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CREATING THRIVING TOWNS AND VILLAGES IN NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

Introduction

- 10.1 Having access to a range of shops, cultural and leisure facilities that meet local needs is vital to creating sustainable communities and promoting a good quality of life for residents in North Lincolnshire. Shopping, culture, leisure and tourism are also important parts of creating a successful and vibrant economy.
- 10.2 The Local Development Framework's (LDF) role is to set a proactive planning policy framework to deliver the vision for the area and support the sustainable delivery of new and improved shopping, cultural, leisure and tourism facilities across North Lincolnshire. In doing so, it will ensure that new retail development is directed to appropriate locations, existing retail facilities are improved and any deficiencies in the retail hierarchy are addressed, allowing for future growth to be planned for. The aim of the LDF is to promote the vitality and viability of the area's shopping hierarchy, encouraging a wide range of services that promotes genuine choice, in a good quality environment, with a vibrant mix of activity, which is accessible to all. Ultimately, the LDF supports the growth of the local economy by ensuring that the area's towns, villages and countryside are vibrant, thriving places to live, work, visit and relax.

Context

National/Regional

- 10.3 National planning policy, as set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, advocates town centres as the principal locations for new retail, leisure, commercial office, tourism and cultural facilities. The key objective is to promote their vitality and viability. Key to this is developing a hierarchy of centres with each performing an appropriate role to meet the needs of its catchment area. It also sets out provisions for determining the need for retail and leisure development and establishes the sequential approach for new development.
- 10.4 Tourism is seen to be of crucial importance to the national economy. It generates significant revenues, provides millions of jobs, supports communities and helps maintain and improve important national assets. This is highlighted within the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism. PPS4 also highlights the specific importance of tourism to rural economies by sustaining local businesses and promoting prosperity in rural towns and villages as well as encouraging farm diversification.

- 10.5 One part of the Regional Spatial Strategy's (RSS) core approach is to strengthen the role and performance of the region's main town and city centres. To achieve sustainable economic growth and investment in the region, regional cities and sub regional towns, such as Scunthorpe, there has to be a focus on providing offices, retail, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture, tourism and more intensive sport and recreation facilities. Local service centres (i.e. the Market Towns) are also seen as being key hubs in serving the needs of rural communities. The RSS emphasises that development, environmental enhancements, accessibility improvements and town centre management activities should take place to create a distinctive, attractive and vibrant sense of place and identity for town centres.
- 10.6 Within the RSS, tourism is recognised and valued as a key component of regional activity making a significant contribution to the local and regional economy. Both the RSS and the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) recognise the potential of some parts of the region to further develop their assets to build on the tourism offer.

Local

- 10.7 Scunthorpe is North Lincolnshire's main retail and service centre and as such provides the bulk of the area's housing, employment, education and leisure facilities. Recent years have seen significant investment in Scunthorpe town centre with the opening of the multi-million pound Parishes retail complex, which has improved the range and type of shops on offer and provided a new multi-screen cinema. However, much still needs to be done to improve the retail offer and improve the town centre's environment. The improvement of Scunthorpe town centre is priority for both the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LDF.
- 10.8 In terms of the retail hierarchy, following Scunthorpe town centre are the Market Town centres of Barton upon Humber and Brigg with further smaller town centres in Crowle and Epworth providing for convenience and comparison shopping needs. These town centres also offer a range of leisure facilities and other supporting services. Kirton in Lindsey and Winterton are also classed as Market Towns and are important service centres but due to limited services and retail provision are considered to be district centres rather than town centres. Below the market towns fall the district centres of Ashby High Street and Frodingham Road, both of which are located in the Scunthorpe urban area. Both provide for local shopping needs but not on the same scale as the market towns. Elsewhere a range of smaller local centres, shopping parades and corner shops provide a vital range of shops and facilities for their local communities, both urban and rural.
- 10.9 As part of the Scunthorpe Urban Renaissance Programme the town centre will be subject to considerable change and redevelopment that reinforces its role as North Lincolnshire's main centre as well as enhancing its role regionally.
- 10.10 Culture and tourism are growth industries in North Lincolnshire. Visitors to the area contributed £167m to the local economy, supported by 3,971 jobs in 2008. Tourism has a key role to play in providing economic support for local communities. It can also provide a hub for environmental enhancement. The area's tourism industry is constantly evolving being centred on the area's market towns and natural environment, such as the Humber Estuary. Opportunities may also arise from the area's accessibility by both Humberside and Doncaster Robin Hood Airports in supporting short break holidays tied into specialist local facilities such as high-quality golf courses.

- 10.11 North Lincolnshire also has a range of cultural and leisure assets, which play an important role in the life of the area's towns and villages. Scunthorpe has the Plowright Theatre, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, North Lincolnshire Museum, Scunthorpe Leisure Centre (to be replaced in 2011 by The Pods leisure and sporting facility) and the Vue cinema as well as a range of bars, restaurants and nightclubs. Barton upon Humber is the focus of the South Humber Collection, a destination for wildlife heritage and the arts. Attractions include the Ropewalk Arts and Crafts Centre, Waters' Edge Visitors Centre, Baysgarth Museum and a new leisure centre. Brigg has an attractive town centre and an award winning Farmers' Market. Epworth is famous for its connections with the Wesley family, the founding fathers of Methodism, which attracts visitors from across the world.
- 10.12 The evening economy is a particular facet of the cultural sector, which poses both a major opportunity and a challenge. It generates jobs and has the potential to add vitality to town centres.
- 10.13 Scunthorpe needs to achieve a better balance in terms of the range of evening and late night activities and their distribution throughout the town centre. In some parts of the town there are concentrations of pubs and bars – in particular Doncaster Road, Britannia Corner and the western High Street. Concentrations in these areas have led to problems of litter and anti-social behaviour. In the market towns a good range of pubs and restaurants exist. These should be protected to maintain a healthy economy. A greater range of cultural facilities should be proposed for these locations that offer evening uses appropriate with their character. The LDF supports the development of Scunthorpe town centre as a leisure and cultural focus for North Lincolnshire as well as the importance of thriving service centres in market towns. This can be achieved by:
- Supporting new investment in the cultural sector and safeguarding existing cultural facilities
 - Containing and controlling new uses, in particular new drinking establishments and nightclubs, where they could cause significant problems or add to existing problems
 - Encouraging cultural uses including restaurants and café bars within Scunthorpe town centre
 - Sympathetically diversify the cultural economy in the market towns as part of a balanced mix of uses in these locations.

Future Provision

- 10.14 The North Lincolnshire Retail Study assessed the retail provision in North Lincolnshire and showed that there was need for additional town centre retail floor space over the coming years. Despite the study showing that many people were satisfied with the retail provision across all of the area's town centres, there was demand for new shops, and a better choice and quality of shops in Scunthorpe, particularly for clothes shops, multiple retailers and national chain department stores. In other centres, many people wanted better choice of shops.
- 10.15 The Retail Study identified the capacity for additional convenience and comparison shopping floorspace needs up until 2015 in the area's main centres.

Centre	Floorspace Type	2010	2015
Scunthorpe	Convenience	800m ² to 1,650m ²	1,830m ² to 3,670m ²
	Comparison	4,300m ² to 11,400m ²	12,900m ² to 28,600m ²
Barton upon Humber	Convenience	90m ² to 180m ²	170m ² to 330m ²
	Comparison	300m ² to 600m ²	500m ² to 1,100m ²
Brigg	Convenience	110m ² to 200m ²	260m ² to 500m ²
	Comparison	400m ² to 800m ²	800m ² to 1,600m ²
Crowle and Epworth	Convenience	40m ² to 80m ²	60m ² to 120m ²
	Comparison	-	-

10.16 In addition the RSS gives an indication of the number of jobs that are likely to be created annually in main town centre uses over its lifespan (between 2006 and 2026). The uses are offices (use class B1) and retail and leisure. In the case of North Lincolnshire, offices are expected to create an additional 160 jobs annually, whilst retail and leisure is expected to create 60 jobs annually. This could potentially create upwards of 4,400 new jobs over the next 20 years in the area's town centres.

Approach

- 10.17 The strategy is to support North Lincolnshire's town, district and local centres as centres for retail, cultural and tourism development. It aims to encourage new retail development in the right location, in a way that supports the delivery of the spatial vision for North Lincolnshire and the regeneration of Scunthorpe town centre. It is also about ensuring that a positive climate is put in place to attract investors to the area to meet consumer demands for a range and choice of shopping opportunities, all within an attractive and well-designed environment. All this should take place in a sustainable way.
- 10.18 A key priority is to safeguard and enhance Scunthorpe town centre as a major sub-regional shopping destination as envisaged by the Scunthorpe Urban Renaissance Programme. This will introduce a new mix of uses to the town centre including enhanced opportunities for retail and cultural development within a high quality, well designed built environment and public realm. This will help to secure high quality new development, which substantially improves the town centre's retail offer in quantitative and qualitative terms. The overall aim is to create a centre where people chose to shop because of its excellent range and offer of shops and attractiveness as a retail destination.
- 10.19 Another key part of the strategy is ensuring that the area's network of centres is preserved and enhanced. This will be achieved through the establishment of a retail hierarchy. This four level hierarchy will ensure that future retail development is directed to the correct location, taking account of the function and role of the centre. The Market Town centres, district centres and local centres/corner shops will also be supported as important locations for retail development and their enhancement and preservation encouraged.
- 10.20 Where new retail development is not appropriate to be located in or on the edge of existing centres (in terms of the sequential approach), if there is a clearly defined need it will be directed to existing retail destinations, ensuring that unsustainable piecemeal development does not occur.

- 10.21 Retail development will play a wider role than just meeting people's shopping needs. Like all development, it needs to contribute to our wider objectives of creating sustainable communities, delivering regeneration and renaissance, as well as promoting social inclusion. The strategy is to direct retail to help address these issues, secure Scunthorpe town centre, respond to retail need and ensure an even spread of shopping opportunities and facilities for the area's residents, as reasonably as possible.
- 10.22 In respect of culture and tourism, the council will support these sectors as a growing part of the area's economy. Both have an important role to play in securing the vitality and viability of the area's town centres by ensuring that there is a mix of uses provided within them. Until recently the value of green tourism to the local economy has been understated within North Lincolnshire. However, it has now a key role to play in assisting the diversification of the rural economy with environmental assets that include the internationally significant Humber Estuary and Crowle and Thorne Moors proving to be significant visitor draws in their own rights.

CS14: RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

The Council will work with partner organisations to identify, protect and enhance the following hierarchy of vital and viable town, district, and local centres in North Lincolnshire:

1. Scunthorpe Town Centre

To fulfil its sub-regional role, identified in the RSS, Scunthorpe town centre will be main location for all new retail, leisure, cultural and office development. Development will be provided which meets the quantitative and qualitative needs for these uses. To support the Scunthorpe Urban Renaissance Programme the town centre will be subject to major redevelopment with increased comparison and convenience retail floorspace together with an improved market and enhanced cultural facilities. New development should make a positive contribution to improving the town centre's viability and vitality, support the creation of a comfortable, safe, attractive and accessible shopping environment, and improve both the overall mix of land uses in the centre and its connectivity to adjoining areas.

2. Market Town Centres of Barton upon Humber, Brigg, Crowle and Epworth

To fulfil their role as key shopping and service centres in North Lincolnshire, the market town centres will be supported as locations for further retail, leisure, cultural and tourism development. Development will only be permitted that meet the needs of the area served by the centre in a sustainable way, is of a scale appropriate to the centre, and that will not adversely impact upon the vitality or viability of other nearby town and district centres. Within the town centres, any new development should respect their historic character.

3. District Centres of Kirton in Lindsey and Winterton

To fulfil their role as key shopping and service centres the district centres will be supported as locations for further retail, leisure, cultural and tourism development. Development will only be permitted that is required to meet the needs of the area served by the centre in a sustainable way, is of a scale appropriate to the centre, and that will not adversely impact upon the vitality or viability of other nearby town and district centres. Within the district centres, any new development should be respect their historic character.

4. District Centres of Ashby High Street and Frodingham Road

These centres will continue to have an important role in providing shopping and services within the Scunthorpe urban area. However, no proposed development will take place within these centres, unless it can be demonstrated that it is to meet local needs, is of a scale appropriate to the centre and will not adversely impact upon the vitality or viability of other nearby centres.

5. Local Centres/Corner Shops

To fulfil their role in providing vital day-to-day shopping facilities for local communities in both urban and rural areas, the retention and enhancement of Local Centres and corner shops will be supported.

In supporting the vitality and viability of North Lincolnshire's network of town centres, it will be important to ensure that:

- The existing retail character and function of centres is safeguarded. Development that detracts from vitality and viability of the area's town centres will be resisted.
- New town centre development complies with the sequential approach to site selection, which prioritises development in existing centres, then edge-of-centre sites, and only then out of centre sites that are accessible by a choice of means of transport.
- The scale and type of development reflects the centre's existing and proposed function and its capacity for new development.
- The retail function of town centres are protected by way of restricting non-A1 uses particularly within the defined town centres boundaries.
- A balanced range of facilities and uses are encouraged within district and local centres in keeping with their size and function to meet the every day needs of the local population. Local shops located within smaller settlements, in particular in rural areas will be protected where they are important to the day-to-day needs of people.
- Shopping facilities are accessible by a range of means including by car, walking, cycling and public transport.
- New developments are of an appropriately high quality design, particularly in the town centre.

10.23 This policy aims to support the sustainable development of a vibrant Scunthorpe town centre, Market Towns and other centres in the retail hierarchy at a scale and function proportionate to the retail standing of the centre. This policy will be implemented through the normal planning process.

10.24 Town centre boundaries and primary shopping frontages will be identified through the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD.

10.25 New retail development is an important part of the continued growth in North Lincolnshire. In particular it will have an important role to play in helping to regenerate Scunthorpe town centre. In choosing the location of new retail development, it should be done in line with the sequential test as set out in PPS4, which is as follows:

- Existing centres, where the development is appropriate in relation to the role and function of the centre, then
- Edge of centre locations, which are well-connected to the existing centre and where the development is appropriate to the role and function of the centre, and then
- Out of centre sites that are well serviced by a choice of means of transport.

CS15: CULTURE AND TOURISM

A balanced and socially inclusive cultural and evening economy will be promoted within North Lincolnshire by supporting uses such as museums, theatres, restaurants, café bars and leisure uses within Scunthorpe town centre and market towns provided that the proposals:

- Are managed to minimise crime, disorder and public concern
- Are of a high quality design
- Do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring uses in terms of noise, traffic and disturbance.

Elsewhere, schemes that extend the range of cultural and evening economy uses will be supported where they are consistent with the size and function of the centre. The loss of leisure, arts or cultural facilities will be permitted only where there are overriding regeneration or community benefits from such a development, in which case consideration must be given to the replacement of the facilities elsewhere.

Existing tourist facilities and infrastructure will be protected and enhanced and the development and promotion of sustainable tourism focusing on the area's natural and built assets will be supported, particularly the Humber Estuary, Thorne and Crowle Moors and Market Towns.

- 10.26 New developments for tourism/leisure related shopping may also be appropriate in other locations where tourism and leisure activities already exist or are proposed. Retail facilities are now recognised as a leisure activity in their own right, and therefore provide an added attraction to leisure and tourism location, increasing the appeal of North Lincolnshire as a tourism and leisure destination.
- 10.27 This policy aims to support the development of a vibrant Scunthorpe town centre and Market Towns to ensure the development of a balanced evening economy throughout North Lincolnshire. It also seeks to support the continuing development of sustainable tourism in North Lincolnshire by focusing on the area's natural and built assets. This policy will be implemented through the normal planning process.

Monitoring

- 10.28 The following indicators and targets will be used in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policies contained in this chapter:

Indicator	Target
Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres.	70% of all new retail, office and leisure development to take place in identified town and district centres.
Number of vacant units within town and district centres.	Annual decrease in the number of vacant units within the identified town and district centre
Amount of new cultural facilities within the Town and District centres.	Net increase in cultural facilities per annum.
Amount of new tourism facilities within the Town and District centres.	Net increase in tourism facilities per annum
Amount of new tourism facilities outside Town and District centres.	Net increase in tourism facilities per annum

Key Documents

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (DCLG, December 2009)
- The Yorkshire & Humber Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (GOYH, 2008)
- North Lincolnshire Retail Study (England & Lyle, 2005)
- A Tourism Strategy for North Lincolnshire 2004-2007 (NLC, 2004)
- Scunthorpe Strategic Development Framework (Gillespies/Yorkshire Forward, 2005)

Link to Key Objectives

Spatial Objectives:

1, 5, 9, 10

SA Objectives:

SA1; SA2; SA3; SA4; SA5; SA6; SA7; SA8; SA9; SA10; SA11; SA12; SA13; SA14; SA15; SA16; SA17; SA18; SA19; SA20; SA21; SA22; SA23; SA24; SA25; SA26; SA27; SA28

