 Appropriate conditions will be attached to any permission granted to ensure that the development remains for this special purpose. These conditions will not normally be removed unless it is clearly demonstrated that the long term need for that type of dwelling no longer exists. One indication that the dwelling would no longer be required would be if it has not been sold following a significant period, normally extending over one year, with the condition attached, and advertised at a price reflecting the occupancy condition and the wage level of farm workers and the local housing market conditions specifically relating to agricultural dwellings. It is important that agricultural dwellings are not sold off separately from land holdings, nor occupancy conditions removed unnecessarily.

1.72 On newly established farm holdings, the provision of a mobile home to allow the operation to demonstrate viability required under criterion iii above, may be considered. Each case will be considered on its own merits; but any mobile home proposal would still need to meet the essence of the above policy and would be strictly time-limited by condition.

EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS LOCATED WITHIN SETTLEMENTS

1.73 This policy should ensure that any extensions to dwellings within settlements are in keeping with the style, character and appearance of the existing property and do not have a negative impact on the living conditions of any neighbouring occupiers.

POLICY RES 11 – EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS LOCATED WITHIN SETTLEMENTS

Planning permission will be granted to extend a dwelling in a settlement provided that the proposal meets the following criteria:

- i. If the proposal is two storey it should not lead to harm by the introduction of a terracing effect in the streetscene;*
- ii. It is well designed in relation to the size, shape and materials of the building to be extended, and is subordinate to the existing property;*
- iii. It would not adversely affect the amenity of the residents of neighbouring properties by virtue of over-dominance or appearance;*
- iv. It does not prejudice the retention of any significant trees or other important features;*
- v. It enables adequate off-street parking space to remain for at least one vehicle to park;*
- vi. It enables an adequate amount of private garden space to remain;*
- vii. Does not have a significant impact on the supply, availability and subsequent affordability of smaller properties as part of the overall mix of properties within the locality.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.74 Applications for extensions usually reflect the individual needs of the applicant. As these needs tend to differ, it is not appropriate to create a policy specifying volume or size standards for such development. Therefore, the policy outlines a list of criteria that should be taken into account when determining applications for extensions to dwellings.

1.75 The Council wishes to avoid the creation of a terrace effect through the development of extensions to the side of dwellings. If such extensions are developed too close to the boundary with another property, this can reduce or in fact remove the otherwise obvious gap between properties, often creating the said terrace effect.

1.76 Any extensions to a building must be carried out in such a way as to ensure that it resembles the existing building in terms of design and materials, and is not excessive in its size so as to dominate the original dwelling. It would be inappropriate to impose a specific volume increase rule above which extensions would not be acceptable, due to the differing needs of applicants and the individual nature of each site.

EXTENSION TO DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

1.77 This policy should ensure that any extensions to dwellings in the open countryside would protect and enhance the character and appearance of the dwellings whilst having a minimal impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding countryside and on the living conditions of any occupier living nearby.

POLICY RES 12 – EXTENSIONS TO DWELLINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

Planning permission will be granted to extend a dwelling in the open countryside provided that the proposal:

- i. Is well designed in relation to the size, shape and materials of the building to be extended, and is significantly subordinate to the existing property;*
- ii. Would not adversely affect the appearance of the surrounding landscape and countryside;*
- iii. Does not prejudice the retention of any significant trees or other landscaping features;*
- iv. Enables adequate off-street parking space to remain for at least one vehicle to park;*
- v. Enables an adequate amount of private garden space to remain;*
- vi. Does not have a detrimental impact on the original design of the dwelling;*
- vii. Does not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the dwelling within the surrounding landscape;*
- viii. Does not have a significant impact on the supply, availability and subsequent affordability of smaller properties as part of the overall mix of properties within the locality.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.78 Significant alterations and extensions to dwellings in the countryside can be visually intrusive on the character and appearance of the landscape. The Council wishes through this policy to balance the needs of the individual to extend their own property whilst ensuring that the design and appearance of the proposal is of a high enough standard not to negatively impact on the character and visual appearance of the surrounding countryside. All schemes should pay particular attention to retaining any significant trees or landscape features which contribute to the distinctive character of the countryside.

1.79 The Council is of the view that any extension to be considered under this policy should be less than 50% of the size of the original dwelling as built before any previous extensions. The cumulative impact of numerous extensions can significantly increase the intrusion of the property into the countryside. Any extension over 50% of the size of the original dwelling is considered to no longer be subordinate and to be of a scale that will increase the impact of the dwelling on the countryside beyond acceptable levels. The Council will pay careful attention to any proposal to extend traditional small cottage-style properties, in assessing what would represent a suitable extension the Council will have regard to the

issue of overall housing mix within the District and the role that smaller properties play. Expansion of small cottage-style properties can have a significant impact on the availability of such properties in the locality and on rural affordability.

FAMILY ANNEXES

1.80 Family circumstances can change over time. This may necessitate the need to move house or to consider altering the existing family home to suit. This policy is specifically geared towards the creation of family annexes which differ from ordinary extensions in that they provide self-contained accommodation rather than providing accommodation which is dependent on the facilities of the main house.

POLICY RES 13 – FAMILY ANNEXES

Planning permission will be granted for the creation of additional, self-contained living accommodation, either by:

- i. Extending an existing dwelling; or*
- ii. By converting outbuildings which are incidental to a dwelling.*

Provided such accommodation remains incidental to, and within the curtilage of the original dwelling, and satisfies normal siting, design and amenity policy criteria set out in other relevant policies of the plan including those dealing with extensions to dwellings.

The creation of a separate dwelling unit will not be permitted unless all the relevant policies of the plan can be met.

JUSTIFICATION

1.81 Sometimes family circumstances change, such as the extension of a family, or a relative moving in. In such cases planning applications are sometimes received relating to the proposed extension of houses to cater for these changes, or for the creation of additional self-contained living accommodation.

1.82 Provided that an extension to a dwelling in such circumstances is similar in terms of scale and design to the original dwelling, these proposals would usually be acceptable. The conversion of existing outbuildings into a family annex would also usually be acceptable, provided that there are no adverse effects upon the amenity of the neighbouring properties or the surrounding area.

1.83 Whichever option is chosen, the annex should remain an integral part of the original dwelling and should not become a separate development. The policy is not intended to support the conversion of garages.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

1.84 Changes in the population structure and changes in social habits have led to an increased demand for houses in multiple occupation. Increasing numbers of single and two-person households are increasing pressure on the housing market in their quest to find suitable properties. The 2002 and 2003 Housing Needs Surveys revealed a significant shortage in the supply of affordable one-bedroom housing in West Lindsey.

1.85 A house in multiple occupation can be defined as one that is occupied by more than one household, where each household lives independently from each other, within the same building. Some facilities may be shared on a communal basis. This definition is one used for planning purposes, the Housing Act 2004 sets out different definitions for houses in multiple occupation which may be subject to mandatory or additional licensing under that Act.

1.86 Whilst broadly supporting proposals for houses in multiple occupation to meet the housing needs of the District, the Council needs to consider and protect the living conditions of neighbouring property occupiers and to ensure that the proposal is in keeping with the character and visual amenity of the locality.

POLICY RES 14 – HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Planning permission will only be granted for the use of a building as a house in multiple occupation provided the following criteria are met:

- i. There will be no significant detrimental effect on the amenity of near residents;*
- ii. There will be no significant detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the building or the locality;*
- iii. Adequate car parking and amenity space are provided;*
- iv. The number of properties converted to Houses in Multiple Occupation in one street is limited in order to prevent an over-intensification of use of facilities and services in the area.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.87 Residential multiple occupation can create environmental issues within a locality. Traffic generation and parking can have a problematic impact in dense areas of housing; therefore it is important to consider the amenities of the existing occupiers of the area in determining applications for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Restricting the number of HMOs on a single street can help to avoid the cumulative impact of a number of these types of dwellings being located together.

1.88 However, the creation of HMOs can help to rejuvenate neglected parts of the urban area and make a valuable contribution towards the housing provision, especially for people in need of affordable housing.

RESIDENTIAL USES ABOVE SHOPS

1.89 Under-utilised and vacant accommodation in upper floors of town and village centre premises presents a number of problems but also offers the potential for new and alternative uses in these areas.

1.90 A concentration of such empty space can cause or add to the run-down appearance of central areas, can increase the decay of important buildings, represents a waste of a resource, inefficient energy use and requires the need for duplicate accommodation in other locations.

1.91 Use of such premises could aid the security of the shop premises over which they are located and the overall security of a shopping street or area by increasing the amount of out of hours activity especially if there are a number of such occupied properties.

POLICY RES 15 – RESIDENTIAL USES ABOVE SHOPS

Planning permission will be granted for residential uses above shops and other commercial premises provided that:

- i. The amenities of the locality are not adversely affected by reason of design, appearance, traffic generation or security;*
- ii. The ground floor use is not inhibited in any way.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.92 Flats over shops and other commercial buildings can be a valuable source of new housing. If the spaces above shops and other commercial properties are utilised it will help create the mixed use town centres the Central Government refers to in PPG3 (Housing) and PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres). By living near the facilities of the town centre, people's need to travel to access employment and other facilities can be reduced, thus making development sustainable and helping to improve the vitality of the town centres as encouraged by the Retail and Town Centres chapter of this Local Plan First Review.

1.93 It will be necessary to ensure that the use of upper floors as a dwelling will not limit or hinder the normal use of the building for retail use at ground floor level, and/or the amenity of the neighbouring buildings.

INDIVIDUAL MOBILE HOMES

1.94 Residential caravans and mobile homes have a significant impact on the environment and amenity of an area. They require the same level of service provision as permanent dwellings.

POLICY RES 16 – INDIVIDUAL MOBILE HOMES

Planning permission will only be granted for individual mobile homes provided that:

- i. They conform with policies for the location of permanent residential dwellings;*
- ii. The siting is for a limited period of time, and in connection with a recognised development requirement.*

JUSTIFICATION

1.95 Proposals for mobile homes will be assessed against the same policies that apply to permanent residential development proposals. Residents of mobile homes require the same access to services and facilities such as health, education, employment and retail therefore the same, considerations need to be taken into account. In certain circumstances,

on agricultural holdings, there may be a special requirement for the use of a mobile home, for example on a newly established farming enterprise, prior to permanent accommodation being justified as identified in Policy RES 10.

RESIDENTIAL MOBILE HOME PARKS

POLICY RES 17 – RESIDENTIAL MOBILE HOME PARKS

Planning permission for new permanent mobile home parks and gypsy/traveller sites will only be granted providing that they conform to policies for the location of permanent residential dwellings.

JUSTIFICATION

1.96 As with proposals for individual mobile homes, proposals for residential mobile home parks will be considered under policies contained in the Plan relating to permanent residential development.

1.97 Mobile home parks can have a significant impact on the character and the appearance of a locality. Being permanent sites their impact on the infrastructure of the area is also similar to that of conventional houses, as is the level of service provision which is expected and required by the occupiers. It is therefore justified to directly compare the impact of a permanent caravan site on an area to that which would occur if conventional houses were proposed on the site.

1.98 In determining any application for a gypsy site the Council will need to have regard to the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy and the provisions of Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites which have both been published since this policy was agreed in accordance with Policy STRAT 1.

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