

# A SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE BOLSOVER LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## 1. THE CORE STRATEGY VISION

- 1.1 The proposed spatial vision for Bolsover District set out below seeks to support the vision set out in the Bolsover Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Derbyshire Sustainable Communities Strategy. This vision will be used to inform the strategy, policies and proposals of the documents that make up the LDF.

***By 2026 Bolsover's communities will have become more sustainable, prosperous, safe and healthy. New development will have taken place in towns and villages in a way that enhances the environment, local distinctiveness and sense of place, strengthens local economies and improves the local quality of life. The district will have provided greater opportunities for more sustainable lifestyles by achieving a better balance between employment and housing in its main settlements, by concentrating development on public transport routes, and by implementation of low carbon energy systems. A network of green spaces will have been improved to link and enhance the setting of the District's key heritage sites, offer a wide range of opportunities for recreation and sustain wildlife.***

- 1.2 The spatial strategy for Bolsover is based on this vision. The strategy must also support and conform with the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS sets a context for the scale and location of new development and gives a lead on other priorities such as responding to climate change.

### **Realising the Vision**

- 1.3 Better services and better access to them will be achieved by a strategy which recognises the distinctive roles of the District's towns and main villages, and the close relationship between many settlements and services available in adjoining districts.
- 1.4 The District will support four towns which will be important centres of service provision and employment for their hinterlands. The prosperity of the towns will be achieved by retaining and developing a range of employment generating uses in town centres, including retail, commercial, health and leisure uses. Good quality employment sites, in easily accessible locations, will be provided within or in close proximity to each town. By 2026 a higher proportion of the District's population will live and work within the district. This will provide a greater range of opportunities for local employment for a more educated workforce.

- 1.5 In order that the towns and main villages fulfil their respective roles as service centres, great emphasis will be placed on ensuring that they are as accessible as possible by guiding development to locations which are or can be well served by public transport.
- 1.6 The four towns will be of similar size and status, with major growth in Bolsover, Clowne and Shirebrook. The employment base in each town will be strengthened and diversified, and major new housing areas designed and built to high quality standards incorporating low carbon communal energy systems. South Normanton will grow at a slower rate, recognising the constraints of its situation and the need to avoid coalescence with Alfreton. However, together with the neighbouring main village of Pinxton, it will continue to be a key part of the Alfreton to Mansfield 'conurbation' which will continue to be a much sought after employment location. The emphasis in South Normanton will be on renewal with a rejuvenated town centre, supported by relatively small high quality residential developments.
- 1.7 Local centres in the District's five main villages will be supported and strengthened. Most of these villages will experience significant growth which should help to support the provision of basic services. However, in Barlborough, the constraints of the green belt limit the options for further residential growth.
- 1.8 Although new development will be concentrated in the towns and main villages, care will be taken to allow small scale development to take place in the smaller villages, where this would be in the overall interests of sustainability, efficient use of land and more balanced communities.
- 1.9 New housing will be distributed in settlements across the District reflecting the respective functions of towns, main villages and villages and the need to minimise environmental impacts. A high priority will be given to the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of local residents. By 2026, a higher proportion of housing will be 'affordable'. All sizeable settlements will have a better balance of affordable and market housing, enabling those who want to live in a particular community, a better opportunity to do so.
- 1.10 In accommodating the major increase in housing development, a design led approach will ensure that the distinctive character of the District's towns and villages is maintained and enhanced. In addition, the carbon footprint of new developments will be minimal as a result of increasingly demanding building regulations and the use of renewable and low carbon energy systems. Bolsover will play a significant part in tackling climate change, not only through low impact built development, but through development of new renewable energy generation, most probably wind power and biomass.

- 1.11 Throughout all this significant change, the District's natural and built heritage will be treasured, protected and enhanced. The District's many conservation areas and wildlife sites will be improved through a combination of protection from harmful development and active management. Care will be taken to avoid, reduce and mitigate any adverse development impacts on the flagship sites of Hardwick Hall, Bolsover Castle and Creswell Crags and the potential of the District's green infrastructure to provide a fitting context for internationally important sites whilst enhancing daily life will be realised.
- 1.12 The historic cores of our villages and towns will be the anchor point to develop new distinctive attractive urban environments with a strong sense of place. All new buildings will enhance and develop the distinctive local character of the district and of individual settlements, retaining and respecting the best of what already exists, and where possible replacing eyesores and mediocre buildings.
- 1.13 Last, but not least, wherever possible care will be taken to reduce the impact of new development on one of the District's most important assets – high quality agricultural land. Analysis of options for development around the District's main settlements suggests that a significant amount of high quality agricultural land will need to be used for new built development in order to expand certain settlements in a sustainable manner. However, with projections of an ever increasing population, it is vital that impacts on good agricultural land are minimised wherever possible, and that this resource is protected, if other equally acceptable options for development are available.

## **2 : SPATIAL STRATEGY**

- 2.1 The following strategic planning objectives have been set to help deliver the LDF's vision, and provide a basis for subsequent development of Core Strategy policies.

**A. To promote the sustainable use of resources.**

This will involve the prudent use of resources through sustainable patterns of development, increasing reuse and recycling of natural resources.

**B. To mitigate against and adapt to climate change.**

Greater use of renewable energy technologies will be required as part of a wide range of initiatives and policies to minimize pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions.

**C. To achieve a better balance of housing and employment provision in towns and main villages.**

There are major disparities in the level of employment provision in the District's urban areas. The Core Strategy will seek to deliver a more equitable distribution, so that all urban areas become balanced settlements for living and working.

**D. To support the regeneration needs of urban and rural settlements.**

The District contains some 'hotspots' of deprivation. New development should help to improve the social, economic and environmental conditions of particular areas of need.

**E. To reduce the amount of out commuting from the District.**

The Core Strategy needs to advocate policies and proposals which will encourage more people to both live and work within the District.

**F. To ensure that housing provision meets the needs of all sectors of the community.**

The Core Strategy must ensure that sufficient housing is provided to meet the requirements of the East Midlands Regional Plan and enable all residents of the District to have access to suitable homes which they can afford in a range of sustainable locations, tenures and house types.

**G. To secure a diverse and competitive local economy.**

This objective will be pursued through provision of good quality land and premises which provide a range of choice and help to diversify

employment provision by encouraging the growth of high value manufacturing businesses, business services, tourism, rural diversification initiatives and the cultural and creative industries.

**H. To sustain retail, service and leisure provision in town and local centres.**

This entails recognising and developing the key roles that the towns and main villages play in providing for the day to day needs of the District, and retaining and wherever possible enhancing the public transport links between service centres and surrounding villages;

**I. To facilitate a transport system which improves accessibility and widens choice of transport modes.**

Measures are needed to reduce the high reliance on car travel in the District and to increase the opportunities for other forms of transport. This can be achieved by focusing the majority of development in urban areas where there is a range of transport options available, by securing improvements to public transport infrastructure, and by securing facilities and agreements that promote walking and cycling.

**J. To ensure delivery of high quality well designed development.**

Appropriate policies are needed to ensure that development contributes to the local distinctiveness of the District, and enhances both settlement identity and the environment through the quality of design.

**K. To support and enable provision of essential community facilities in accessible locations.**

Many settlements in the district are not large enough to support a wide range of community facilities, therefore, it is important that accessibility is a major factor in determining the provision of community facilities.

**L. To protect and enhance the District's historic and natural heritage**

The Core Strategy must set the foundations for a linked network of green infrastructure, that enhances and protects the District's distinctive landscapes, woodlands, geology, and biodiversity. Particular attention must be given to safeguarding, enhancing and where necessary regenerating the District's distinctive built environment including the wider setting associated the District's outstanding heritage assets.

## Devising a Spatial Strategy

- 2.2 In devising a spatial strategy for the District, account must be taken of the District's regional and sub-regional context and of strategies being pursued in neighbouring authorities. The location of the M1 means that the accessibility of the District in the north-south direction to vehicular traffic is a major asset. The A38 which links Mansfield and Derby intersects with the M1 at Junction 28 at South Normanton/Pinxton, making any open land nearby a sought after location for development. On the east side of the District, the Robin Hood line again provides for north to south movement between Worksop and Nottingham linking a series of settlements, including Whitwell, Creswell, Whaley Thorns and Shirebrook. In contrast to these excellent pieces of transport infrastructure, however, much of the district is characterised by rural style roads constructed to facilitate village to village movements rather than medium or long distance commuting.
- 2.3 The East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy places the District in the Northern Sub-Area. Within this area the sub-regional centres of Chesterfield, Mansfield-Ashfield, Newark and Worksop are all expected to provide for significant levels of growth. With the exception of Newark, all these centres have very strong relationships with parts of Bolsover District. Accordingly care needs to be taken in looking at the cumulative cross-boundary effect of potential land allocations, particularly in the Mansfield to Alfreton 'conurbation' which will mean close liaison with planning authorities in Ashfield, Mansfield and Amber Valley.
- 2.4 Bolsover District is a partner in the Sheffield City Region, reflecting the economic relationship between North Eastern Derbyshire and South Yorkshire. The Council participates in a number of thematic Joint Issue Boards to consider initiatives at the city region scale.
- 2.5 The overall scale of provision for new housing and employment must meet the minimum requirements of the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. The RSS points towards the towns of Bolsover, Clowne, South Normanton and Shirebrook as suitable candidates for significant development. On employment land, the RSS suggests consideration of land west of Bolsover and around Barlborough and eastwards towards Clowne, Whitwell and Creswell with an emphasis on brownfield land. The RSS also stresses the opportunities for environmentally led regeneration in the area and identifies the Northern Sub-Area as the part of the Region where the greatest public benefit would derive from improved green infrastructure.
- 2.6 There are clearly a number of possible ways in which future development could be accommodated within the District. The principles outlined below therefore seek to show **how** achievement of the vision and objectives will be implemented. In each case other possible options are outlined.

**Spatial Principle 1: Use the settlement hierarchy for organising and focussing development and services and concentrating growth where suitable opportunities exist in the larger settlements.**

***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.7 In order to reduce the need to travel and to make the most efficient use of infrastructure and services, new development is best sited close to existing clusters of service provision. Towns tend to have more services and facilities than large villages, which usually have more services and facilities than small villages. Existing services can often be expanded to accommodate new demands more efficiently than creating new service locations. If development were to be concentrated in villages rather than towns, major investment would have to be made in making new service provision or new residents would have to travel longer distances to access services in nearby towns.
- 2.8 To a large extent a hierarchy of settlements already exists within the District. The work undertaken in the Settlement Hierarchy Study demonstrated this through its consideration of the range of services and facilities currently available in each settlement, together with analysis of other factors such as population size. The Settlement Hierarchy now proposed, reduces the number of main villages proposed in the Preferred Options report of October 2006, from 11 to 5. This reflects a more detailed and rigorous appraisal of the function of villages as local service centres.

**The settlement hierarchy is shown at Appendix A to this document.**

- 2.9 In order to comply with RSS requirements the District needs to provide a **minimum** of 8,000 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026. Under the preferred option it is intended to encourage higher growth rates in the higher order settlements during this plan period as shown in the table below:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Households in 2006</b>	<b>Proposed growth rate 2006 to 2026</b>	<b>New dwellings provision resulting from mid-range growth rates</b>
Towns	17,569	30 %	5,270
Main Villages	8,753	20 %	1,750
Villages	6,005	15 %	900
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,327</b>		<b>7,920</b>

- 2.10 By pursuing this distribution of growth in a hierarchical manner, the LDF will ensure that the general thrust of national and regional policy to concentrate new development in higher order settlements is met. However, the target percentages would not be applied unvaryingly to

every settlement within each category, because each town and village has different constraints and opportunities.

- 2.11 In the towns, Bolsover, Clowne and Shirebrook all have potential for growth rates above 30%, however, major expansion of South Normanton is heavily constrained and the growth rate for this settlement is likely to be well below 30%.
- 2.12 Work on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is still underway and therefore it would be inappropriate at this stage to reach rigid conclusions on how much housing each of the District's settlements can accommodate. Nevertheless, it is already clear that South Normanton has more significant constraints than the other towns in the District, particularly if it is felt important to retain open land north of the A38 between the town and its neighbour, Alfreton. It is likely therefore, that South Normanton would have a relatively low growth rate for a town of around 10%. This would need to be compensated for by growth rates above 30% in two or three towns.
- 2.13 In the main villages, expansion of Barlborough is heavily constrained by the green belt, Pinxton also has a number of constraints, whilst major growth in Whitwell and Creswell is largely dependent on the ability to facilitate development on derelict land.
- 2.14 The proposed target growth rate of 15% for the villages category, should not be taken as a general removal of the need to restrict the expansion of the smaller villages. Restrictions would apply to most villages limiting most future residential development to infill development or satisfying local affordable housing needs. Instead the proposed growth rate recognises the specific opportunities discussed in Spatial Principle 2 below.
- 2.15 The Settlement Hierarchy Study identified a possible variation on the approved settlement hierarchy that involved the inclusion of Langwith/Whaley Thorns as a main village. The analysis undertaken for the Settlement Hierarchy Study showed that these two closely related villages could meet the criteria for a main village, if considered as a single settlement. However, there is a major questionmark over whether Langwith/Whaley Thorns has the potential of recognised main villages, to accommodate significant development, particularly employment development. As employment provision in Langwith/Whaley Thorns area is already very limited, further significant residential development would merely lead to increase commuting, rather than a more balanced settlement. Consequently, it is not proposed to change the current categorisation of Langwith and Whaley Thorns as villages.
- 2.16 Bolsover was ranked 55 out of 354 local authorities in the Indices of Deprivation 2007. It is important that the LDF does what it can to reduce the level of poverty and deprivation across the district, and also to seek to

ensure that the benefits of new development help to address particular pockets of deprivation. In this regard, it is particularly important that Bolsover, Shirebrook and Langwith/Whaley Thorns benefit from new development investment.

## **Rejected Options**

### **1 A Apply a consistent growth rate to all sizes of settlement**

- 2.17 With a minimum of 8,000 dwellings needed between 2006 and 2026, this alternative would result in a growth rate of 24% applied to all sizes of settlement. Compared with the preferred option, this would concentrate more development in the smaller settlements e.g. villages. This might help to support services within those villages. However, this option avoids addressing the question of where new development is best located. Different towns and villages have different needs and opportunities which should be reflected in planning policy. This alternative may not be compatible with regional planning policy.

### **1B Create a new settlement to accommodate a large proportion of new growth**

- 2.18 A new settlement could be designed from the outset for sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century living with priority given to walking and cycling, use of low carbon and renewable energy, sustainable drainage, accessible green space, etc. It is sometimes difficult to 'retrofit' existing towns to meet modern needs. However, national and regional planning policy strongly favours concentrating new development in existing urban areas as this is usually the most efficient way of making use of existing services. A new settlement would need very strong reasons to ignore this policy e.g. a clear opportunity to create a new settlement and a lack of good development sites in and around existing towns. In the case of Bolsover District, three of the District's towns have good opportunities for further expansion.

**Spatial Principle 2: Whilst pursuing residential growth in a hierarchical manner, adopt the following priority order:**

**Within the towns: Bolsover, Shirebrook, Clowne, South Normanton.**

**Within the main villages: Creswell, Whitwell, Tibshelf, Pinxton, Barlborough**

**And allow significant development in the following villages: Doe Lea/Bramley Vale, Hodthorpe, Langwith/Whaley Thorns, New Houghton, Shuttlewood.**

***Why is this the preferred option?***

- 2.19 As stated already, whilst the overall strategy is to encourage development in the larger settlements, each town and village has different needs, opportunities and constraints. Principle 2 identifies the priorities for new residential development resulting from an analysis of these factors.
- 2.20 Bolsover has some major employment land commitments and is situated close to the Markham Vale Employment Zone. There appear to be several suitable opportunities for significant residential development with good access to the town centre and/or public transport. The town centre would benefit from an additional catchment population.
- 2.21 Shirebrook already has major commitments for both new employment and residential development e.g. the Brook Park development. Several initiatives are underway in the town as it seeks to restructure and recover from the loss of the colliery and address socio-economic problems such as a weak enterprise culture, a narrow employment base, higher than average levels of worklessness and economic activity, and low education attainment. Good quality residential development should widen the range of housing available and attract people with new skills into the area.
- 2.22 Clowne has several potentially suitable options for significant residential development. However, the employment base of the town is very weak. Consequently, although Clowne is likely to accommodate significant growth, this should be of a lesser order to that of Bolsover or Shirebrook.
- 2.23 Further expansion of South Normanton is heavily constrained by a development control zone to the west, and by the desire to avoid coalescence with neighbouring settlements and retain/enhance green infrastructure.
- 2.24 With regard to the main villages, the restoration of the model village appears to have rejuvenated Creswell with strong interest in residential development. Whitwell has major brownfield opportunities for expansion. Tibshelf has some limited opportunities for significant residential development, whilst Pinxton is constrained by infrastructure issues and Barlborough by green belt.
- 2.25 National and regional planning policies give a strong steer towards locating new development in and around the larger towns and villages. Whilst such guidance is reflected in the overall effect of the proposed strategy for the District, there is a danger in seeing all small villages as 'no go' areas for significant development, that opportunities are missed to facilitate development that would have clear benefits and lead to more sustainable communities. The strategy for Bolsover District, therefore, does not propose a 'one size fits all' approach to small villages, but proposes significant growth between 2006 and 2026 in each of the following villages:

- Bramley Vale/Doe Lea
- Hodthorpe
- Langwith/Whaley Thorns
- New Houghton
- Shuttlewood

2.26 The reasons for proposing these settlements as 'growth villages' are as follows:

- These villages contain existing facilities for primary school education with spare capacity to accommodate a greater number of pupils;
- These villages currently support convenience shops which provide an important local service; their viability would benefit from additional customers;
- These villages are adjoined by sites offering realistic opportunities for significant residential development;
- Hodthorpe and New Houghton are adjoined by sites offering realistic opportunities for employment development with potential for good connections to the strategic road network, and Shuttlewood is well located close to the developing Markham Vale Employment Zone. Bramley Vale/Doe Lea is the only village in the District to have an excess of jobs to economically active residents.
- Each village is well served by buses providing access to higher order centres, and in the case of Langwith/Whaley Thorns by the Robin Hood railway line.

2.27 The term 'significant growth', as used in relation to villages, indicates that between 100 to 300 new dwellings could be provided in each village during the plan period.

### **Rejected Options**

#### **2A Focus new residential development around major employment sites**

2.28 This option would create new residential areas as close as possible to the Markham Vale Employment Zone, Barlborough Employment Growth Zone, Castlewood Employment Zone, Brook Park and Steetley Colliery in Bassetlaw (application pending to expand over the district boundary into Bolsover). This might be said to be an employment led option. Apart from the practical difficulties of accommodating residential development in these locations, there is no guarantee that the housing provided on nearby sites would be occupied by employees in local employment areas. It is also highly probable that residents of such estates would still be reliant on nearby towns in order to access services.

## **2B Focus development on one town**

- 2.29 An argument could be made that the District lacks a major town and that rather than spread development around settlements in the District, more benefit would derive from concentrating development in one town. If the District is considered as a separate entity, then this alternative has some initial appeal. For example, if 4,000 new houses were provided in Bolsover town, the increase in population would result in a town of over 18,000 population. Such an increase in population might be expected to lead to a major improvement in the town's retail offer, for example, broadly comparable with that of a town like Retford.
- 2.30 However, such a proposal has some drawbacks. Firstly, whilst Bolsover is the administrative centre for the District, it is not a higher order service centre for the District. For example, the Retail Needs Assessment for the District carried out by White Young Green in 2006 shows that most residents in the District go outside the District to the larger sub-regional centres of Chesterfield, Worksop and Mansfield for higher order needs. Even if Bolsover were to accept most of the District's new growth, it would still be difficult to compete with the offer of these sub-regional centres either in terms of proximity and ease of access, or in terms of the service offer. The same comments would also apply to concentration of growth in Clowne and Shirebrook, whilst major expansion of South Normanton is heavily constrained.
- 2.31 Secondly, concentrating most new development in one town would necessarily lead to less development in other towns and main villages. In most of these settlements, however, there is a need for additional development to cater for people who wish to live and work locally and for additional population to support services which might otherwise be under threat from continued rationalisation.

## **2C Concentrate all significant development in the towns and main villages and apply restrictions on significant new development in all villages.**

- 2.32 It could be argued that this option is the most consistent with national and regional planning policy which gives strong encouragement to development in urban rather than rural settlements. This option would reallocate around 650 dwellings proposed for the villages category in the preferred option above, and add them to the towns, most likely to Bolsover, Clowne and Shirebrook. With the exception of infill development it would apply a policy of general restraint on new development in all villages. However, this 'one size fits all approach' has been criticised in the Taylor Review entitled Living Working Countryside presented to Government last year. The review argued (e.g. pages 8 and 9 of the review) that a more flexible approach was needed which recognised that some development in villages can be beneficial and help to improve

sustainability. Whilst it is accepted that significant development would be inappropriate in most villages, there are some villages where such development can be justified on grounds of improved sustainability and efficient use of land.

## **2D Target major growth at Glapwell to create a new main village with local centre**

- 2.33 One of the submissions being assessed under the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, relates in effect to a proposal to create a new Main Village around Glapwell, with a local centre, primary school, employment land, open space provision and residential development of at least 2,000 dwellings. The advocates of this proposal argue that such a development would enable partial provision of the Glapwell Bypass, a scheme which is not currently identified for funding in any active capital programme. Compared with the preferred option, the effect of this proposal would be to reduce the growth envisaged for Bolsover and Shirebrook. In addition, in order to make the overall spatial strategy compliant with national and regional policy, it would probably also be necessary to reduce envisaged growth rates in other villages within the District.

## **2E Target major growth at Stanfree to create unified village**

- 2.34 Stanfree has a population of around 500, but is not currently included in the village category of the Settlement Hierarchy because of its very fragmented form. However, the Core Strategy process gives an opportunity to consider the desirability of creating a more unified form. There are currently no local services – the Post Office shut down in 2008 – but the land here is not prime agricultural land, and Stanfree is situated on the principal bus route between Clowne and Bolsover. The nearby Oxcroft Disposal Point also offers potential as a local employment site. In order to create a local catchment large enough to support a village convenience store, at least 500 dwellings would be needed. However, this option would reduce growth in Bolsover, Clowne and Shuttlewood, where development would appear to have more benefits.

**The Table at Appendix B to this document provides indicative totals for new housing provision in each town, main village and several settlements for each of the above options. The sole purpose of this table is to illustrate the possible consequences of each option in terms of housing numbers.**

**Spatial Principle 3: Increase employment provision so that the number of jobs provided within the District equals the number of economically active residents**

***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.35 There is a currently a marked imbalance between the number of jobs available in the District and the number of economically active residents. The Office of National Statistics provided an estimate of 35,700 economically active residents within the District in 2006 and estimated the number of jobs at 27,000. Thus the percentage of jobs to economically active residents within the District is currently around 75%. As the encouragement of sustainable lifestyles is integral to the spatial vision for the District, it is desirable to seek to balance jobs with economically active residents. This policy will provide more opportunities for more residents to live a more sustainable lifestyle and work closer to home.
- 2.36 The population of Bolsover in 2006 was estimated by NOMIS to be 73,900, of whom 35,700 were estimated to be economically active. At the same time, employment in the district was estimated at 27,000. Our population projection for 2026 is 85,553 (based on a projected household occupancy rate of 2.16). If it is assumed that the proportion of economically active residents within the total population stays the same, at 48.3% then there would be 41,322 economically active residents in 2026. If we aim to increase the percentage of jobs to economically active residents in the District from 75 % in 2006 to 100% in 2026, then we will need to plan for 41,322 jobs, an increase of 14,322. If current ratios persist then 88% of these jobs would be 'employee jobs' ( rather than self-employed, government trainees, etc) meaning that an increase of 12,604 employee jobs that would need to be provided for.
- 2.37 Therefore, if new employment opportunities are provided at an average rate of 50 jobs per hectare on new employment generating sites, we will need to provide around **250 hectares** of new employment land between 2006 and 2026. This figure would include land which has already been developed or been granted planning permission since April 2006. It should be noted that employment land already developed since April 2006 or currently available through planning permissions or local plan allocations already amounts to over 170 hectares. In addition, the term 'employment generating sites' should cover not just business, industrial and storage/distribution use, but any use that generates employee jobs e.g. shops, schools, hotels, residential homes, garden centres, etc. A separate figure will be needed for business, industrial and storage/distribution use and it is suggested that a maximum of **220 hectares** would be a suitable target – this figure was suggested as a suitable target for a high growth strategy by the Employment Land Study, carried out in 2006.
- 2.38 Whilst this principle aims to encourage more living and working within the District, it could be argued that out commuting from the District is of little consequence and that what matters is the distance that employees are commuting. A three kilometre journey from South Normanton outside of the District to Alfreton, for example, is clearly more desirable than a thirty kilometre journey inside the District to Whitwell. Accordingly, to be

effective, it is very important that Principle 3 is applied together with Principle 4 as set out below.

### **Rejected Options**

#### **3A Restrict allocation of land for employment so that the existing proportion of jobs to economically active residents across the District is maintained.**

- 2.39 It could be argued that the geography of Bolsover District makes it less imperative to try and satisfy all the employment needs of its population within the District boundary.
- 2.40 Firstly, there are several very significant sources of employment outside the District, but nevertheless situated very close (within 2 km) to settlements within the District. Examples of these are the existing Fulwood Industrial Estate and the Castlewood Employment Zone currently under construction in Ashfield but extending into the District, the Steetley development in Bassetlaw, the Cotes Park Industrial Estate in Amber Valley, and the emerging Markham Vale Employment Zone under construction in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire, which will extend into the District in the future. In addition, Sherwood Park an employment area occupying a 'hole in the green belt' and situated five kilometres south of the District off Junction 27 of the M1, provides 6,500 job opportunities on its own.
- 2.41 Secondly, the District does not possess any sub-regional centres where employment provision tends to be most concentrated, but has the centres of Chesterfield, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Worksop all within 10 kilometres of the District Boundary
- 2.42 If this principle were applied, land would need to be allocated to provide for an additional 3,710 jobs (see note 1). Accordingly a minimum of only 74 hectares of new employment land would be required. As 170 hectares are currently committed through planning permissions or local plan allocations, this option would mean significant de-commitments which may well not be possible. Such a strategy might have environmental benefits, for example, less heavy traffic on the District's road network and less visual intrusion in a largely rural district from large buildings. However, this principle would not be compatible with the aim of reducing out commuting from the District. Whilst, there is no guarantee that new jobs created within the District will be taken up by local residents, there would be no prospect of a reduction in out commuting if the number of jobs provided does not at least exceed the anticipated increase in economically active residents.

#### **3B Ensure that the quantity of new employment land provided between 2006 and 2026 narrows the gap between the number of jobs**

**provided within the District and the number of economically active residents within the District.**

- 2.43 If we were to aim to increase the percentage of jobs to economically active residents in the District from 75 % in 2006 to 90 % in 2026,( i.e to narrow the gap), then we will need to plan for 37,189 jobs, an increase of 10,189 jobs. This would mean providing for an increase of 8,967 employee jobs.
- 2.44 Therefore, if new employment opportunities are provided at an average rate of 50 jobs per hectare on new employment generating sites, we will need to provide around **180 hectares** of new employment land between 2006 and 2026. Again, as 170 hectares are already committed, the difference of just 10 hectares would not give much option for further commitments, and little flexibility for the LDF to address the problems of low levels of employment in specific settlements.

**3C Increase the allocation of land for employment to increase the proportion of jobs to economically active residents to well over 100 %.**

- 2.45 There would appear to be little justification for this option, as over provision of jobs within the district would necessarily result in in-commuting from outside the District.

**Spatial Principle 4: Seek a better balance between employment and housing within towns and main villages.**

***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.46 As outlined above, the District as a whole has far less employment opportunities than economically active residents. Within this overall context there are major differences in the availability of jobs at a local level , as shown in the table below.

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Economically Active Residents 2008</b>	<b>Employment ( no. of employee jobs) 2008</b>	<b>Jobs per economically active person</b>
<b>Towns</b>			
Bolsover	4,934	2,184	0.44
Clowne	3,634	1,335	0.36
Shirebrook	4,448	2,139	0.48
South Normanton	5,380	3,283	0.61
<b>Main Villages</b>			
Barlborough	1,387	2,722	1.96
Creswell	2,162	673	0.31
Pinxton	1,829	2,601	1.42
Tibshelf	1,540	407	0.26

Whitwell	1,673	380	0.22
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2.47 It can be seen that all the towns have a significant shortfall of jobs to economically active residents with Clowne being especially low. In the main villages, Barlborough and Pinxton have a surplus of jobs compared with economically active residents, whilst Creswell, Tibshelf and Whitwell have poor employment provision. In view of the Vision of this Strategy of main settlements with a better balance of employment and housing it is suggested here that the LDF should set a target that towns should provide **at least** enough employee jobs for 60% of their economically active population and that main villages should provide for **at least** 40%. On this basis the shortfall between this target and current employment provision would require the employment land allocations shown in the table below (if we assume provision at 50 jobs per hectare). Figures have been based on the increase in settlement populations which would result from the indicative totals given in the preferred option as shown in Appendix B.

Settlement	Total Employment needed to achieve proposed targets	Additional jobs required to meet minimum target	Additional employment development needed at 50 jobs per hectare	Land developed since April 2006 or already committed
<b>Towns</b>				
Bolsover	4,450	2,226	45	34.6
Clowne	2,771	1,436	29	0
Shirebrook	4,110	1,971	39	36.7
South Normanton	3,223	0	0	51
<b>Main Villages</b>				
Creswell	1,274	601	12	1.3
Tibshelf	785	378	8	0
Whitwell	874	494	10	8.1

2.48 It should be noted that these figures would need to be revised in the final Core Strategy to reflect the anticipated population in 2026, which cannot be estimated accurately at present. Nevertheless, whilst the table shows that existing commitments make a good contribution towards meeting these targets in Bolsover and Shirebrook, they highlight the need to make major allocations for employment development at Clowne, and also for significant allocations in Creswell and Tibshelf. The minimum targets suggested would result in a more balanced distribution of employment opportunities across the District. At this stage they would appear to be generally achievable within the plan period, however, closer study would be needed of potential employment land in Creswell and Tibshelf. If it isn't possible to find an acceptable way of locating additional land for employment development in these settlements, then further housing allocations in them should be restricted as it would appear that they would

not qualify as settlements which can be expanded in a balanced sustainable manner – they would just be large ‘dormitory’ villages.

### **Rejected Options**

**4A Use the towns as the main means of providing employment both for their own population and also for main villages close by.**

2.49 This alternative would avoid significant employment development in the main villages, but lead to greater concentration of employment development in the towns. There is some logic to this in that the towns are more accessible by public transport than the main villages, and are generally more attractive to prospective employers. It would, however, mean that some of the main villages are simply large ‘dormitory’ villages where few residents are able to find employment within the village, and must therefore look elsewhere to access a job. The aim of providing enough job opportunities for just 40% of economically active residents in main villages is a modest one, but would be a major step towards more balanced communities.

**Spatial Principle 5: Seek a more balanced provision of affordable housing in every settlement through:**

- a) settlement specific requirements for provision of affordable housing on private sector led residential developments**
- b) redevelopment of selected existing housing schemes to higher density developments including shared ownership tenures**

### ***Why is this the preferred Option?***

2.50 Policy 14 of the East Midlands Regional Plan sets a target for the Northern Housing Market Area of 10,000 affordable dwellings between 2006 and 2026. Bolsover District is just one part of this area, and on a pro-rata basis, its **minimum must achieve target** for provision of affordable housing would be 2,640 dwellings. (See Note 2)

2.51 It is estimated that the stock of affordable housing within the District in April 2006 was 6,243 which approximated to 18.8% of a total stock of 33,238 dwellings. In April 2026 there should be a minimum total stock of 41, 895 dwellings, of which the affordable housing stock would be 8,883 or 21.2% if Bolsover District can achieve an additional provision of 2,640 affordable dwellings.

2.52 A major aim of the Core Strategy is to achieve a better mix of housing in its towns and main villages. Some settlements in the District, e.g. Shirebook already have large amounts of affordable housing, whilst others

e.g. Clowne have relatively little. Over the course of the plan period, it is proposed to reduce these disparities as shown in the table below.

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Existing provision as % of housing stock</b>	<b>Indicative Requirements for provision of affordable housing from private sector developments 2006 - 2026</b>
<b>Towns</b>		
Bolsover	21	25%
Clowne	9	30%
Shirebrook	29	20%
South Normanton	11	30%
<b>Main Villages</b>		
Barlborough	10	30 %
Creswell	22	25%
Pinxton	19	30%
Tibshelf	18	30%
Whitwell	24	25%

2.53 The principal means for delivering affordable housing in the District is provided by the planning obligations complying with Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990. Essentially these obligations are negotiated between the local planning authority and developers, where proposed developments give rise to the need to secure community infrastructure. Accordingly the issue of viability – the amount of community provision that a development can make without compromising its profitability – is a major issue in such agreements. Accordingly, the Council commissioned King Sturge, as specialist consultants, to advise them on the issue of viability in relation to provision of affordable housing within new residential developments. King Sturge reported that it would be viable for the Council to request:

- 20 to 30% provision of affordable housing within urban areas;
- 30 to 40% provision of affordable housing within rural areas.

2.54 As defined in the Settlement Hierarchy Study, all towns and main villages would be classed as urban settlements, and all villages and small settlements as rural settlements. Consequently whilst it might be desirable to request a higher percentage of affordable provision on private sector led residential development in Clowne, than that suggested in the table above, such a request would generally be unviable. The situation may be different, however, if a large strategic site e.g. of over 500 dwellings, were to be proposed in the Core Strategy. On such sites, because of economies of scale it may be feasible to request provision of up to 40 % affordable housing. This option would result in an approach which clearly relates S.106 requirements to the needs of particular communities rather

- than that of the District as a whole. This approach should be more acceptable to developers and easier for the Council to uphold.
- 2.55 It is anticipated that imposition of the above requirements would result in provision of around 1,500 dwellings which would leave a shortfall of over 1,000 dwellings from the 2,640 minimum new affordable dwellings required between 2006 and 2026. This shortfall, therefore, would need to be filled by direct provision by public sector housing providers either:
- through attainment of social housing grant levels enabling the social housing sector to purchase additional units;
  - through the recycling of existing public sector affordable housing land redeveloped at higher density.
- 2.56 Currently there are 5,388 local authority owned dwellings. Some of these dwellings were built in low density schemes, when there was more demand for large gardens and land was relatively cheap. If it were possible to take 20% of this stock and rebuild at double density, then an additional 1,000 affordable dwellings would result. In addition, the opportunity would be taken to diversify tenures by including provision of shared ownership properties. (Further work is needed to determine whether such redevelopment is feasible and if so to identify suitable sites)
- 2.57 It should then be possible to provide at least the remaining shortfall of 140 dwellings, partly through provision on rural exception sites,( i.e. development of small 100% affordable housing schemes in or adjacent to the District's villages and small settlements,) and partly by the Council and/or its partners bringing forward new 100% affordable schemes on land within urban settlements.
- 2.58 If this policy approach were to be pursued, a policy on developer contributions would be needed in the Core Strategy to outline the situations in which planning obligations will be sought to support provision of additional or improved infrastructure, amenities or facilities.

## **Rejected Options**

### **5A Set higher requirements**

- 2.59 At present, the delivery of affordable housing in England is heavily reliant on the private housing sector to deliver affordable housing as part of new residential development, through the mechanism of Section 106 agreements. However, even during the peak of the housing boom, it has proved difficult to obtain a major contribution from such sites to affordable housing. Only 34 affordable dwellings were provided between April 2006 and April 2008, out of a total net additional provision of 434 dwellings i.e less than 8% of total provision. Although the situation should be kept under review, it is not considered practical at present to set higher

minimum target figures. The King Sturge viability appraisals have demonstrated that to ask for more affordable housing than is economically viable, limits profitability and therefore the likelihood of sites coming forward.

### **5B Set lower requirements**

- 2.60 The LDF must comply with the provisions of the Regional Plan, so it must therefore set out suitable policies and proposals to achieve target figures set in the Regional Plan.

### **5C Set same requirements in all settlements and in urban and rural areas**

- 2.61 This option would be simpler to pursue and might be regarded by some as more equitable. However, the preferred option is based on advice from consultants King Sturge on what is a viable requirement. It incorporates a range of possible provision which should enable an effective response to the different circumstances of each site and settlement. It is good practice to relate a Section 106 requirement on a developer to the particular circumstances of the settlement that a development falls within. The Council has also been advised that it is generally easier to achieve provision of affordable housing in rural areas than in urban areas.

### **Spatial Principle 6: Restrict further development in Bramley Vale/Doe Lea, and maintain a strategic gap between Glapwell and Pleasley.**

#### ***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.62 Ease of access to the M1 motorway has been of undoubted value in helping the economic development of the District. However, one of the aims of this LDF is to increase the proportion of people who both live and work in the District. Bolsover District experiences a high level of out commuting. In 2001, over 18,100 residents travelled out of the district to work, particularly to adjoining districts in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Given the narrow nature of the District, the lack of local employment and the proximity of sub-regional centres, this is hardly surprising. Whilst local cross boundary commuting is completely acceptable, use of the District as a residential base by large numbers of people for long distance commuting would be undesirable and therefore, in order not to encourage such lifestyles, significant residential development close to motorway junctions should generally be avoided. However, residential development may be allowed in settlements close to the M1 on suitable sites as long as they have good pedestrian access to a town or local centre, or are within two kilometres of an employment zone.
- 2.63 The major remaining opportunity in the District for significant residential development outside of towns and main villages, in close proximity (under

3 km) to a motorway junction is along the A617 through Bramley Vale/Doe Lea and Glapwell. These settlements have a long linear form, lack a local centre and are within 3 kilometres of Junction 29 of the M1. Although there is some significant employment provision in Bramley Vale/Doe Lea, there are no outstanding commitments for future employment development. Consequently, residential development in this location would be likely to give rise to increased car usage and increased commuting to work outside of the District.

- 2.64 Mansfield District Council is considering proposals for significant development along the A 617 up to the District Council boundary at Pleasley. Similarly, North East Derbyshire are considering the options of concentrated development along the A 6175 from Clay Cross to Holmewood. Accordingly without a restrictive approach to development in Bramley Vale/Doe Lea and Glapwell; and protection of a gap between Glapwell and Pleasley there is a danger of creating an almost continuous belt of intensive development over 20 kilometres long running from east Mansfield to Clay Cross.

### **Rejected Options**

#### **6A Allow significant development in Bramley Vale/Doe Lea, and Glapwell.**

- 2.65 The alternative would be to allow significant additional residential development in and around Bramley Vale/Doe Lea, and Glapwell. Locations in these villages would no doubt be attractive to the market and such development might help to support existing local shops, but other benefits are hard to identify. Such development would be likely to add proportionately more traffic to the M1 than similar developments elsewhere in the District, and exacerbate the problem of out commuting.
- 2.66 It should be noted that house completions since 2006 and existing commitments as of April 2008 in Bramley Vale/Doe Lea will result in an additional 198 dwellings to the 2006 housing stock level in any event.

#### **6B Allocate a strategic development site adjacent to Bramley Vale/Doe Lea or Glapwell**

- 2.67 Major development of around 1,000 dwellings would be needed in one or other of these settlements to create a catchment population large enough to develop and sustain a local service centre. In the absence of such a centre, and of additional employment provision, a strategic development site would be likely to add proportionately more traffic to the M1 than developments elsewhere in the District, and exacerbate the problem of out commuting. This scale of development would reduce growth in Bolsover and Shirebrook which have higher levels of service provision and which are appropriate locations for new residential development

**Spatial Principle 7: Promote major mixed use developments, villages and neighbourhoods as an essential part of strategy to address climate change**

***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.68 Mixed use developments, where employment, community, retail and residential uses are intermingled or in close proximity to each other, have a number of advantages. They reduce the need to travel to access jobs, shops or services. They facilitate more integrated communities. They also enable establishment of more cost effective communal energy systems e.g. combined heat and power systems. In guiding future development, therefore, the Council will encourage a greater diversity of land use within villages, neighbourhoods and in major new developments. This means that proposals to use large areas of land for a single type of use will need to demonstrate exceptional need. It also means that the LDF will not seek to allocate large areas of land (e.g. major settlement extensions) for a single use, unless special circumstances have been demonstrated.

**Rejected Options**

**7 A : Encourage large predominantly single use developments**

- 2.69 It could be argued that residential uses do not mix well with uses such as employment, retail or even some community uses, and that mixed use may lead to reduced residential values, and to unwelcome constraints on how businesses operate. However, most of the conflicts that occur between existing land uses come about through a lack of planning, and in most cases such conflicts can be avoided through good design.

**Spatial Principle 8: Give strategic level importance to the protection and enhancement of the core heritage assets of Bolsover Castle, Creswell Crags and Hardwick Hall**

***Why is this the preferred Option?***

- 2.70 The District is fortunate to contain three heritage assets of outstanding importance. Whatever else happens in the District, there is a duty of stewardship to future generations to hand on these assets in good condition. This duty extends beyond merely seeking to maintain and retain these assets; it means taking active conservation and enhancement initiatives and it means safeguarding and if possible improving the setting of such assets. This has significant consequences for the immediate environs of these assets (e.g. it could mean that certain types of development are not allowed within certain zones, or that heights of buildings are strictly controlled). At the same time, it is important that these assets do not unnecessarily constrain new development in large areas of

the District. Detailed guidance would be needed therefore to show how development needs can be accommodated in a satisfactory way.

### **Rejected Option**

#### **8 A Rely on statutory duty powers alone to safeguard settings.**

- 2.71 Local authorities have a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building, so in a legal sense there is no alternative to the preferred option in respect of Bolsover Castle and Hardwick Hall, although Creswell Crags does not enjoy statutory protection of its setting. However, what is highlighted here is the intention not to be merely reactive to proposals that are submitted to the Council, but to ensure that the LDF plans in a pro-active manner to safeguard the settings of these assets.

#### **Spatial Principle 9: Tackle green infrastructure deficiencies around South Normanton and Pinxton**

- 2.72 Bolsover's Green Infrastructure Study has taken a detailed look at the strategic green open space resource within the District, following the emphasis given to the possible benefits of green infrastructure in the area by the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. The study found that the sites and uses surrounding South Normanton and Pinxton presented a poor green infrastructure context for these important settlements. Open areas, public open space, and footpaths can be safeguarded from harmful development by planning policies, but positive action is also needed to improve the setting of these settlements and enhance opportunities to access and enjoy adjacent open areas. At a more local level, there are many other areas within the District which would benefit from improvement in green space, but at a strategic level South Normanton and Pinxton stand out as being in need of better countryside access opportunities, and an improved landscape setting.

### **Rejected Option**

#### **9A Do nothing**

- 2.73 The Council or its partners are not obliged to do anything to improve the surrounds of South Normanton or Pinxton. It may be considered that action as identified under the preferred option would not have enough benefits for the likely costs involved, or would be too difficult. However, without positive action, adjacent landscapes are likely to deteriorate further.

### **Notes**

1. 5,622 additional economically active residents x 75% ( existing ratio of jobs to economically active residents) x88% ( ration of employee jobs to total jobs) = 3,710
2. Nevertheless, our Housing Market Area assessment by Fordhams identified a higher need in this district, of 40% of all new houses i.e. 3,200. This remains as the aspirational target and the Council should use every opportunity to lobby Government and the relevant agencies for the funding and implementation mecehanisms to realise this target.

## APPENDIX A TO SPATIAL STRATEGY: SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Category	Classification	Settlement
<b>Towns</b>	<b>Urban Area</b>	<b>Bolsover</b> <b>Clowne</b> <b>Shirebrook</b> <b>South Normanton</b>
<b>Main Villages</b>	<b>Urban Area</b>	<b>Barlborough</b> <b>Creswell</b> <b>Pinxton</b> <b>Tibshelf</b> <b>Whitwell</b>
<b>Village</b>	<b>Rural Area</b>	<b>Bramley Vale/Doe Lea</b> <b>Blackwell</b> <b>Newton</b> <b>Pleasley</b> <b>New Houghton</b> <b>Glapwell</b> <b>Hilcote</b> <b>Hodthorpe</b> <b>Langwith/Whaley Thorns</b> <b>Palterton</b> <b>Scarcliffe</b> <b>Shuttlewood</b> <b>Westhouses</b>
<b>Small Settlements in the Countryside</b>	<b>Countryside</b>	<b>Astwith</b> <b>Ault Hucknall</b> <b>Barlborough Low Common</b> <b>Belph</b> <b>Bentinck Row</b> <b>Bolsover Woodhouse</b> <b>Elmton</b> <b>Hardstoft</b> <b>Old Blackwell</b> <b>Oxcroft Settlement</b> <b>Rowthorne</b> <b>Stainsby</b> <b>Stanfree</b> <b>Steetley</b> <b>Stony Houghton</b> <b>Upper Langwith</b> <b>Whaley</b> <b>Whaley Common</b> <b>Whitwell Common</b> <b>Worksop Road (Mastin Moor)</b>

