

Planning Services

South Derbyshire Local Development Framework



South Derbyshire Local **Development Framework Core Strategy**

January 2009

South Derbyshire 2026 ... What should South Derbyshire be like in 2026? ... your issues & ideas

"I can't afford to buy my own home"

"I need larger premises to grow my business"

"My children can't afford to live in our village"

"Traffic congestion is a problem and it's getting worse"

"I can't find a doctor or a dentist near to where I live"

"I'm concerned about climate change. We need to use less energy"

"My children's schools are overcrowded"

"The factories are all closing down.

There are no jobs for me round here anymore"

"New housing estates all look the same"

"I want to work from home but I can't get a decent broadband service"

"There should be more decent shops in the town"

"There's nowhere safe for my children to play"

"The shops in my village are all closing down and being turned into houses"

"I don't drive and I can't get to the hospital on the bus"

"I don't feel safe in my neighbourhood. The kids have nothing to do round here"

"This is a really nice place to live - I want it to stay that way"



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About this consultation

South Derbyshire is set to change and grow - the population, the local economy, our towns, villages and green spaces, and the services and facilities we all rely on daily. Over the next few decades these changes will shape our quality of life in many ways, such as;

where we live,



the state of our local environment,



how we travel, shop and access education,



how we spend leisure time



It is now time to update our plans for deciding what those changes will be and how they will happen.

This is your chance to say, at the earliest stages of planning, how you think the Council should address the issues that matter.

Please take the time to read this document and let us know **your** views. Information on how to comment is set out on page 31 at the end of this document.



issues & ideas

The Local Development
Framework (LDF) is a
general term for a
collection of local
development plans
which together deliver
the planning strategy for
the area. The Core
Strategy is the key plan
within the LDF.

The Local Strategic
Partnership (LSP) brings
together the public,
private and voluntary
sectors in South
Derbyshire to co-ordinate
the contribution that each
can make to improving
the area.

The Sustainable
Community Strategy
(SCS) will be prepared
by the LSP and sets out
the overall vision for the
area. It shows how the
big issues such as
climate change, the local
economy and social
exclusion will be prioritised
locally. In turn it fits within
an overall Strategy for the
whole of Derbyshire and
provides the lead for the
LDF Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy will co-ordinate physical development with other changes in the District. This is sometimes referred to as "Place Shaping".



This document marks the first step in preparing a **Core Strategy** which will form part of the new Local
Development Framework (LDF) for South Derbyshire.
The Core Strategy will look to plan as far ahead as 2026.

Along with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which is prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), the Core Strategy will be the main way we can shape how the District will change in the future.

The Core Strategy is important because it will set out the **vision** of how the area will look in 2026 and show how the changes will be brought about. It will be used by everyone who wants to see how much and what types of development will occur and in which locations. It will also identify which areas need to be protected from development such as the Green Belt and areas important for wildlife. In other words, it will deal with the **key issues** in planning for the future.

In doing so, it will be the agreed plan for making decisions on proposals for new development and provide some certainty to others making investment decisions for a wide range of public and private services.

To achieve this, the Core Strategy will co-ordinate with the business plans of many other public, private and community organisations which are concerned with improving the area. This could include plans for health, crime, economic development, education, training or transport or local initiatives, such as Parish Plans, or the investment plans of private companies. The Government describes this co-ordination of activity in planning for the future as "Place Shaping".



The Community Strategy was a forerunner to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). It is shortly to be updated and re-named accordingly. Close co-ordination is taking place in drawing up both the LDF Core Strategy and the SCS. The SCS will be published in April 2009.



Existing priorities

Some ideas about the future are already set out in the LSP's existing South Derbyshire Community Strategy.

The overall aims are:

- Fairer, more inclusive and self-reliant communities
- A safer South Derbyshire in which to live, work and visit
- Healthier and supportive communities
- Better jobs and prospects for local people and businesses
- A cleaner, greener and high quality environment
- More opportunities for local people to take part in learning and cultural activities

The Core Strategy will play an important part in achieving these objectives as it can earmark land for the development of, say, play facilities, a new GP surgery or for new industrial premises. It can also contain policies which require new facilities to be provided where new development is likely to place extra strain on existing services.

In summary...

What the Core Strategy will do ...

The Core Strategy will set out:

- An overall vision showing how South Derbyshire's towns, villages and rural areas will develop, in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy
- A number of key **objectives** for our area to guide growth in a way which achieves the vision and addresses the key issues
- A **delivery strategy** for achieving those objectives i.e. where major development is intended to happen, when and who will provide it. This will also identify what major infrastructure, services and facilities will be needed alongside development; and
- Clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the strategy

What the Core Strategy will **not** do ...

The Core Strategy will not go into detail about the precise location of all future development sites. These will be set out in subsequent LDF documents. However,

the Core Strategy will

include the largest and

most significant developments (known as

"Strategic Sites").



As a document focused on the 'Vision', the Core Strategy will avoid getting bogged down in too much detail about the precise location and detail of all future development sites. Similarly, detailed criteria for assessing all possible types of future development proposals will not be included at this stage. These will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents such as Site Allocations and Development Control documents. However, the Core Strategy will need to identify the location of the largest and most important sites (known as "Strategic" sites).



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The Council is committed to full public involvement in preparing the LDF. The standards we set for public consultation are set out in our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which can be viewed on the Council's website.



1.3 What will happen to my comments?

All comments will be considered carefully and summarised in a report, together with an indication of what action, if any, the Council intends to take in response. Where the Council disagrees with any comment and proposes to take no action, we will explain the reasons why.

Following this, the Council will re-examine the key issues and identify the main alternative proposals that might be adopted in the Core Strategy. We will then seek your further views, before writing a draft Core Strategy for submission to the Secretary of State and, if necessary, a Public Examination.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a document setting out what LDF documents the Council is intending to prepare and when. It can be viewed on the Council's website



The Council has already published a timetable for the preparation of the Core Strategy in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). This indicates that the Core Strategy will be adopted by June 2010.

However, the Government has recently changed the rules on the steps to be followed in preparing Core Strategies and this will require revisions to be made to the detail and timing of steps we will need to take in working towards its final adoption. In the meantime, the following diagram outlines the main steps we will follow:



Communities and Local Government: www.communities.gov.uk Planning Portal: www.planningportal.gov.uk Planning Aid: www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk



Within the next few months, the Council will publish the target dates for reaching each of the milestones outlined above and this will be kept up to date on the Council's website: www.south-derbys.gov.uk

Further Information and help

You can find out more about local development frameworks and the preparation of Core Strategies from the Council's website. Alternatively other sources of advice and information are available from the **Department for Communities and Local Government**, the **Planning Portal** and **Planning Aid**.



Core Strategies are required to be based on clear evidence to show the development strategy chosen is the most appropriate having considered reasonable alternatives. The Council has therefore undertaken or commissioned a number of studies and other research into areas such as a flood risk assessment and the local employment market. An up to date list of these studies can be viewed on the Council's website. The Council is also required to undertake 'Sustainability Appraisal' throughout the process of preparing the document and prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Together, these are the main sources of information behind this 'Snapshot' and can be viewed on the Council's website.



1.4 A 'snapshot' of South Derbyshire

Before looking at some key issues in detail, this section briefly describes the main characteristics which make the district unique - its industrial past, its people, assets, opportunities and problems - and points to some of the main areas which we will need to address over the next 20 years.

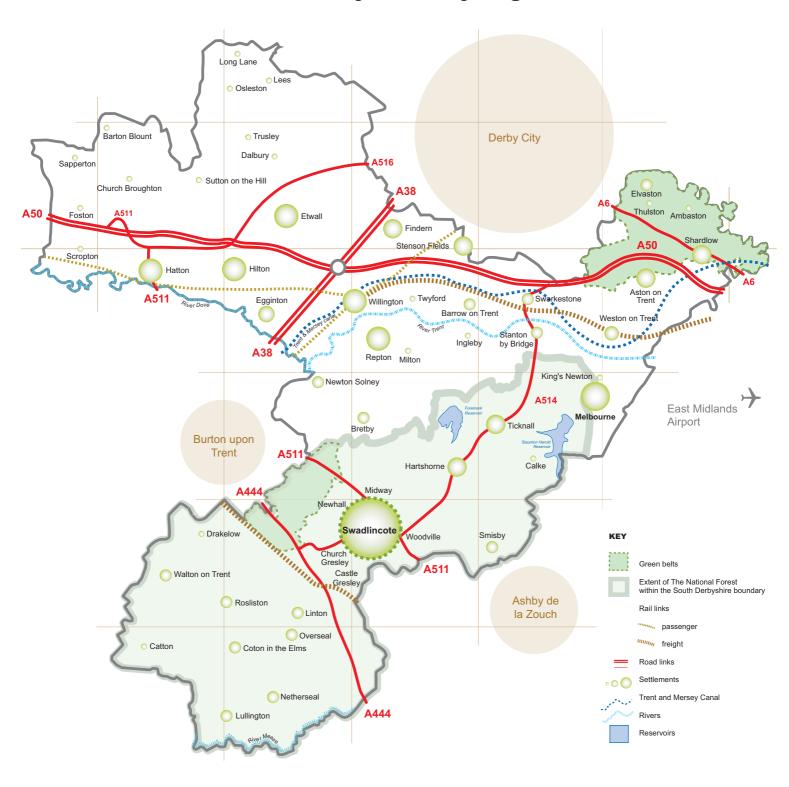
It is helpful to reflect on this in thinking through what needs to change in the future and how this can be made to happen.





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South Derbyshire - key diagram



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The RSS provides the vision for the whole of the East Midlands, identifying broad locations for growth together with the overall amount of housing needed to be planned for in individual LDFs. The RSS for the East Midlands is currently being updated to cover the period to 2026.

South Derbyshire is a rural district in central England covering an area of over 100 square miles. Its population is growing and currently stands at just under 90,000. It adjoins and is heavily influenced by the City of Derby to the north, Burton-upon-Trent to the west and Ashbyde-la-Zouch to the east. The town of Swadlincote, in the south of the district, is the main urban centre with a population of around 33,000.

For many years the District has been the fastest growing in Derbyshire and is, in fact, currently one of the fastest growing areas in England. Official forecasts anticipate the population increasing to just under 110,000 by 2026. This is being driven by the continuation of a high housing requirement being set by the emerging East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS or 'Regional Plan') and reflects the fact that the area offers a high quality of life and is a place where people want to live. This means, however, that people are increasingly commuting from South Derbyshire to other areas to work.

House prices are becoming increasingly unaffordable in the District and in 2007 average prices were 7.6 times the average earnings of working residents - up from a ratio of 6.4 in 2004. This shows no sign of easing, even with the current downturn in the property market.

The population is not just growing: it is also becoming older and more diverse. By 2026, the number of people aged 65 or over in South Derbyshire is expected to increase by 23,500 - an increase of 84%. The number of people aged 85 or over is expected to increase even faster - by over 113%. Whilst not a unique pattern, this ageing of the population is particularly acute in South Derbyshire and raises important questions about the types of housing, facilities and support



Woodville: new housing within The National Forest



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services that will be needed in the future and how the employment market will work. Particular attention will be needed in ensuring that older people are able to live as long as possible in their own homes and that appropriate care accommodation is available for those in need.

There is a wider need to ensure that the District's future housing stock reflects the full range of needs, ranging from starter homes to family and executive housing. Access to local health facilities, both for new communities and for existing residents especially in the most deprived neighbourhoods, will be essential. The growing population will also need to be served by enhanced and new primary and secondary school facilities - a challenge which is more pressing here than in any other part of Derbyshire.

The ethnic minority population is relatively small but this too will grow in the future, particularly around the fringes of Derby, and the needs of an increasingly diverse community will need to be considered in planning future services and facilities.

Over the last twenty years or so, rapid housing growth has seen the development of a variety of suburban housing developments across the area. These tend to be popular and desirable places to live. However in some cases they have developed without the essential day-to-day facilities that we all need. Generally, the quality of design is good and reflects the standards of the day when such developments were planned. But in future there will need to be considerable improvements to make sure that the new places we create are of the highest standards of environmental quality and design and contribute to combating climate change. Equally, easy access to jobs, services and facilities by a choice of means of travel, including public transport, will be vital as currently South Derbyshire residents rely more heavily on the car to travel to work than the county or national average. In other words, we need to be planning for **sustainable** communities.



Melbourne: shopping facilities within a sustainable commu7nity



Despite strong population growth, the District remains largely rural. Away from Swadlincote, the District is scattered with a network of villages of varying sizes. The largest is Hilton which has seen major expansion in recent years through the redevelopment of previously developed (brownfield) land at the former MoD depot. Melbourne, an important historic small town, is the second largest rural settlement providing for local shopping, recreation and employment. Other villages such as Etwall, Hatton and Willington perform a similar role albeit on a smaller scale.

Considerable efforts have been made to conserve the character of the villages and a number, such as Repton, Ticknall and Melbourne, are of particular historic value. These villages are attractive places to live and important for tourism; but, in addition to the problems of housing affordability, the provision and retention of existing shops, jobs, leisure facilities and other day-to-day services is something which will need to be addressed in planning for the future. The need to ensure availability of public transport is equally as important in the rural areas as in other parts of the District.

Several major watercourses cross the District, including the Rivers Trent, Dove, Mease and Derwent and approximately one fifth of the land area is within areas at risk of flooding. The Core Strategy will need to take flood risk fully into account both for new and existing communities.

South Derbyshire also contains numerous areas which are important for wildlife, including the River Mease itself - a site of international importance - and six nationally recognised Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), together with many sites of local value. The need to promote biodiversity as well as other forms of green space will be an important task for the Core Strategy.



Hilton: where Hilton Brook and Sutton Brook, two of South Derbyshire's



The District has an urban focus too. Swadlincote is a market town and is the main urban centre for commerce, leisure and learning. The area was for many years important for mining and pottery manufacture. However, these traditional industries declined dramatically in the latter part of the 20th Century. More recently, the town has undergone a period of significant positive change and, in line with a 'Vision and Strategy' drawn up in 2001, is being transformed by the public, private and voluntary sectors into a vibrant, modern town with its own distinctive character. It is now recognised in the draft RSS as a 'Sub-Regional Centre'.

Significant changes have included the opening of the Sharpe's Heritage and Arts Museum in a restored former pottery complex, the re-development of derelict land for a major food superstore and the introduction of new uses and activities such as modern café bars and leisure facilities. But there is more to do. Research has shown that the town's growing catchment population will require further shopping and leisure facilities in the future and there is strong developer interest in providing it.

At the same time, the town's High Street is characterised by traditional small shop units and the Core Strategy will need to plan for occupancy of the buildings and the maintenance of a vibrant High Street.

The growth of the town has not been achieved at the expense of its heritage and the Conservation Area boundary was reviewed and extended in 2001. Since then, the Council, in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and English Heritage, has operated a conservation grant scheme for town centre properties, generating a total investment in the town of over £1million over the last 6 years. This has led to visible improvements in the quality of the townscape.





The Council is also working to bring about further improvements in the public spaces in the town and a costed 'masterplan' for £8 million of improvements is in place. Phase 1 was completed in April 2008 and further improvements will be made as funding becomes available.

Away from the urban core, farming has been and remains an important industry in South Derbyshire, with over 75% of the total land area of the District currently being devoted to active agricultural use. Post-war growth and the location of the Trent Valley also gave rise to major energy generation in the 1950s and 60s, with the development of the Drakelow and Willington Power Stations. Both of these have now ceased to be operational and, as large "brownfield" sites, new uses may need to be found.

In recent years however, positive economic change has been driven by major inward investment throughout the District - on business parks at Dove Valley and Hilton in the North of the District and Tetron Point at Swadlincote. Major companies have been attracted to the area, including JCB Power Systems Ltd, Futaba, Truma (UK) Ltd and Bison Concrete Products Ltd.

Further investments have also been made by existing businesses, including Roger Bullivant Limited, Nestle and Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK, the latter having chosen to locate their UK operation at Burnaston in the early 1990s. Some industrial premises and sites are, however, coming under increasing pressure to be redeveloped for other uses - particularly housing - and their loss will need to be controlled if a balance of jobs and homes is to be maintained.

Proximity to East Midlands airport, the UK's busiest freight handling airport, provides a major focus for local economic activity, including tourism, with nearly 7,000 people being employed in over 100 companies based on or near the airport. The recent decision to





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relocate the British F1 Grand Prix from Silverstone to Donington Park, on the boundary of South Derbyshire, will, if permitted, also provide a potential boost for tourism and other business opportunities.

Despite the current economic slowdown, we can expect long term growth in the national economy including in the service and knowledge economy i.e. areas such as retailing, business services and tourism. This is in a context of the East Midlands Development Agency's overall aim for the East Midlands to become a Top 20 region in Europe by 2010.

The combination of the District's central location and an increasingly efficient logistics industry are also likely to give rise to pressures for the development of major goods distribution sites. If provision of such facilities does become necessary, it will be essential to identify the most appropriate locations to ensure environmental impacts are carefully controlled, and to ensure that goods can be moved by rail as well as by road.

In general, as well as capturing benefits from major developments in and around the District, there will be a need to carefully manage the potential for environmental and amenity damage arising from them.

Local heritage is an important element of the unique character of the area, with twenty two Conservation Areas and over seven hundred Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Tourism is becoming increasingly important, reflecting this rich history, attractive countryside and opportunities for recreation. The first Tourist Information Centre in the District recently opened in Swadlincote.

The southern part of the District lies within the National Forest - one of the country's most ambitious environmental initiatives straddling parts of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Since 1994, over 7 million trees have been planted and the Forest is now half way to its aim of one-third woodland cover. In addition to the obvious





opportunities for further leisure and recreation, the Forest has potential for the creation of woodland based industries as well as a high quality environment for all types of new development.

The positive changes which have occurred in recent years mean that many of the headline economic indicators, such as unemployment and economic activity, are positive. Similarly, two thirds of local authorities in England are ranked as being more deprived than South Derbyshire when measured against a range of indicators. Residents enjoy significantly better health than the England average and crime rates are relatively low.

However, the area faces persistent problems which will continue to demand concerted action. For example, a relatively well skilled and prosperous growing population masks some underlying problems - particularly in the urban core of Swadlincote. There are weaknesses in the town's industrial base with a shortage of small to medium sized workspace and in physical conditions in the Swadlincote urban area, including the town centre. This, in turn, is reflected in low skills levels and worklessness. There are also health inequalities, particularly in the urban core, although pockets of deprivation persist in both urban and rural areas of the District, as do incidences of anti-social behaviour.

This is perhaps not surprising. Areas with a legacy of heavy industry often suffer from comparatively low levels of educational achievement, employment, skills and health long after the physical evidence of former industries have disappeared.

These problems howeverare reinforced by the physical characteristics of the District. In the north, there are good East-West communications along the Trent Valley (the A50 corridor), giving easy access to the regional and national road network as well as rail and air transport. In contrast, direct North-South communications within the District are difficult, as are movements from Swadlincote to neighbouring areas. Accordingly, whilst the North of the District has benefited from proximity to Derby, progress in the South of the District has been slower. Furthermore, the availability of public transport and access to day-to-day services is poor in some parts of the District, particularly in the more isolated rural areas.

The Council has been concerned for some years that accessibility to Swadlincote Town Centre is constrained and the Woodville area, in particular, suffers from traffic congestion and its attendant problems as a direct result of poor road connectivity. The Council is already investigating the feasibility of the construction of a Woodville Regeneration Route and this will be an important part of the Core Strategy. The route would help in promoting better access to the town centre, provide much-needed traffic relief as well as free up large areas of underused land for new development and address some of the weaknesses in the local employment market.



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National planning policies are set out in a series of Planning Policy Statements which set out the government's policies on different aspects of planning in England. Local authorities are required to take them into account in drawing up LDFs and making decisions on planning applications.



Affordable housing includes social rented and shared ownership housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market



The Core Strategy will be required to be in "general conformity" with the Regional Spatial Strategy







1.5 What has already been decided?

Many of the changes which will take place in South Derbyshire arise from events and decisions taking place at the wider regional, national and even international level. These set the basic ground rules for planning the district and cannot be over-ridden or ignored by the Core Strategy.

In particular, national planning policies require an increase in the number of new homes to be built across England, including affordable housing and increasingly energy efficient buildings.

The emerging RSS is likely to require at least 610 new houses to be built annually in South Derbyshire to 2026. Furthermore, as part of an overall policy of "urban concentration" the RSS will expect a significant proportion of the new housing to be as greenfield extensions to Derby (the "Principal Urban Area"), and to Swadlincote. A further immediate review of the RSS is also planned and will set out housing needs to 2031. In doing so, regional policy is being progressed on the basis that the current global ' credit crunch' will not fundamentally affect the long term need for, or delivery of, substantial numbers of new homes across the East Midlands.

The Core Strategy will be required by law to be in "general conformity" with the RSS and therefore growth requirements cannot be significantly changed.

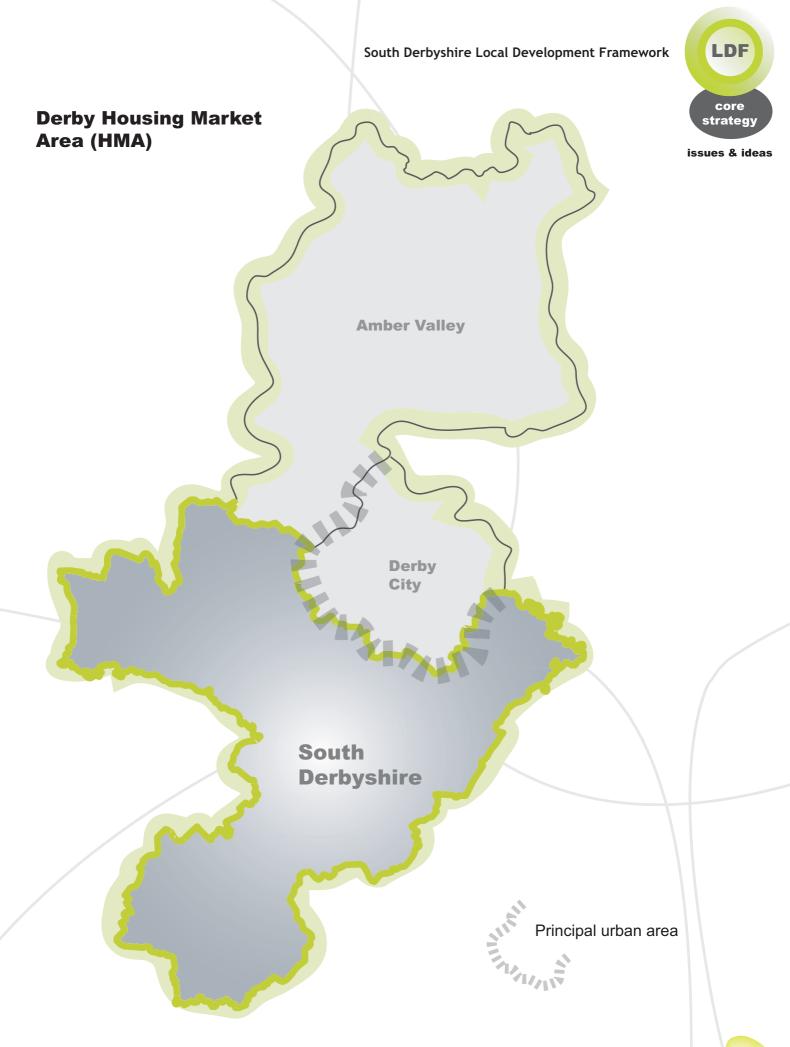
It is also important to think about South Derbyshire operating within wider local markets - especially for housing and employment. For example, people living in South Derbyshire frequently work, shop or access medical facilities in neighbouring areas. The RSS has identified the 'Three Cities' of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham as a sub-region. Within this, a Derby 'Housing Market Area' (HMA) has been identified. This includes the whole of South Derbyshire, Derby City and Amber Valley Borough.

For this reason, the RSS regards the Derby HMA as the starting point for planning this part of the East Midlands. The three local authorities (together with Derbyshire County Council which has responsibilities for education, highways and other services) are therefore closely co-ordinating work on Core Strategies and much of the background evidence is being gathered and shared collectively.

Amber Valley Borough Council and Derby City Council are therefore also inviting comments on issues and ideas as part of the preparation of their own Core Strategies.

The area also forms part of a National Growth Point. This means that much of the major infrastructure planning to meet the needs of major growth will also be planned and co-ordinated on a HMA-wide basis.

Of course, the District is also influenced by other areas such as parts of Leicestershire and Staffordshire and this will be taken into account in preparing the Core Strategy.





1.6 The issues and your ideas



The following section poses a series of wide-ranging questions relating to a number of themes.

We expect these to be the key questions which will enable us to identify what needs to change in the different places throughout South Derbyshire in preparing the Core Strategy. They have been identified largely on the basis of the evidence we have gathered so far and a review of existing plans and strategies, including the South Derbyshire Community Strategy.

Each theme is introduced with some summary background information about why it is important and other relevant information such as any appropriate government policies.

Many of the issues we have identified are closely interrelated. For example, 'design' might be relevant to 'housing' or 'transport' or 'green space' or 'rural' or 'climate change' or 'sustainable communities'.

Some questions are very broad whilst others are much more specific.

Where and how you choose to make your comments is not vital. They will all be taken fully into account.

You may, of course, feel there are other issues which we have not addressed at all and your suggestions and ideas on those are also invited.

Please therefore treat the questions as a set of prompts to help you think about what is important to you or your organisation.

?

A response form is included with this document. Further details on how to respond are given on page 31 of this booklet.







A Vision for South Derbyshire

The Core Strategy is all about setting out an overall 'vision' for South Derbyshire in 2026. The vision is important because it is the starting point for agreeing what sort of place we should be aiming for and, in turn, the selection of development options. The vision can only be agreed when all the relevant issues have been considered fully. However, it might look something like this:

South Derbyshire 2026 - a Vision?



'In 2026 South Derbyshire will be a first class place to live, work and invest and provide the opportunity for an outstanding quality of life for all. Growth will have been used to bring about positive change through the achievement of sustainable, prosperous, safe, clean and low-carbon development in existing and new communities. The best of our countryside and green spaces will have been protected from development and the quality and diversity of the natural environment will have been improved. South Derbyshire will continue to play a major part of the success of the National Forest.



The distinctive character of our towns, villages and hamlets will have been protected and enhanced whilst providing for necessary and sustainable amounts of development in both urban and rural areas. In particular, the District's housing stock will be aligned to the needs of - and available to - everyone, irrespective of their stage of life or income. This will include accommodation which is suited to older people, the disabled, those on the lowest incomes, families and people requiring executive housing.



The business environment will be diverse and supported by a highly skilled workforce. A good range of jobs, housing, education, shops, services, facilities and green space will be reasonably accessible to all who live in South Derbyshire by a choice of modes of travel - including those living in the more isolated rural areas. This will be assisted through improved communication links throughout the District, bringing the various locations within the area in closer touch with each other.

Swadlincote will have become firmly established as a vibrant town centre providing a high quality residential, commercial, leisure and shopping environment through new development and improved connections to the wider road network. In particular, the residential environment around Woodville will have been dramatically improved through new development and relief of chronic traffic congestion."

You may wish to think about this having read the overall priorities of the Community Strategy, the 'Snapshot' of South Derbyshire and all of the themes in the following pages.



 What do you feel should be included in the overall 'vision' for South Derbyshire to be achieved by 2026?



Tackling climate change

The need to combat climate change is a global issue and the planning system has a major part to play, particularly in reducing carbon emissions.

Accordingly, the Government is aiming to make all new homes "carbon neutral" by 2016, and all new commercial buildings carbon neutral by 2019. It is seeking to achieve its ambitions through the progressive tightening of building regulations over the next few years.

Under current rules, the planning system cannot require homes and businesses to be built to higher energy efficiency standards than those set out in building regulations (except in specific and exceptional circumstances): but it does have a role to play in reducing the environmental impact of new buildings. For example it can require developers to ensure new buildings generate a proportion of their own energy such as electricity or hot water from low or zero carbon sources on site or it can make provision for large-scale renewable or low carbon energy infrastructure.

The East Midlands is one of the driest regions in UK and receives less rainfall than parts of southern Spain. As a result of this there is a high level of competition for water resources in many parts of the region. In South Derbyshire water supply is constrained in the southern part of the District, particularly around the River Mease. In contrast there is water available from both the River Trent and its tributaries and from groundwater sources in the northern part of the District.

Government policies on development and flood risk aim to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

Despite receiving relatively low levels of rainfall, there are a number of communities located on major rivers including the Rivers Trent, Dove and Derwent which are at flood risk. In addition to flooding associated with rivers, there are also a number of specific areas where landform, geology and land use lead to "pluvial" (overland) flood risk.





- What is the potential for harnessing renewable, low carbon or locally generated energy in the District?
 What types of energy generation should be explored?
- Is it desirable to make provision for new renewable energy installations in the District? If so, what and where?
- Is there a threat to the landscape and character of the District from renewable energy development?
- Should we require the energy needs of new development to be met, at least in part, from on-site renewable sources? If so, what types of development and what proportions?
- Are there any specific opportunities or sites where the promotion of eco-buildings exceeding the national building regulations requirements can be justified?
- Are there any parts of the District where development should be avoided because of the risk of flooding?
- Are there any types of development that should be allowed in areas of flood risk?



Sustainable communities

Government policies are geared towards an overall policy of achieving "sustainable development" and "sustainable communities". There are many different meanings of the word "sustainable" but generally it refers to the creation of places that maximise the potential for environmental, economic and social wellbeing, in ways which do not prejudice future generations from also doing so.

In the Government's view, this means:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
- contributing to economic development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

In short, it is about improving people's quality of life. These are overarching ideas which relate to all the themes which follow. However, the general questions opposite can be considered first:





Questions to think about ...

- How can the Core Strategy ensure that the quality of all future development and public places are designed to the highest standards? Should a common standard such as the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment's (CABE) 'Building for Life' standards be adopted?
- What policies and proposals are necessary for the Core Strategy to ensure new places reflect how and where people want to live, work and play?
- How can the Core Strategy ensure that the benefits of growth can be enjoyed by everyone in the community?
- Can the Core Strategy assist in improving the sustainability of **existing** communities?
- Can we reduce the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour through the design and layout of new development?
- In what ways can the Core Strategy assist in improving the health of the District?



Community facilities and infrastructure

National guidance recognises the importance of living within easy reach of good community facilities and having good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. When assessing the design of new housing developments, one consideration is how well connected the development is to public transport and community facilities.

The emerging Regional Plan focuses housing development on the edge of Derby and around Swadlincote in order to ensure good links with these essential facilities. The provision of at least 15,250 new homes between 2001 and 2026 means we need to ensure that both the occupants of these new homes have access to the services they need and that the existing services are not overstretched. The provision of essential services and facilities in more rural areas will be a particular challenge for the Core Strategy.

Health services in South Derbyshire are mainly managed by the Derbyshire Primary Care Trust (PCT). The PCT has overall responsibility for commissioning and developing primary care (including GP and dentistry services) and secondary care (such as hospital services).

In South Derbyshire, around 20% of residents attend Derby City GP practices, 70% attend practices in South Derbyshire with the remainder receiving GP services in Leicestershire or Staffordshire.

The PCT oversees South Derbyshire PBC Consortium which is made up of seven GP practices surrounding Swadlincote. In addition, there are practices at Willington and Hilton. The Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) Swadlincote Health Centre was also developed in 2006.

Particular attention will need to be paid to the co-ordination of local health services with population growth in the District. To this end, particular issues for the PCT are the rapidly growing and ageing population and the need to improve access to services especially in the most deprived communities.

The changing population also has implications for both primary and secondary schools. There are currently 38 primary, infant and junior schools throughout the District. Secondary schools are located at Etwall and at three sites in the Swadlincote area.

Major changes in the way that schools are funded and provided are currently underway. At the secondary school level, the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative aims to entirely replace or refurbish all school buildings over the next 25 years. Funding is allocated in 'waves' and South Derbyshire is to be included either in 'wave 7' (to be delivered by 2015/16) or later. The aim for primary schools is to replace, refurbish or re-model around half of primary schools throughout Derbyshire, over the next 14 years.

The major house building growth being required by the RSS will pose additional challenges in matching new housing with available school places over the next couple of decades - a challenge which is more acute in South Derbyshire than any other part of the County.





- How can we ensure that housing growth in the District is supported by adequate schools, health facilities, roads, public transport and other essential community facilities and infrastructure?
- How can we ensure essential services and facilities are provided in rural as well as urban areas?
- Are there any particular patterns of development which would be more likely to enable the provision of services and infrastructure?
- To what extent should the Core Strategy resist the loss of existing community facilities? What needs to be done to encouragePost Offices, pubs and shops to stay in rural areas?
- How should the development of telecommunications and other utilities infrastructure be guided by the Core Strategy?
- Is there a need for any other major infrastructure provision in South Derbyshire?



Housing

National housing policies require an increase in the provision of a wide choice of homes in places people want to live and at prices they can afford. Policies also call for the creation of sustainable and mixed communities in urban and rural areas, i.e. housing of a range of sizes, types and tenures in locations offering a good range of community facilities with access to jobs and key services. The ageing population poses particular challenges for housing provision.

The Government expects that best use is made of previously developed (brownfield) land in developing housing and efficient use to be made of land. The national minimum residential density is 30 dwellings per hectare.

The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy is likely to require at least 44,750 dwellings to be built in the Derby Housing Market Area (i.e. Derby City, Amber Valley and South Derbyshire) between 2001 and 2026. It is expected that approximately 15,250 of these will need to be located in South Derbyshire (610 dwellings per annum). Furthermore, as part of an overall policy of "urban concentration" the RSS will expect a significant proportion of the new housing to be as greenfield extensions to Derby (the "Principal Urban Area"), and to Swadlincote.

A further review of the RSS is underway which will look forward to 2031 and which will revise the amount of housing needing to be provided across the East Midlands.



Questions to think about ...

- Bearing in mind the need for conformity with the RSS, are there any reasons why the Core Strategy should plan for levels of growth significantly different to those set out in the draft RSS?
- What proportion of new housing should be located around Derby and Swadlincote? Should housing development occur in the rural parts of the District and, if so, how much and where?
- What **types** of new housing are needed in South Derbyshire (e.g. bungalows, flats, large detached houses etc)? Is there a need for particular types in particular locations?
- How can we make sure that the future housing stock will be suited to the needs of an ageing population?
- Are there any particular housing needs arising for specific sections of the population which are unlikely to be adequately met through general housing provision e.g. older people, people with special needs, Gypsies and Travellers?
- + How can we ensure that housing is affordable to those that need it?
- National planning policy indicates affordable housing should be provided on sites involving the development of 15 or more dwellings. Is this an appropriate threshold for South Derbyshire?
- Is there a need to reserve particular sites solely for affordable housing or is it sufficient to rely on a general 'rural exceptions' policy? (That is, a policy that allows affordable homes to be built to meet specific needs where housing would not normally be granted).
- How should the Core Strategy plan to make the most efficient use of land? Should a uniform policy on residential density be applied across the District, or should it vary from place to place?



Travel and transport

South Derbyshire is well connected to the national trunk road network, being crossed by the A38 and A50 and lying in close proximity to the M1. However links between the North and South of the District are poor. This results in traffic congestion at Swarkestone Causeway, particularly at peak times, and difficulty in accessing new employment and other facilities in the Derby area by those living in the less prosperous South. Activities outside the District at East Midlands Airport and Castle Donington also contribute to pressures on the local road network. In addition, although relatively close to the A38 and A42/M42, the economic regeneration of the Swadlincote urban area has been hindered by poor road connections. Feasibility work and public consultation has been undertaken on proposals for the development of the Woodville Regeneration Route to improve accessibility as well as providing traffic relief and open up under-used land for development. To date, this has been pursued via an emerging Area Action Plan (AAP). However, as a result of changes in government thinking on LDFs, it is likely that the main elements of the AAP, including the regeneration route, will now need to be taken forward as part of the Core Strategy.

There are railway stations at Willington and Hatton, serving those villages and their surrounding areas. However those seeking access to rail from the South of the District are limited to services from Burton-on-Trent. The potential for the establishment of a 'National Forest' passenger rail service is under investigation by Leicestershire County Council. This could potentially include a new station at Castle Gresley in the Swadlincote area.

There are a number of sites in the District that were formerly served by rail where there may be potential to provide rail freight services to support larger industrial operations.

Some rural parts of the District lack local services, facilities, education and employment opportunities and are poorly served by public transport.

The North of the District is relatively well served by cycle routes providing links to Derby, Burton-on-Trent and Ashbourne. However, there is very little provision in the South of the District, where new facilities would encourage access to the National Forest by means other than motor vehicle and enable cycle trips for day-to-day purposes.

Parking policy can help to encourage travel by public transport, cycle and foot. Whilst government guidance establishes maximum parking standards for some types of development, a more restrictive approach may be appropriate in highly accessible locations, such as town centres and urban areas, which are well served by public transport and other non-car modes.





- Are any other major transport schemes or routes needed in addition to the Woodville-Swadlincote Regeneration Route? If so, why and where?
- Is there a need to improve transport linkages between the northern and southern parts of the District? If so, how can this be achieved?
- Are there particular difficulties in accessing day to day facilities in rural areas? If so, where and how can these be addressed?
- Would a National Forest passenger rail service be feasible and beneficial to the District?
- Is it desirable to protect land for the development of rail freight facilities? If so, where?
- Can the Core Strategy do more to encourage travel by rail?
- Should the Council pursue a less restrictive approach to parking provision in rural areas than in urban areas?
- Should the Core Strategy identify and protect routes for cycling, walking and horse-riding and/or for the development of the canal network?



Employment and skills

South Derbyshire's main employment sites are concentrated in the Swadlincote urban area, Toyota at Burnaston, Hilton Business Park and Dove Valley Business Park. Villages such as Melbourne, Hatton and Shardlow also contain significant employment areas. It is likely that land will need to be found for further employment development over the Core Strategy period and suitable locations will need to be identified. In doing so account will need to be taken of such considerations as the broad locations of new housing development, the attractiveness to business of land close to the A50 and A38, the employment needs of rural communities, the need to regenerate the Swadlincote urban area and the presence of former power station sites at Willington and Drakelow. The availability of employment opportunities in neighbouring areas will also need to be taken into account, along with the need to minimise distances travelled to work.

Established employment premises have been under increasing pressure to be redeveloped for alternative purposes such as housing, leading to a loss of local employment opportunities. This trend has been particularly pronounced in the Swadlincote urban area.

Consideration needs to be given to the types of new employment development the District should be seeking to encourage. There is an identified shortage of start-up business units and small development plots, whilst at the other end of the scale the draft RSS has identified a regional requirement for large scale rail- connected strategic warehouse and distribution facilities, including in the Derby Housing Market Area.

In recent years a number of small rural employment premises have been developed by converting redundant farm buildings. Such provision can provide employment opportunities for local people, helping to diversify the rural economy. There has also been interest in the development of units which are suitable for both living and working ('live/work' units).

The tourism and leisure sector is a growing part of the South Derbyshire economy. The development of the National Forest has been key to recent growth whilst East Midlands Airport and Castle Donington Race Track provide opportunities for associated accommodation provision and the attraction of in-bound tourism.





Questions to think about ...

- How should the Core Strategy plan for economic growth?
- How much new employment land should be provided to 2026 and in what locations?
- What types of new employment uses are needed and what are the associated requirements in terms of location, size and design?
- Should the Core Strategy encourage the expansion of established business premises?
- Can the Core Strategy assist in improving education and skills levels in South Derbyshire?
- Is there a need for rail connected strategic distribution sites in South Derbyshire. If so, in which locations?
- Should existing and obsolete business premises be protected from re-development for other uses such as housing?
- The Council has already undertaken feasibility work and consultation for new economic development through the draft Woodville - Swadlincote Area Action Plan. Is the Council right to plan for employment use in this area?
- Can the District take advantage of its proximity to East Midlands Airport?
- How should new employment opportunities be developed in rural areas?
- How can the Core Strategy enhance the District as a tourist destination?



issues & ideas

Brownfield land and regeneration

National planning policies make clear that the re-use of previously developed (or brownfield) land in appropriate locations is a key part of sustainable development. In particular, there is a national target for at least 60% of new housing to be built on brownfield land, although such land should be re-used for any form of development where available and appropriate, rather than developing greenfield sites.

Local Planning Authorities are therefore urged to proactively prepare proposals for bringing disused and under-used land back into use and should consider a range of incentives or interventions.

The most notable areas of such land in South Derbyshire are found in the Woodville - Swadlincote area, and at the former power stations at Drakelow and Willington. However, there are pockets of derelict sites throughout both the urban and rural areas.





- How should the Core Strategy pursue the regeneration of previously developed and underused land between Woodville and Swadlincote?
- Should major brownfield sites at the former Willington and Drakelow power stations be redeveloped for new uses and, if so, what?
- Are there any other areas of under-used and brownfield land which the Core Strategy should address?
- Given the rural nature of the District, should the Core Strategy set a brownfield target for new homes? What should this be set at?
- Should a brownfield development target be set for any other types of development?



Rural issues

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy is based upon an overall policy of "urban concentration", i.e. focusing development mainly on the urban areas around Derby and Swadlincote.

However, South Derbyshire is largely rural with less than 6% of the District's land area being covered by settlements with a population of greater than 1,000.

It is essential that the needs and aspirations of those living and working in the countryside are not overlooked.

Historically, rural areas have generally been viewed as requiring development constraint. This must continue as, for example, the protection of land in the Green Belt and other areas of open countryside is an essential part of maintaining the character of rural areas. Nevertheless, there is every reason for rural residents to have similar needs and expectations as others. For example, there are important questions around the availability of affordable housing in villages, jobs, play space, travel choices and the availability of day-to-day services and facilities.

It is therefore important that the Core Strategy plans positively for the rural parts of the District as well as those areas where major growth is more likely to occur.





- How much development should be promoted in rural areas? Should housing development be located in particular settlements to act as a focus for surrounding villages?
- How can shops and services be retained or expanded in rural villages?
- Should particular rural settlements act as the commercial focus for surrounding settlements?
- To what extent should commercial development be promoted in rural areas?
- Should an exception to the general resistance to out-of-town shopping be made to allow ventures such as farm shops to trade in rural areas?
- Should the tourist potential of rural South Derbyshire be developed and, if so, how?
- Is there a need for additional tourist accommodation and facilities in the countryside?



Landscape, countryside character and Green Belt

The Government has an overall aim of protecting the countryside for the sake of its "intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all".

As a rural District, it will therefore be particularly important to ensure strong growth is balanced very carefully with the need to protect valuable countryside and its unique landscape. In addition there are a number of other land uses within the District, which contribute to rural character. These include areas set aside for leisure, tourism and recreation, and land protected for amenity or conservation reasons. The growing National Forest is also an important feature of South Derbyshire's landscape.





Questions to think about ...

- There are two areas of Green Belt in South Derbyshire. The largest area is in the north east of the District and is part of the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt whilst a smaller area lies between Swadlincote and Burton. Should the Green Belt continue to be used to prevent key settlements from coalescing?
- Is there a need to introduce any other special forms of countryside protection such as Green Wedges?
- How should the Core Strategy ensure that new development in the countryside reflects local landscape character?
- Part of the District is covered by the National Forest. Should policies continue to require new development to provide on-site tree planting and habitat creation? Are there any other ways the Core Strategy can assist in the achievement of National Forest Objectives?
- To what extent should development be encouraged in the National Forest?



Environmental conservation

Just over 5% of the District's land area is protected for its wildlife and geological interest. There is one site of European importance, six nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest and in excess of 150 County Wildlife Sites which are of local or regional importance. There is also one National Nature Reserve (Calke Park) and one Local Nature Reserve (Elvaston Castle) in the District. Together these sites provide the core of the area's biodiversity.

Increasingly, however, rather than just protecting sites, national planning policies require positive steps to be taken to restore and improve biodiversity across the District.





- + How should the Core Strategy aim to protect, enhance and restore areas identified as being of ecological interest or value?
- How should the Core Strategy plan for the creation of new habitats? Are there parts of the District where new habitat creation is particularly needed? What sorts of habitat are needed?



Heritage and conservation

South Derbyshire has a rich heritage reflected across the towns, villages and countryside. The District is home to over seven hundred listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments which are designated for their architectural and historic importance. In addition, there are many important buildings which are not listed but are of local interest. Twenty two Conservation Areas have been designated which preserve the character of an area rather than individual buildings. Most conservation areas have within them buildings which are "listed" although the majority of buildings are unlisted but nevertheless contribute to the character of the area. Conservation areas occur in both urban and rural areas.

Such buildings are an important part in planning for sustainable development, as they are irreplaceable. However, preservation also involves adapting to change including the introduction of new uses for old buildings and accommodating new development.

It will be important to continue to protect these special assets, not just for the sake of the safeguarding the essential character of the District, but also because this character is the key to developing the tourism potential of the area.





- How can the Core Strategy ensure that archaeological and heritage features, listed buildings and other buildings of architectural merit are given adequate protection?
- How can the Core Strategy ensure that the preservation of historic buildings is compatible with the need to address climate change, for example through the adaptation of important buildings?
- What should be the Core Strategy's approach to the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and other areas of historic townscape?
- Is there a need for the Core Strategy to include a policy safeguarding important Historic Parks and Gardens from development which undermines their special character? If so, how can this be achieved?
- Should the Core Strategy resist development in particular areas to protect the character of existing settlements?



Leisure, recreation and open space

The ability to access open space for leisure and recreation is an important element of sustainable communities and additional space can be planned as part of new development. National planning policy makes clear that the amount of such provision should be set locally. This allows the LDF to include open space requirements that reflect local needs. Currently, most open space within South Derbyshire is located within or around existing settlements although the development of the National Forest in the southern part of the District presents significant opportunities for new informal provision for walking and cycling or similar activities. Similarly, the creation of new homes around the fringes of Derby and Swadlincote could also help improve the quality and quantity of formal public open space, such as sports pitches.

There will also be a need for the improvement or provision of new built leisure facilities such as leisure centres to serve the needs of a growing District.





about ...

- Should the same open space standards apply to all forms of development? Should the same standards apply to new development in both rural and built up areas?
- Will there be a need for upgraded or additional built leisure facilities (such as leisure centres) in the District? If so where?
- Are there any specific open space or other recreational needs within the District that are not being met?
- Is there a need to create new allotments to serve new housing developments?
- Are there opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of informal open space for walking, cycling or similar activities?
- Can the Core Strategy assist in the provision of cemetery space?



Shopping and town centres

Swadlincote town centre acts as the main focus for shopping in South Derbyshire, and major future expansion is already planned. Melbourne is also regarded as a town centre, albeit on a much smaller scale.

National planning policies are aimed at promoting the vitality and viability of existing town centres by planning for their expansion and, where possible, by locating new development within them rather than at out-of-town locations. Town centres are also regarded as the best locations for encouraging high density, mixed used developments for other uses such as homes, offices, leisure, tourism and cultural facilities. This reflects the fact that town centres offer the best opportunity for carrying out a range of activities in a single trip, and tend to be well served by public transport services.

However, the availability of shops and other outlets, in both urban and rural areas, is also regarded as essential to meet people's day-to-day needs. Currently, such needs are met by small unplanned clusters of individual small shops and other outlets spread throughout the towns and villages in the area.

In addition, specialist forms of shopping, such as farm shops, can help support the rural economy, although there is a risk that these can compete with existing shops in established centres. Similarly, garden centres sell an increasing range of goods which, if not controlled, can threaten the viability of existing shops.





Questions to think about ...

- + How should we plan for growth in Swadlincote Town Centre? Should its role as a focus for shopping and commerce be expanded further and what types of new development should be attracted to the town?
- How can we ensure that shops in Swadlincote and Melbourne town centres remain occupied and that the centres remain vibrant?
- Should the loss of existing shops to other uses in Swadlincote and Melbourne town centres be resisted or encouraged?
- Is there a need for any new major shops in the District, for example major new food stores, factory shops, DIY stores, retail warehouses etc? Where should these be located?
- + How can we ensure that day-to-day shops and other facilities are provided and retained in urban areas away from the town centres and throughout the rural areas? Should a network of local centres be defined to act as the focus for existing and new local shopping facilities?
- Should major housing developments be accompanied by shops and other day-to-day facilities?
- Should new shops be allowed in the countryside where they support the rural economy?
- Should the Core Strategy resist the development of new garden centres or extensions to existing garden centres?



Your comments

This 'Issues and Ideas' paper sets out the Council's initial thoughts on the main questions which will need to be addressed in identifying the right options for the future development of the area. Please take the time to read this document and tell us your views.

You can respond through our website, by post or by e-mail:



Website

You can register and submit comments on-line at

www.south-derbys.gov.uk

as well as read other people's responses. Simply follow the instructions on the website.



Postal and e-mail responses

A questionnaire response form is included with this document and is available to download from the Council's website. Copies are also available at all local public libraries in South Derbyshire during opening hours (plus libraries in adjoining areas at Derby Central, Borrowash, Mickleover, Sinfin, Alvaston, Blagreaves Lane, Burton upon Trent and Ashbourne). Questionnaires can be completed by hand or electronically and sent to:



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It would be appreciated if responses could be received by Friday 3rd April 2009.

This is the first main consultation on the Core Strategy.

There will be further opportunities to comment as we identify the development options and a draft Plan.



Obtaining alternative versions of this document

If you would like this document in another language, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us. This information is also available in large print, Braille or audio format upon request.

Phone: 01283 595795 email:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk

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Glossary of abbreviations used in this document

AMR Annual Monitoring Report

AAP Area Action Plan

BSF Building Schools for the Future

HMA Housing Market Area

LDF Local Development Framework

LDS Local Development Scheme

LIFT Local Improvement Finance Trust

LSP Local Strategic Partnership

MoD Ministry of Defence

PCT Primary Care Trust

PUA Principal Urban Area

RSS Regional Spatial Strategy

SA Sustainability Appraisal

SCI Statement of Community Involvement

SCS Sustainable Community Strategy

SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest



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