

ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CONSULTATION STATEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Number	Section	Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Summary of consultation during development of the draft plan	3
3	Launch of the Neighbourhood Plan	4
4	Consultation on the 1 st draft of the Neighbourhood Plan	7
5	Results of consultation on the 1 st draft of the Neighbourhood Plan	9
6	Arrangements for Phase 1 Pre-Submission consultation	11
7	Results of the Phase 1 Pre-Submission consultation	12
8	Requirement for Phase 2 Pre-Submission Regulation 14 consultation	14
9	Arrangements for Phase 2 Pre-Submission Regulation 14 consultation	14
10	Results of the Phase 2 Pre-Submission Regulation 14 consultation	15
11	Statutory Consultees	20
Appendix 1	Publicity for the launch of the Neighbourhood Plan	
Appendix 2	Summary of the views expressed in the launch period	
Appendix 3	Summary of responses to emerging themes	
Appendix 4	Neighbourhood Plan Newsletter	
Appendix 5	Invitations to Stakeholders event	
Appendix 6	Publicity on consultation at the Tractor Run	
Appendix 7	Publicity on Draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation	
Appendix 8	Summary of consultation responses to draft Neighbourhood Plan	
Appendix 9	Publicity on Phase 1 Pre-submission consultation	
Appendix 10	Summary of consultation responses to Phase 1 Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan	
Appendix 11	Publicity on Phase 2 Pre-submission Regulation 14 consultation	

1. INTRODUCTION

This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Section 15(2). Part 5 of the regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain:

- a. Details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- b. Explain how they were consulted;
- c. Summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- d. Describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

This statement describes the statutory and non-statutory consultation that has taken place and the steps taken to ensure the engagement of as wide cross section of Ashby residents and businesses within the process as possible.

2. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION DURING DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT PLAN

On 9th July 2012 the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee agreed that Ashby de la Zouch Town Council would prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Ashby de la Zouch. Following that decision a small working party of interested parties was established to manage the process.

The Steering Group consisted of:

- Leader of Ashby de la Zouch Town Council;
- Chairman of the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee;
- Chairman of the Town Council's Parks and Cemetery Committee;
- A representative from Ashby Civic Society;
- A representative from Ashby Town Team (a group representing businesses within the town centre);
- Following the Town Council elections in 2015 a representative from the Labour Group of the Town Council joined the Steering group.

The Steering Group decided that the Neighbourhood Plan area should be restricted to the Ashby Wards of Castle, Holywell and Ivanhoe. The village of Blackfordby was excluded as it was felt that the village had its own distinct development needs.

A dedicated Neighbourhood Plan page was created on the Town Council's website to enable people to keep up to date with progress and download Neighbourhood

Plan documents. Regular updates were provided to the Town Council's Planning and Transportation Committee who approved each round of consultation and submission of the Examination Neighbourhood Plan. Meetings were also held with North West Leicestershire District Council and Leicestershire County Council to keep them informed of progress and to receive their input, especially on housing numbers.

There were 4 rounds of consultation in total:

- The launch of the Neighbourhood Plan where the public's views were obtained on the issues facing the town.
- Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- Phase 1 consultation on the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.
- Phase 2 Regulation 14 consultation on the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Launch of the Neighbourhood Plan

The first task in producing the Neighbourhood Plan was to gain the public's views on the issues facing the town, this was combined with the launch of the Plan. As part of that process people were asked:

- What things do you like about the town?
- What things do you not like about the town?
- What things would you want that the town doesn't have?

The consultation was promoted with the strap line 'Planning Ashby's Future' and that has been used throughout all consultation phases.

Four drop in sessions were held during April 2013, on different days of the week, including a Saturday and at different times of the day, so daytime and evenings.

The events were publicised through:

- An advert in Ashby Life, a monthly town magazine that is distributed to all households in the town;
- Invitation letters to key groups in Ashby including local churches, schools, businesses and community groups;
- Posters and flyers throughout the town;
- A press release in the Ashby Times.

Appendix 1: Provides details of the publicity for the event.

In addition to the Drop In sessions the following events were held to try and extend the reach of the consultation:

- Visits to two primary schools to gain the views of a selection of Key Stage 2 pupils on the key questions listed above;

- A consultation session with Ashby Explorer Scouts who were having a session on local democracy;
- The same questions were asked to people attending events at the Town Council offices: Weight Watchers, Hospice Hope Support Café and literacy and numeracy classes;
- People at the local Farmers Market were also questioned.

Approximately 60 people took part in this first round of public consultation and the following key themes and issues emerged:

- People like living in a historic market town at the heart of the National Forest, which they see as friendly with a good community spirit and facilities which need retaining and building on;
- The town centre, issues around the mix of shops and businesses and car parking;
- The open spaces are appreciated but they could be developed further and put to greater use;
- There are concerns about the traffic infrastructure and congestion and about the perceived lack of public transport;
- Where new development is going to happen people want it to be of the right type, have the right mix of housing and be in the best location for the town;
- There are concerns about the ability of the existing infrastructure to cope with the additional houses e.g. the health centre is of concern and the current location of schools;
- There are a lack of facilities for teenagers (with some people concerned about the growing elderly population);
- There is a need for a multi-functional community facility and more community events in the town;
- The need to encourage a range of employment opportunities in the town and utilise the existing business parks.

Appendix 2: Summarises the views expressed during the launch period.

To ensure the correct themes were emerging and that there were no key issues being missed the Steering Group decided that a survey should be conducted using the emerging themes and asking people if they agree, disagree or have no view on the themes. They were also asked if anything was missing.

People were asked to complete the survey forms at the Food Gusto Food Festival on 25th May 2013 and the survey was available online through Citizen Space. To help gain the views of younger people in the town GCSE Citizenship students at Ashby School were asked to complete the survey as well.

In total 50 forms were completed at the Food Festival and 112 forms were completed by students from Ashby School.

Analysis of the survey returns indicated that the key themes were:

- Town Centre Vitality
- Economic Growth
- Housing and the Built Environment
- Accessibility and Transport
- Education and Leisure

Appendix 3: Summarises responses to the emerging themes.

Focus Groups were established to look at the issues around each of the Themes, to look at evidence and to propose policies for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan to deal with the issues. Members of the public were recruited to join the Focus Groups through press releases, emails to people who had contributed to previous consultations and a newsletter was produced to update people on progress with the plan and to seek volunteers for the Focus Groups. 1000 copies of the newsletter were produced and dropped off at shops in the town centre, copies were also left at the Tourist Information Centre and at the Town Council's offices. Email copies were also sent to everyone who had completed survey forms and wanted to be kept informed of progress. Copies were also distributed at the Ashby Food Festival and through a mail shot to over 70 organisations and businesses in the town. Local churches placed copies of the newsletter at the back of their churches.

Appendix 4: A copy of the Neighbourhood Plan Newsletter.

Five Focus Groups were established with over 40 participants from the local community, with officers from the District and County Councils also offering support. Each Focus Group produced a table which summarised the objectives for their theme and suggested policies required to support the achievement of those objectives. A Reference Group was established, consisting of the Chairs from each Focus Group and representatives from Yourlocale and the Deputy Town Clerk. The Reference Group reviewed the outputs from the Focus Groups and agreed what policies should form part of the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

In November 2014 a Stakeholder Drop In event was held to update people on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and to gain their views on the policies emerging from the Theme Groups. The event was targeted at businesses, statutory agencies, landowners and developers operating in the area, with over 60 invites being sent out and 12 people attending.

Appendix 5: Contains copies of letters inviting Stakeholders to the Drop in event and a letter informing Statutory Stakeholders of the start of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

In the summer of 2015 briefings were held for Town Councillors and members of the Focus Groups on the policies being included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, so their views could be obtained on any changes required. Members of the public were also given the opportunity to comment on the key policies intended for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan through a stand at Jim's Tractor Run. Despite the very wet weather 41 people visited the stand and commented on the policies. Attendance at the Tractor Run was publicised through emails to people who wanted to be kept informed of progress, twitter and Facebook.

Appendix 6: Contains publicity on the Tractor Run consultation.



4. CONSULTATION ON THE 1st DRAFT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan was held from 12th October to 24th November 2015. The consultation was advertised through:

- Two adverts in Ashby Life, one announcing the start of consultation and publicising drop in sessions and workshops, the second a month later reminding people how they can comment on the draft plan. Ashby Life is delivered to every household in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Posters were placed on notice boards and in shop windows throughout the town.
- Flyers were distributed to parents through primary schools.
- 241 emails were sent to people who wished to be kept informed of progress with the plan, with a link to the Town Council's consultation page.
- Letters were sent to statutory stakeholders, neighbouring parishes, developers, landowners, County and District Councils, businesses,

community groups, schools, churches etc. informing them of the consultation and the date of drop in sessions and workshops.

- A Press Release was issued to the local publications and this resulted in an article in the Ashby Times.
- Twitter and Facebook were utilised to inform people about the consultation, with links through to the Town Council's consultation page. 21 tweets reminded people about the consultation and individual workshops.
- Flyers were distributed in the town centre on a Saturday morning.

A Councillor briefing was held on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, where the policies in each section were described.

Appendix 7: Contains publicity used for consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.



Attendance at the drop in and workshops was disappointing but those who attended fully engaged with the process and some very useful discussions took place:

- 10 people attended a general Neighbourhood Plan drop in session;
- 5 people attended the workshop on Housing and the Build Environment;
- 5 people attended the workshop on Education and Leisure;
- 2 people attended the Economic Growth and Transport workshop;

- 3 people attended the workshop on the town centre and conservation area and
- 2 people attended the final workshop which provided an overview of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON THE 1ST DRAFT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

55 responses received:

- 35 respondents were residents
- 10 respondents were developers/landowners
- 3 respondents were community interest groups
- 7 respondents were statutory consultees

Appendix 8: Summarises the consultation responses and where action has been taken in response to the comments.

Significant changes to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The following significant changes were made following the consultation:

Section 2: About Ashby de la Zouch

- Additional background information on the town has been given;
- Details of house prices in Ashby when compared with neighbouring towns.

Section 3: What the plan is trying to achieve

- The Vision has been amended to include reference to ‘the countryside’.

Section 4.1: Towards a sustainable Ashby de la Zouch

- The Limits to Development have been amended to reflect those proposed in the draft North West Leicestershire Local Plan;
- As the proposed developments at Money Hill are now included within the Plan reference is made to concerns about the scale of development envisaged for Ashby set out in the draft Local Plan. Stating that consultation shows that people are opposed to new development and its impact on the town’s infrastructure;
- Employment areas are now shown on the Limits to Development map;
- The section on design has been redrafted to make expectations more explicit and to broaden the remit to all development and not just housing;
- A new section and policy on Areas of Local Separation has been added;

Section 4.2: Housing

- The section on Sustainable Housing Growth has been redrafted to comment on housing allocations in the draft Local Plan and recent planning appeal decisions for Woodcock Way and Money Hill;
- The Policy on Housing Provision has been replaced by one on Sustainable Housing Growth, proposing a minimum of 2,050 dwellings at Money Hill. This will ensure the Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirement of conformity with the draft Local Plan. The Local Plan had originally proposed 1,750 dwellings for Money Hill, but the Town Council were aware that this was likely to increase to 2,050 dwellings. Therefore the higher figure was used;
- The allocation of 2,050 dwellings is only supported if a Spatial Masterplan, Landscape Masterplan and Design Code are produced for the Money Hill site;
- Reference to the windfall sites has been included;
- Following representations about the original 40% affordable housing target being undeliverable, this has been revised down to 30%;
- For the same reasons the target for 1 bedroom affordable homes has been reduced from 50% to 40%;
- The expectations around the delivery of self-build projects have been simplified;
- The policy on exception sites for affordable housing has been removed in light of the proposal for Money Hill.

Section 4.3: Employment and Economic Growth

- Greater detail is given of existing employment in the town;
- The policy on existing employment land has been redrafted to include expectations on the types of employment permitted within the industrial estates;
- A new policy on the change of use of existing employment sites has been included;
- There is now only one policy relating to 'Small and Start up Businesses' rather than two.

Section 4.4: Ashby de la Zouch Town Centre

- Reference to the night time economy has been included;
- A community action has been added regarding the retail mix in the town;
- Reference to shop fronts has been extended to include 'shop frontages';
- The section on tourism has been widened to beyond the town centre;
- A policy on the decluttering of signage and on use of internal illumination has been redrafted, with the Legible Signage strategy becoming a community action.

Section 4.5: Transport

- A section on the potential impact of new development on traffic management within the town has been added;
- There is now a separate policy relating to car parking;
- A community action has been included on the improvement of footpaths and cycleways.

Section 4.6: Education, Leisure and Wellbeing

- There are now separate policies relating to 'Open Spaces' and 'Local Green Spaces';
- Important Local Green Spaces are now listed;
- Open space provision in new developments refers to District Planning Policy but still emphasises the need for provision for all age groups;
- Allotment provision is now for schemes of 50 or more, rather than 5 or more;
- The policies on biodiversity and trees and hedges have been strengthened;
- Listed buildings and buildings of local heritage interest are dealt with separately, the existing designated buildings of local interest have been added;
- A review of the Conservation Area has been requested;
- The policy on Areas of Archaeological Interest has been amended following the reference to an ALERT zone and refers instead to recorded archaeological sites;
- Important community assets and assets of community value are now listed;

Section 4.7: Developer Contributions

Greater detail on developer contributions has been included.

In addition minor changes to the presentation of the draft Neighbourhood Plan have been made.

Changes were also made to provide additional justification for some of the policies.

6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PHASE 1 PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

The pre-submission consultation was launched on 2nd May until 14th June 2016. With the consultation publicised through:

- An advert in Ashby Life which goes to all households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Details were placed on the Town Council's website, including a copy of the draft plan.
- Social media was used to promote the consultation.

- Letters with copies of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan were sent to Statutory Stakeholders, neighbouring parish councils, Leicestershire County Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, Ashby Library, the National Forest Company, the local MP and Civic Society.
- 183 emails and 36 letters were sent to local schools, churches, developers and landowners and to people who had been involved in previous consultations. They were provided with details about how to download a copy of the plan.

Appendix 9: Provides details of publicity for the Phase 1 Pre-submission consultation.

7. RESULTS OF THE PHASE 1 PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

There were 21 respondents to the Pre-Submission Consultation:

- 8 Statutory Consultees – Environment Agency, Natural England, Coal Authority, Highways England, North West Leicestershire District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Local Access Forum and the National Forest Company.
- 4 developers/ landowners.
- 5 local groups e.g. Civic Society, Allotments Association, local campaign groups.
- 4 individual Town Councillors and residents.

Appendix 10: Summarises the consultation responses and where action has been taken in response to the comments.

Significant changes to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan (June 2016)

- The Plan was restructured to divide the section on 'Education, Leisure and Well-being' in to four sections: Historic Environment, Natural Environment, Community Facilities and Education Provision. The Developer Contributions section was also altered as people felt the previous version was confusing.
- Housing numbers were amended to 2050 dwellings at Money Hill, to ensure conformity with the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.
- Recommendations from the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment were incorporated.

- References to the National Forest were enhanced.
- The design policy was amended to include reference to:
 - Flood zones and sustainable drainage systems
 - Storage of waste and recyclable materials
 - Consideration of land instability
- A map showing proposed areas of separation has been included.
- References to the Heath End Conservation have been included.
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment has been added as a key objective. With maps showing SSSI's and ancient woodlands have been added.
- References to the River Mease Special Area of Conservation and the restrictions placed on the Water Quality Management Plan have been strengthened. This includes references in the section on the Money Hill Masterplan.
- The affordable housing requirement was amended to 40% affordable homes being 1 or 2 bedroomed, rather than just 1 bedroomed.
- One policy: Employment land and buildings has been created rather than two separate policies.
- Following concerns from the Environment Agency specific reference has been made to excluding properties in flood zones 3 and 3a from the conversion of upper floors in to residential premises.
- In the Transport section Policy T1: Sustainable Development has been retitled: Traffic Management, the walking and cycling section has been revised to emphasise the need to good connectivity with the town centre, essential services and the surrounding countryside.
- In the new section on the historic environment a policy has been included seeking to protect heritage assets e.g. the Royal Hotel and Midlands Railway Station. Whilst the policy on listed buildings has been removed as it was felt that they were adequately protected by national policies.
- The provision of a new arts/community centre has become a community objective rather than a policy.

8. REQUIREMENT FOR PHASE 2 PRE-SUBMISSION REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

At the same time the Neighbourhood Plan was being prepared North West Leicestershire District Council were preparing the North West Leicestershire Local Plan. In June 2016 the Publication Local Plan was published with 1750 dwellings for Ashby de la Zouch. In November 2016 a main modification was announced to the Local Plan increasing the number of dwellings to 2050 for Ashby de la Zouch.

The Neighbourhood Plan needed to be amended to reflect the new housing figure of 2050 dwellings. This level of change meant another round of Regulation 14 Consultation was required.

On 24th July 2016 North West Leicestershire District Council had advised Ashby de la Zouch Town Council that in their opinion a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulation Assessment needed producing. The Town Council was successful in its bid to Locality for technical support with the production of these documents and AECOM were appointed to produce both reports. Consultation was required on these documents and this was held at the same time as the Phase 2 Regulation 14 consultation.

9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PHASE 2 PRE-SUBMISSION REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

The Part 2 Pre-submission consultation was launched on 30th January 2017 until 13th March 2017. With the consultation publicised through:

- An advert in Ashby Life which goes to all households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Details were placed on the Town Council's website, including a copy of the draft plan.
- Social media was used to promote the consultation.
- Letters with copies of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan were sent to Statutory Stakeholders, neighbouring parish councils, Leicestershire County Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, Ashby Library, the National Forest Company, the local MP and Civic Society.
- 190 emails and 36 letters were sent to local schools, churches, developers and landowners and to people who had been involved in previous consultations. They were provided with details about how to download a copy of the plan.

Appendix 11: Provides details of publicity for the Phase 2 Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation.

10.RESULTS OF THE PHASE 2 PRE-SUBMISSION REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

There were 26 respondents to the Regulation 14 (Phase 2) consultation:

- 9 Statutory Consultees – Environment Agency, Natural England, Coal Authority, CPRE, Highways England, National Forest Company, Leicestershire Local Access Forum, Leicestershire County Council and North West Leicestershire District Council.
- 3 developers/landowners
- 4 local groups e.g. Civic Society and local campaign groups
- 10 individual Town Councillors and residents.

Summary of responses received and amendments made to the Neighbourhood Plan

As with previous consultations many comments were supportive of changes made to the draft Neighbourhood Plan following previous rounds of consultation. There were some minor changes suggested to wording in the plan.

Section 4.1: Towards a Sustainable Ashby de la Zouch

Following comments on the description of sustainable development the text has been amended to set out the definition of sustainable development within the National Policy Planning Framework.

Concern was expressed by a resident at the inclusion of the entire Money Hill site within the Limits to Development. This is to ensure conformity with the Local Plan so cannot be altered.

A developer did not support the use of a settlement boundary. This concern was dismissed as the Limits to Development is a policy in the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in conformity with the Local Plan and the suggested changes would remove that conformity.

Other respondents welcomed the Limits to Development being in line with those within the Local Plan.

Leicestershire County Council supported the inclusion of superfast broadband in the Design Principles, therefore this was retained, despite being questioned by a developer.

Leicestershire County Council suggested some amendments to the Design Principles around the retention of existing trees and hedges and these amendments have been made.

There were comments about the Parking Standards within the Design Principles and potential conflict with the County Council's standards. The text has been amended to provide clarity that the County Council's standards are the ones used.

Concern was expressed at the use of the words 'Priority to be given to Brownfield Sites'. The text has been amended to say 'Support' rather than 'Priority'.

There were a range of comments concerning the Areas of Separation:

- Support of the area of separation in helping to retain rural villages and the sense of place experienced by their residents.
- Requests for other areas to be included within the Areas of Separation, but these were within the limits to development or not between the town of Ashby and a village/hamlet so could not be included.
- Concerns about how the Areas of Separation were identified. The text has been amended to provide the reasons for the Areas of Separation.

The Area of Separation between Ashby de la Zouch and Shellbrook appeared very narrow at one point, therefore this has been extended to include an area of National Forest planting.

Section 4.2: Housing

Housing numbers, Masterplan and housing mix

The amendment of the housing numbers to ensure conformity with the Local Plan has been welcomed.

North West Leicestershire District Council and other respondents expressed concern at the wording around the timescales for delivering the 1,222 dwellings required in addition to those already with planning permission. The wording has been amended to provide greater flexibility in the timescale for delivering the dwellings.

Residents living close to planned employment land on Money Hill requested the inclusion of employment land in the Masterplan. The Masterplan process is led by the District Council and will include employment land. The reference in the Neighbourhood Plan to the Masterplan relates only to housing provision.

Ashby Civic Society requested that the text be amended to ensure requirements already agreed through planning approvals are included within the Masterplan. The text has been amended to make this clear.

There was concern at the text regarding housing design encouraging too uniform approach to housing design. Reference 'to avoid the potential for different developers adopting different design styles and standards' has been deleted.

The use of the term 'Windfall sites' for Policy H3 was found to be confusing, therefore the title was changed to 'Infill sites'.

The focus on encouraging smaller dwellings was questioned by a developer. This has not been altered as the priority being given to 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings supports the findings of the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment and the Local Plan. Consultation had revealed concerns about people being unable to get on to the property ladder in the town owing to the dominance of 4 and 5 bedroom properties in new developments.

Residents supported the need to provide 1 and 2 bedroom retirement properties to help release 3 and 4 bed houses back on to the market.

Affordable housing

Attention was drawn to the difference between the threshold for affordable housing in the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. The threshold in the Local Plan has been altered from 15 to 11, therefore the two documents are now in conformity.

North West Leicestershire District Council had concerns about commuted sums being ring fenced for use in Ashby and the local connection policy. Following discussions between Ashby de la Zouch Town Council and housing officers at North West Leicestershire District Council the following amendments were agreed and supported by the District Council:

- Within Policy H5: Affordable Housing commuted sums can also be used for 'suitable affordable housing in Ashby de la Zouch or specialist accommodation in the wider district'.
- To ensure those with high levels of housing need are able to access accommodation it was agreed that the local connection policy would be amended to allow allocation by band on the housing register. However the local connection requirement would still be adhered to.
- Policy H5 would be incorporated in to the District Council's wider Allocations Policy.
- The Policy would be reviewed at least every 2 years so outcomes can be monitored and any necessary adjustments made.

The local connection policy does not exclude the allocation of properties to people without a local connection. If there is no one on the housing register with a local connection then accommodation can be allocated to other people on the housing register list within that band.

Concerns were expressed that the local connection policy could exclude residents from Blackfordby, who are outside the Plan area, but still part of the parish. Therefore the text was amended to state 'Ashby de la Zouch' rather than the Plan area.

Self-build houses

There were concerns that the criteria for self build properties were too restrictive, therefore the restrictions have been removed.

Section 4.3: Employment and Economic Growth

Respondents commented that the support for start up and small businesses needs qualifying to state that applications need to be in conformity with planning policy and the Local Plan. This amendment has been made.

There were concerns about the expectation that development proposals being encouraged to create employment and local business opportunities to meet local need. This text has been amended to clarify the purpose of the policy and to make it clear that the list is examples, not expectations.

Section 4.4: Town centre

The wording in Policy TC2: Town Centre uses was seen as confusing, therefore the policy has been redrafted.

Support was given by the National Forest Company to the policies on shop frontages and on residential development in the town centre.

The Environment Agency welcomed the changes made to Policy TC4: Residential Development which were made in response to their concerns about safe access and egress to a property which may be at flood risk.

Section 4.5: Transport

The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (Leicestershire branch) and the Leicestershire Local Access Forum expressed concerns that the impacts of the proposed HS2 route are not dealt with in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is unable to deal with national strategic infrastructure plans, therefore the plan cannot go in to a lot of detail about HS2. However text has been added to say that the implications of the construction of HS2 will be dealt with when the Neighbourhood Plan is reviewed.

The County Council suggested some amendments to make it clear that only the impacts on transport of new development can be dealt with and the policy as drafted is in conflict with the County Council's statutorily defined role. The text has been amended as suggested by the County Council.

Following comments from the District Council the supporting text on Travel Plans has been enhanced to give examples of what they should cover when tailored to the local area.

A resident asked for the maintenance footpaths be included in the Neighbourhood Plan, the sentiment was supported but it falls outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Following a suggestion by a resident reference has been made to connectivity with Hicks Lodge cycle centre.

Section 4.6: Historic Environment

Concern was raised that the way Policy HE1: Non Designated Heritage Assets was drafted was unclear, therefore it has been redrafted to make the status of the local list of non-designated heritage assets clearer.

4.7: Natural Environment

A number of respondents expressed concern about the wording around Local Green Spaces not being in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. The text has been amended as suggested by a number of consultees to state 'very special circumstances' rather than 'special circumstances'.

A Local Green Space Assessment for land on the western fringe of Ashby, to the north of Willesley Lane was submitted. This was reviewed but it the land did not meet the criteria for Local Green Space designation as it is an open tract of land.

4.8: Community Facilities

The District Council expressed concerns about the way Policy CF1 on Important Community Facilities was drafted. In the interests of clarity the text has been amended to remove reference to 'have a significant adverse effect on'.

The specific reference to the need for an 'Arts Centre' was questioned by a resident and as this has been questioned in previous consultations it has now been removed.

The District Council expressed some concerns about Policy CF3: Assets of Community Value, especially how community value will be measured. The policy has been redrafted to address those concerns.

4.9: Developer Contributions

Ashby Civic Society requested that the developer contributions cover improving the existing overburdened roads and infrastructure across the whole town. This change could not be made as developer contributions can only be used to mitigate the impact of new development.

Following comments from a number of respondents the text has been amended to make it clear that the list of infrastructure requirements is not in priority order.

General comments

A resident wanted a Park and Ride scheme including in the Plan, it was not practical for the plan to deal with this suggestion.

Another resident requested that the sections on renewable energy expectations be strengthened. It was felt that this topic was adequately dealt with under Policy S4:Design.

There is praise for the comprehensive nature of the Neighbourhood Plan from a number of statutory consultees e.g. Natural England, Campaign for Protection of Rural England, Leicestershire County Council.

11. STATUTORY CONSULTTEES

North West Leicestershire District Council
Leicestershire County Council
Heritage England
Environment Agency
Natural England
British Gas Properties
Highways England
National Forest Company
Leicestershire Local Access Forum
Leicestershire Police
British Telecommunications Plc
The Coal Authority
National Grid
Network Rail Infrastructure
Severn Trent Water
East Midlands Housing Group
Andrew Bridgen MP
CPRE
Voluntary Action Leicestershire
Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership
Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
North West Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce
Age UK Leicestershire
Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service
West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group

Homes and Communities Agency
Neighbouring Parish Councils