

# Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement

**Statement of Consultation**  
March 2012

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **Purpose of this Statement**

- 1.1 Mansfield's Core Strategy has been prepared having regard to the principles of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and in accordance with the regulations governing the development plan process.
- 1.2 This consultation statement meets the requirements of Regulation 30 (1) (d) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2008 by setting out:-
  - a) which bodies and persons were invited to make representations under Regulation 25;
  - b) how these bodies and persons were invited to make such representations;
  - c) a summary of the main issues raised by those representations; and
  - d) how those main issues have been taken into account in the preparation of the Core Strategy.

### **Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

- 1.3 The Core Strategy is the key plan in the folder of local development documents that together will make up the Local Development Framework for Mansfield District. Its aim is to set out the overall ambitions and priorities for the district, a set of proposals, and a means for making sure that they are delivered – in effect a business plan. In short it will look to answer the Why ? What? Where? When? and How? questions about the District's future – Why change is needed?; What should be done? Where should it happen? When should it happen? and How should it happen?

### **Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement Report**

- 1.4 The Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement Report is part of the first stage in preparing the plan. It follows on from the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report which was produced and consulted on during 2010. The Dwelling Requirement report was the subject of a series of public consultation and engagement events during January 2012. In particular it asked for peoples views on the amount of new homes that should be planned for up to 2031. Four options were given, as well as an opportunity for people to suggest (and justify) an alternative.
- 1.5 This issue was not included within the initial work on the Core Strategy Issues and Options as a dwelling requirement for Mansfield was set out in the East Midlands Regional Plan (EMRP), otherwise known as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). However due to the Government's intention to abolish Regional Plans the decision was made to carry out work which would allow the Council to set its own, evidence based target.

## **Structure of this Statement**

I.6 This statement is structured as follows:-

- Section 2 -** gives details on who was consulted including the list of specific and general consultation bodies;
- Section 3 -** sets out how the consultation was undertaken including what, where and when this took place;
- Section 4 -** outlines who responded including the chosen response methods;
- Section 5 -** provides a summary of the main issues raised and the Officer's response for dealing with them in the next stages of its plan-making.
- Section 6 -** provides an Officer level conclusion to the consultation.

## 2.0 Who was consulted?

- 2.1 The following specific and general consultation bodies were invited to make representations on the Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement Report.

### Specific consultation bodies:

Arqiva	Mobile Operators Association
Ashfield District Council	N Power
Bassetlaw District Council	National Grid Property
Bolsover District Council	National Grid Land and Development Team
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)	Natural England
British Telecommunications / Openreach	Nether Langwith Parish Council
Broxtowe Borough Council	Network Rail
BT Plc	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Cable and Wireless	NHS Nottingham County
Central Networks (EME)	NHS Nottinghamshire County
Chesterfield Borough Council	North East Derbyshire District Council
Civil Aviation Authority	North Nottinghamshire Health Authority
Clipstone Parish Council	Norton Parish Meeting
Coal Authority	Nottingham City Council
Cuckney Parish Council	Nottingham Community Health
Defence Infrastructure Organisation	Nottinghamshire County Council
Department for Transport	Nottinghamshire County NHS
Derbyshire County Council	Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
E.ON Central Networks	Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
E.ON Energy Ltd	Nottinghamshire Police
East Midlands Councils	O2 UK Ltd
East Midlands Development Agency	Perlethorpe-cum-Budby Parish Meeting
East Midlands Tourism	Radiocommunications Agency (Midlands and East Anglia)
East Midlands Trains	Rainworth Parish Council
Edwinstowe Parish Council	Rufford Parish Council
English Heritage	Severn Trent Water Ltd
Environment Agency	Severn Trent Water Ltd. (Mansfield)
Environment Agency - Lower Trent Area	Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust
Gedling Borough Council	Shirebrook Town Council
Government Office for the East Midlands	Telefonica O2 UK Limited
Health & Safety Executive	Transco
Highways Agency	Vodafone Ltd
Homes and Communities Agency	Warsop Parish Council
House Builders Federation	
Hutchison 3G UK Ltd	
Mansfield & Ashfield District Primary Care Trust	
Mansfield Area Strategic Partnership	

## General consultation bodies:

Albert Street Residents Association	Mansfield Community and Voluntary Service
Alzheimers Society	Ministry of Defence
Ancient Monuments Society	National Farmers Union
APTCOO	National Quarries Inspection Team
Ashfield Links Forum	Nottingham & District Racial Equality Council
Baggaley Construction	Nottinghamshire Biological and Geological Records Centre
British Horse Society	Nottinghamshire Older People's Advisory Group
Church Commissioners	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
Citizens Advice Bureau	Planning Inspectorate
Country Land and Business Association Ltd	Royal Society for the Blind (Nottinghamshire)
D.I.A.L Mansfield and District	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Sport England
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce	Stagecoach East Midlands
Derbyshire County Council	Sure Start Meden Valley
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group	Sure Start Ravensdale
Greenwood Community Forest	The County Land and Business Association
Groundwork Creswell, Ashfield & Mansfield	The Mines Inspectorate
H. M. Prison Service – National Offender Management Service	The Woodland Trust
Health & Safety Executive	Victim Support Mansfield & Ashfield
Home to Home Respite Care	
Mansfield 2020 Ltd	

- 2.2 In addition to the above bodies, correspondence was sent either electronically or by post explaining the purpose of the consultation event to approximately 550 other individuals and organisations registered on the LDF database.
- 2.3 Notification emails were also sent to approximately 40 'Mansfield Development Forum' members, and approximately 170 members of 'Mansfield 2020'.

### **3.0 How was the consultation undertaken?**

- 3.1 A number of consultation methods were used in the preparation of the 'Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement' Report and to invite people's views and comments on it. The list below sets out the details of the methods of engagement deployed at this early stage of the plan-making process.

#### **Pre-consultation Engagement**

- 3.2 In developing the options discussions were held with the other service areas within the Council including economic development and housing. The comments made were fed into developing the scenarios that formed the basis of the options (the modelling was carried out for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire authorities by Edge Analytics Ltd). In addition, the report was prepared with the input of Members of the Council following a presentation and workshop-based discussion with them during the preparation process.

#### **Statutory Requirements**

- 3.3 In order to meet the statutory requirements the Council undertook the following:

##### **Consult with specific and general consultation bodies**

Consultation was undertaken with the specific and general consultation bodies recorded in the LDF database. All bodies were sent a letter either electronically or by post including details about the consultation event together with a link to the relevant webpage ([www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement)) where access to the report, online survey (hosted by Snap Surveys), and the link to the Council's online LDF Consultation Portal was made available. In addition, those bodies registered on the online Consultation Portal were automatically sent e-mail reminder before the event ended.

#### **Statement of Community Involvement**

- 3.4 In accordance with the Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement the following consultation was undertaken:

##### **'Making Plans for Mansfield – Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement' Consultation**

The Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement Report, together with an 'option / comment card' was produced by the Council. It was the key document used during the consultation period to gather the views of individuals and organisations. A copy of the 'option / comment card' is included in the Appendix.

##### **Making copies of documentation available for inspection**

Copies of the report and the 'option / comment card' were made available to view and select options with at the Main Council Offices, Area Housing Offices, Libraries, Leisure Centres and Neighbourhood Management Team Offices throughout the district. Ballot boxes were made available for people to 'post' their comments. A list of venues is included in the Appendix.



**Letters**

Letters were sent either electronically or by post explaining the purpose of the consultation event to approximately 660 individuals and organisations registered on the LDF database.

**Website**

Information about the consultation and a PDF copy of the report were available to view and download from the Council's website. The report was also available to comment on online through the LDF Consultation Portal.

**Posters**

As well as the documents, cards and ballot boxes, posters to publicise the report were displayed at the Main Council Offices, Area Housing Offices, Libraries, Leisure Centres and Neighbourhood Management Team Offices throughout the district. A copy of the poster is included in the Appendix.

**Press Releases**

A press release was sent to the Mansfield Chad. A number of articles together with commentary in the Mayor's column were published in both The Chad and the Nottingham Post during December 2011 and January 2012. A copy of each article is included in the Appendix.

**Councillor Involvement**

Councillors were each given at least 100 'option / comment cards', (some up to 1000 upon request) to distribute amongst their individual wards / hand out at surgeries etc.

**Mansfield Developer Forum (MDF)**

A summary note and PowerPoint presentation were given to key MDF partners on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2011. A summary of their discussion following the presentation is included in the Appendix.

**Citizen's Panel**

Members of the Citizen's Panel were invited to attend a presentation on the report in order to help them identify important issues before making their comments on the consultation and stating their preferred option. The presentations were given on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

**Consultation through Schools**

The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor helped to set up 'School Council debating sessions' which were held at the following schools:

Manor Academy – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Queen Elizabeth Academy – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Samworth Church Academy – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Brunts Academy – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012

Students were given a short presentation before having a debate about how different options might affect them. They then filled in 'option / comment cards'.



### **Skills4Employment Group**

A presentation followed by a debating / question and answer session was held at the Civic Centre on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 where participants of this 'hard to reach' group, which is based at MyPlace, were able to discuss the ways that the options might affect them. They then filled in 'option / comment cards' before learning more about democracy and meeting the Mayor.

### **Youth Forum**

Following on from the consultation through schools, the Youth Mayor (YM) and Deputy Youth Mayor (DYM) hosted a Youth Forum at the Civic Centre on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012. Representatives from each school attended and aired the views of their school council (which were discussed during their own debating sessions) to help inform the YM in making a recommendation to Full Council which most reflected the views of Mansfield's young people.

### **Facebook and Twitter**

The Planning Policy Facebook group 'Making Plans for Mansfield' was regularly updated throughout the consultation period to notify people about the consultation, and provide them with links to the Council webpage and the Snap Survey webpage.

See: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=136258933056365&ref=ts>

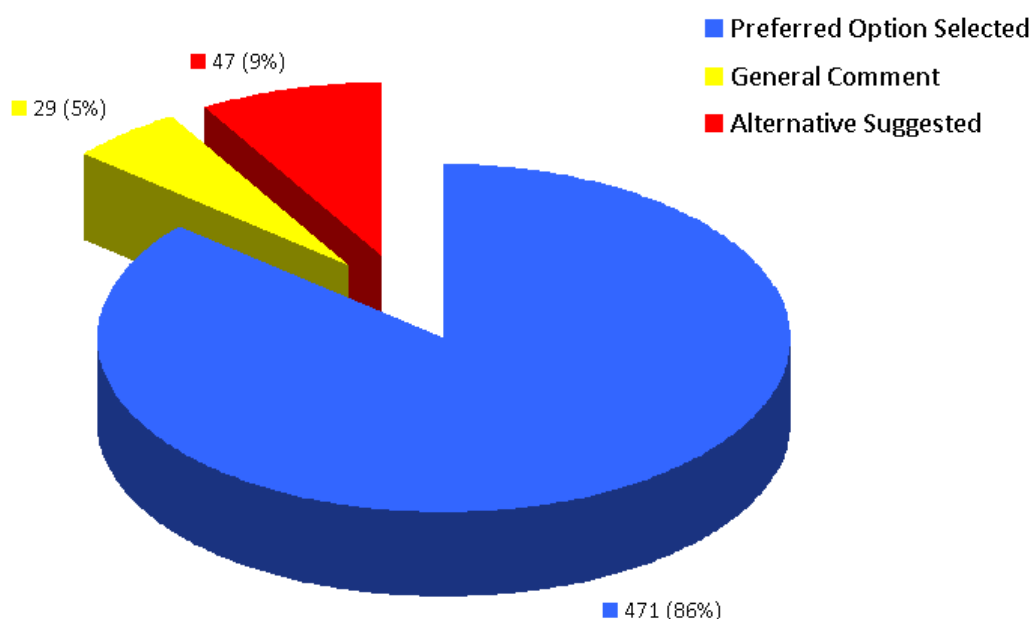
Tweets were also sent via the Council's twitter account (@MDC\_News) to help raise awareness of the consultation.

### **Public Exhibitions**

Staffed exhibitions were held at the Four Seasons Shopping Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and Market Warsop Market on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012. Officers were on hand to explain about the report and answer questions. The 'option / comment cards' were handed out at these exhibitions. An unstaffed exhibition was also set up in the Civic Centre Mall during the consultation period.

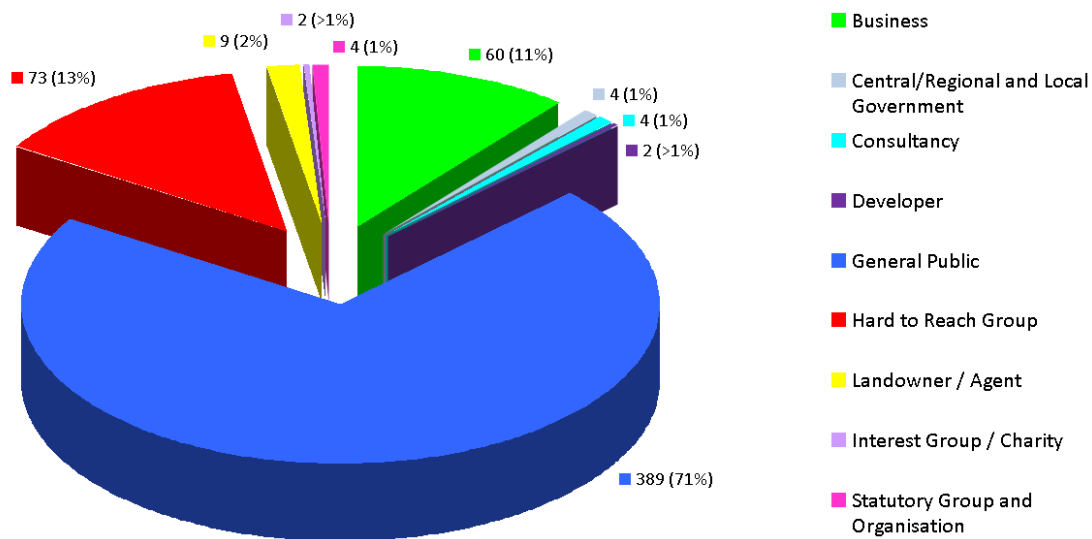
## 4.0 Who responded?

- 4.1 From those notified about the consultation on the 'Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement' report, a total of 554 people made a response. Unfortunately 7 people made void / inadmissible responses (such as duplicate or blank comments), which leaves a total of 547.
- 4.2 Of these 547 valid responses, some 471 people supported a particular Option the Council had put forward. 47 people suggested an alternative dwelling requirement and 29 people made general comments on the report / issue. This split is shown below:



- 4.3 The following breakdown of respondent type shows that the vast majority of all responses were submitted from the general public (including hard to reach groups) and businesses in the area. The broad mix of respondent types is shown below. 'Option / comment cards' received through the post, and responses made through the Snap Survey were considered to have been made by the general public, unless known or stated otherwise.

Respondent Type	Nos. (%)
General Public	389 (71%)
Hard to Reach Group	73 (13%)
Landowner / Agent	9 (2%)
Interest Group / Charity	2 (>1%)
Statutory Organisation	4 (1%)
Business	60 (11%)
National / Regional / Local Government	4 (1%)
Consultants	4 (1%)
Developers	2 (>1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>547</b>

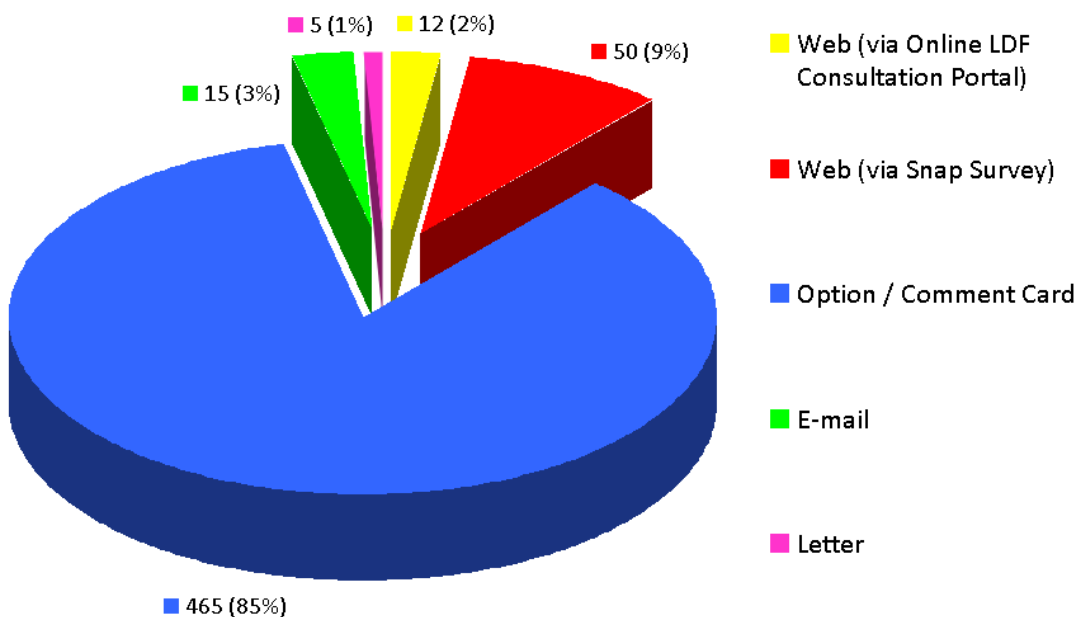


4.4 Out of all the comments made the vast majority of comments (81%) were submitted via the 'option / comment card'. The chosen method of response of all the respondents is set out below.

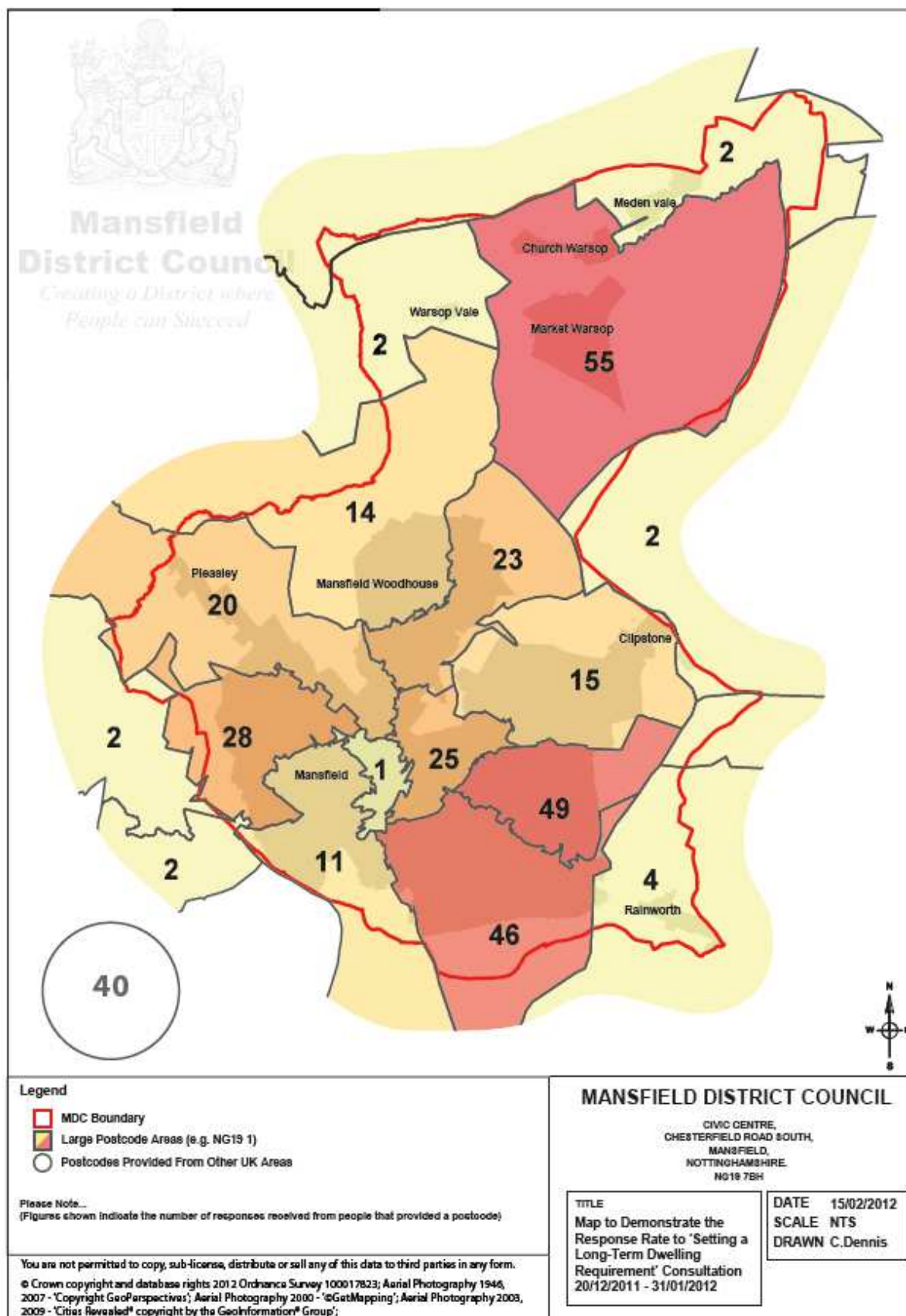
#### Response Method

Web (via Online LDF Consultation Portal)  
 Web (via Snap Survey)  
 Option / Comment Card  
 E-mail  
 Letter (inc paper questionnaire form)

Nos. (%)
12 (2%)
50 (9%)
465 (85%)
15 (3%)
5 (1%)
<b>Total 547</b>



- 4.5 The following plan shows which areas of Mansfield District produced the most responses (where people provided legible postcodes). Please note that the areas shown are postcode zones not ward boundaries.



## 5.0 What was said and what is the response?

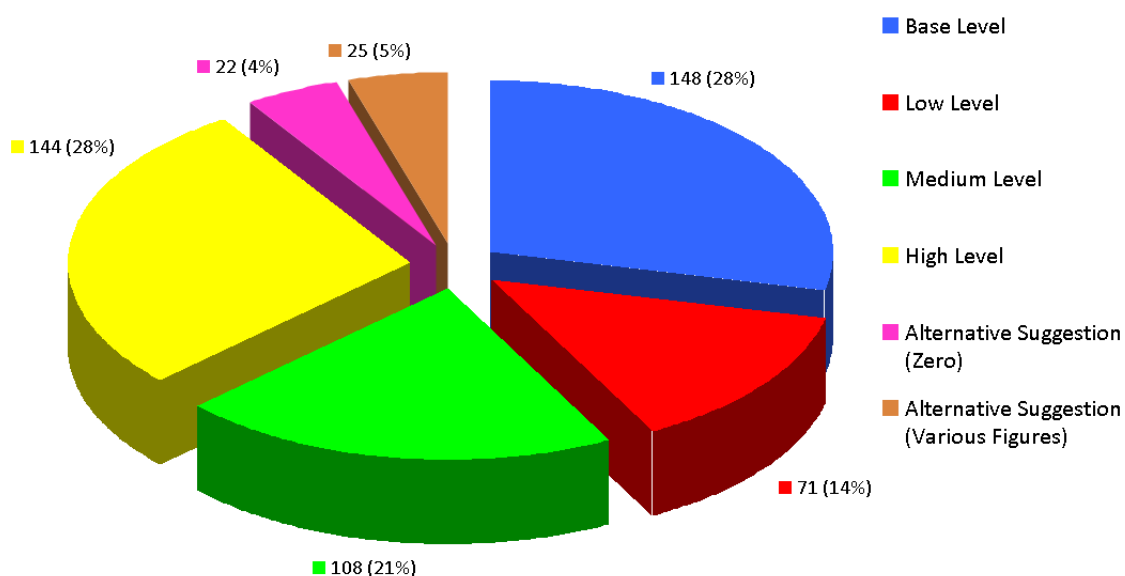
5.1 A summary of the main issues raised together with the Officer's response is set out below. In considering these issues and formulating our responses, it was important to recognise that it is not the sheer quantity of representations that carry weight, as each different view and piece of factual evidence has to be considered. In making future decisions, the Council will take on board significant community concerns and ideas wherever possible and appropriate.

5.2 The main purpose of the report and the consultation period was to find out what the preferred option of the public is.

5.3 As stated above, of all comments received, 518 people made a choice between Options A, B, C, and D, or put forward alternative dwelling requirements. The following preferences were expressed:

- 28% agreed with Option A to set a Base level of 4,413 dwellings for the plan period (average of 221 dwellings per year);
- 14% agreed with Option B to set a Low level of 5,643 (average 282 per year);
- 21% agreed with Option C to set a Medium level of 7,828 (average 391 per year);
- 28% agreed with Option D to set a High level of 11,100 (average 555 per year); and
- 9% put forward alternative options. Of these, 47% suggested a figure of zero. Other alternatives put forward were based around various other figures and approaches which will be discussed below.

5.4 The following pie chart clearly shows the level of support for each option.



- 5.5 Many consultees made comments in relation to the option they chose. The main issues raised in relation to each option are summarised below.

<b>Base Level</b>
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- 5.6 There were many comments by people who supported the base level which referred to the refurbishment / reuse of unfit houses in order to reduce the amount of new housing that is needed. It was pointed out that refurbished homes could be put on the market for first time buyers. One suggestion was that the District's housing stock should be surveyed for an accurate idea of how many properties could be brought back into use before establishing what the shortage is, whilst another consultee stated that the number of "long term empty dwellings" for Council Tax purposes at 4/1/2012 was 354, with another 969 properties vacant for a variety of reasons.
- 5.7 The use of brownfield land first and the protection of Greenfield land are inter-related issues which also received a lot of comments. There was concern raised over the fact that once green spaces / countryside / farmland have been built on, the environment is damaged for future generations, and therefore it was suggested by many people that brownfield sites in need of improvement should be the focus for the development of new homes. It was also suggested by some that empty shops could be utilised as new homes. There was a feeling that 4000 new homes overall would be adequate.
- 5.8 There was also a lot of comments received which stated that there are enough new houses already which aren't selling, and many people questioned the need for more, especially as 1700 are due for development at Lindhurst.
- 5.9 Design and environmental quality were also important concerns of consultees who supported the Base Option. Comments included that we should keep the character of the area and concentrate on making less attractive areas better to live in, rather than develop further 'ugly sprawl' and undermine existing communities. It was also mentioned that we need good, attractive and green entrances into Mansfield.
- 5.10 It was stated that new homes need to be affordable, but that it is unclear how the proposed targets will address this without additional policy support. It was also highlighted that planning policies should ensure that more bungalows / residential homes are built for the elderly, in order to release family homes. It was pointed out that divorce doesn't always mean two properties are needed and a comment was received which suggested that reducing immigration would make more houses available.
- 5.11 Consultees stated that the creation of new industry and business is required as a priority before new homes, and that the empty shops, industrial estates and factories should be filled to get people back into Mansfield and create wealth. Many people highlighted that there are no jobs available and

questioned why there is a need to build houses for an unemployed workforce.

- 5.12 The impact of new houses on infrastructure was another issue raised by consultees who selected the Base Option. The general opinion was that the roads will not be able to cope with any additional traffic and that the higher the amount of development permitted, the greater the impacts will be and more new infrastructure will be required.
- 5.13 It was stated that the dwelling requirements should be monitored and reviewed annually rather than using estimations / guesswork for a 20 year plan, the figure can then be revised if necessary. Another point was made in relation to the fact that the forecasts are based on the 2001 census data, stating that it would be preferable, if possible, to draw on more recent census data.
- 5.14 Advantages of the base level option which were highlighted include:
- It gives Planning Officers / Committee greater flexibility in the granting of planning permissions, ensuring that only the best proposals are permitted.
  - Inappropriate development of greenfield sites will be avoided.
  - Less land set aside for housing means more would be available for employment which supports employment aspirations.
  - Better for conserving and enhancing the natural environment (green infrastructure), thus making an irreplaceable contribution to improving the quality of life for existing residents while attracting higher skilled workforce and businesses to employ them. In June 2011 the Government acknowledged that: "High-quality green infrastructure can...drive local economic growth and regeneration".
- 5.15 It was highlighted that house building will not attract employers by itself. Building unwanted housing will result in unsellable property, put people off and not lead to long term occupancy. There is no correlation between the number of high jobs created and the number of houses built. It was also stated that the higher options may not help reduce unemployment, with real danger that if new jobs do not come forward, but the houses do, it would increase unemployment.
- 5.16 Concerns over the justification for the high and medium options were also raised, stating that they are not founded on a robust and credible evidence base, or represent the most appropriate strategy. There is no mention of delivery partners, or reference to the plans of neighbouring authorities' plans. In addition a comment stated that references to population forecasts are not fact-based but speculate about Mansfield's ability to attract a younger, better educated workforce (which also manipulates the District's standing in health statistics). A population shift through increasing the target number of new



dwelling is not guaranteed. It was also stated that the medium and high targets do not appear flexible enough to respond to changes in circumstances.

5.17 It was stated that the medium and high options go against aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), such as providing homes which meet the needs of our residents. The SCS also says that housing activity should link with education, training and employment but there is no recognition within this report of the warning in the Sherwood Forest Area Housing Strategy that housing growth needs to be balanced with economic growth as a mismatch could cause instability in the housing market.

5.18 People who supported the Base Option also highlighted the following disadvantages of the medium and high options:

- Could put strain on existing infrastructure, e.g. public transport, road networks, health, education and social services.
- Housing would compete with employment land and we could end up with an increased workforce but no places for them to work, resulting in increased unemployment. This could increase crime and fear of crime - driving away potential employers, and triggering a downward social and economic spiral.
- Increased pressure on green infrastructure - with more users and with fewer sites available for conservation / restoration. This could undermine potential for tourism, as well as deterring skilled workers and businesses offering higher quality jobs.
- Reduction in the buffers (e.g. green wedges) could damage community cohesion and local identity (a problem often associated with urban sprawl).
- Negative health impacts could also be expected to arise from the negative environmental and social impacts.

<b>Low Level</b>
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5.19 There were a number of consultees who thought that the Low Option was the most reasonable. Their comments were quite similar to those received in support of the Base Option, in that the main issues were that unoccupied houses should be reused and redeveloped, that we need green spaces, and that brownfield land should be used first.

5.20 It was highlighted that social housing is required, and many people stated that employment regeneration should be the priority as without jobs people cannot purchase new houses. New jobs should be ensured before extra houses are built. One consultee highlighted that because of the recession there are no jobs and no investment, just empty sites around Mansfield.

- 5.21 Another point raised was in relation to the roads and shops being too congested already and that Mansfield is gridlocked by ever increasing traffic.
- 5.22 Further comments were made which highlighted a feeling that there are already too many houses, and that we should let demand catch up with supply and finish projects that have already started. One person (who made comments via the comment card) stated that there is no supporting information to qualify any expected increase in the resident workforce and therefore demand.
- 5.23 One consultee stated how the decision depends on certain circumstances, such as whether the figure refers to social housing. They stated that it is hard to get a council property since they were sold off. It was also stated by another consultee that the Low Option may deter immigrants.

<b>Medium Level</b>
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- 5.24 Comments received by respondents who supported the Medium Option included the point of view that this is a more realistic and deliverable option than the Council's favoured approach and as such would be easier to defend at examination. At 25% higher than past trends, this figure would still allow the Council to pursue its growth agenda, and if adopted as a minimum, higher growth could be accommodated if such demand arises.
- 5.25 A neighbouring authority stated that they lowered their housing target by 25% on the basis that the SNPP which informed the RSS had been revised and average past trends were lower than the RSS requirement. They state that this is a similar situation to Mansfield's as the SNPP forecast suggests a reduction of 26.8% on the current RSS target, and past trends over the last 10 years have been far less than the RSS target.
- 5.26 Comments reflected those above (in relation to the Base Option) which referred to the fact that the dwelling requirement needs to be based on robust evidence. It was recognised that the job growth scenario underpins the favoured option, but states that such projections are based on a number of assumptions about a variety of factors which have a major impact on projection figures. It was pointed out that job growth is not necessarily accompanied by major population growth and highlighted by the fact that between 1998 and 2008, Bolsover District had a jobs growth of 9,100 but a population growth of just 3,750.
- 5.27 Concerns were raised that an unrealistically high target may produce uncertainty in the local housing market and impact adversely on the regeneration of settlements like Shirebrook and priority areas in Mansfield District.

- 5.28 Another respondent stated that the target should relate more closely to forecast demand over the plan period, taking account of affordability, mortgage availability and consumer confidence, in addition to household formation projections, in line with the emerging NPPF policy that requires Local Plans to be informed by objectively assessed development needs.
- 5.29 It was stated that the supply of land needs to be managed effectively to accurately match supply with demand. Affordability issues caused by a constrained land supply need to be balanced with a lack of developer interest (due to low profit levels) caused by an over supply. Comments received emphasised that the release of development land does not necessarily correlate to housing delivery, at least in the short term and recent approved housing developments mean that, whatever target is set, Mansfield's five year land supply is assured for a considerable time. It was suggested by a developer that applying a graded approach in the short term would delay future supply, allowing local demand to catch up. It would also allow a supply in excess of projected household formation levels in the long term, reflecting the District's growth aspirations within realistic and achievable timescales. Although the medium level was supported, this consultee considered that their proposed graded approach, which bases the short term supply target on past trends (low level), would be sound as long as the overall target throughout the plan period matches ONS household formation projections.
- 5.30 There were also many comments received in relation to refurbishing and re-using empty properties, and protecting Greenfield land by exploration of other options such as developing brownfield sites and land that is currently underused first. It was suggested that a bigger picture is required.
- 5.31 One consultee stated that there is always a need for new homes and that the Medium Option would be a good place to start. Other consultees stated that properties are needed for first time buyers, as well as those coming back from the army, but not too many as it ruins the environment. It was also considered that the Medium Option would help reduce waiting lists.
- 5.32 It was stated that the Medium Option would increase the rate of development, and therefore increase population and make Mansfield more appealing for business without using too much land, or becoming too densely populated. It would also control the supply of property better than the high option if demand isn't high.
- 5.33 Other consultees questioned where the jobs for the increased workforce would come from, and another suggested that immigration was a problem and that the UK should withdraw from the EU. Concern was also raised over the cost of this survey.

## High Level

- 5.34 There were many comments in support of the high option, particularly in relation to achieving economic growth and encouraging better quality and higher paid jobs. It was stated that the high level option would adhere to the Government's Planning for Growth strategy as it is based on employment-led and increased labour force projections, as well as allow the development industry the greatest opportunity to increase build rates. It was stated that the high option would help ensure a wide range, choice and variety of housing sites are available for developers to provide the full range of housing types and tenures required by the local population. Although this is reliant on the national economy position improving; it was considered essential that the housing growth policy is in place, as well as any necessary Infrastructure Delivery Plan, when there are signs of sustained economic recovery, to ensure that the Council can sustainably deliver the desired housing completions.
- 5.35 Supporters of the high option were of the opinion that its negative implications, such as higher levels of land release and some of the more challenging sites remaining undeveloped, would be outweighed by the potentially positive implications of economic growth, employment growth and regeneration of the town, which should encourage young/local people to buy houses and stay in the area. It was also stated that this option could allow the Council to take a more relaxed approach on more challenging sites as the Greenfield site allocations should be better placed to viably meet obligations, such as the provision of affordable housing.
- 5.36 Comments received suggested that this level of housing is needed to ensure enough housing for increases in population and workforce levels, and it was stated that the alternative (to the high option) would be to contribute to Mansfield's decline; although one consultee did highlight that Greenfield use should be limited. A number of consultees highlighted that the High Option is needed to reduce the Council housing waiting list and reduce homelessness.
- 5.37 As such there were concerns raised that Options A to C all represent a reduction of Mansfield's housing target from that in the EMRP, despite the recognised need to plan for more jobs and greater economic prosperity. Comments made stated that there is sound economic justification for the high option, particularly as the figure is not substantially different to the EMRP figure which went through an examination and was found to be sound. The Core Strategy evidence base will have already been geared towards the EMRP figure and this should not be ignored.
- 5.38 Despite supporting the high option, one consultee stated that emphasis should be given to the fact that the plan is for 20 years and fluctuations in the housing market should be expected. This view was reflected in another suggestion that it would be more appropriate to focus on the period to 2022

and review the situation then, as the long-term future is difficult to predict. Any under delivery up to that point would mean there is no realistic possibility catching up by 2031.

- 5.39 There was recognition that the high target would emphasise the need for phasing policies to ensure that the most sustainable sites do not go undeveloped, but that a balanced approach is needed as the required annual rate of development could be stifled if available and achievable sites are held back by more difficult, but more sustainably located sites. It was suggested that the Council take a flexible approach to encourage development of difficult sites in its site allocations DPD and/or contemplate a quota approach within a policy which seeks to secure development of 'difficult' sites at a pro-rata rate with Greenfield sites.
- 5.40 Other suggested actions to help ensure such an increase in completions is to take place and be sustained in the period 2012 to 2031 included the encouragement of development, not just control of it, with Parish Councils, the community, the County Council and the public utility companies taking more of a responsive, pro active and constructive role. It was stated that the system needs to function transparently and efficiently for development to take place at the rate set out in the Core Strategy.
- 5.41 It was also pointed out that development contributions towards Community Infrastructure should be related to the additional pressures on those services and not be seen as a convenient way of financing improvements in the base line position, and that affordable housing policies need to be reasonable and transparent. The viability of development is a highly relevant planning consideration, and delays in the negotiation and signing of S 106 agreements are a significant cost to developers which could lead to them concentrating their efforts on other Districts.
- 5.42 One consultee welcomed the work carried out in 2009 by Experian which shows that the economic performance of Mansfield is often underestimated. It was noted that one of the assumptions regarding housing allocations for Milton Keynes / South Midlands in the Regional Plan no longer holds good. They were also not convinced about some of the prescriptions offered in the report such as claiming proximity to Birmingham and Manchester as a locational advantage for Mansfield.
- 5.43 Comments were also made regarding the data contained in the report. It was suggested that Table 2.2 was out of date as the housing supply figures were based on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 and excludes dwellings given planning permission since this date, including 1,700 dwellings on the Lindhurst site which have a resolution to grant from the Council.
- 5.44 The following were given as reasons why the other options should not be selected:
- The balance of houses to be allocated would be minimal for both Option A and B. This severely limits the growth potential for Mansfield and doesn't

meet economic aspirations of the Council. A more positive approach to regeneration sites is needed than simply starving the alternative site supply. Options also result in a declining resident labour force which does not support the long term regeneration of Mansfield and is highly inconsistent with the Council's clear intention to encourage growth and job creation.

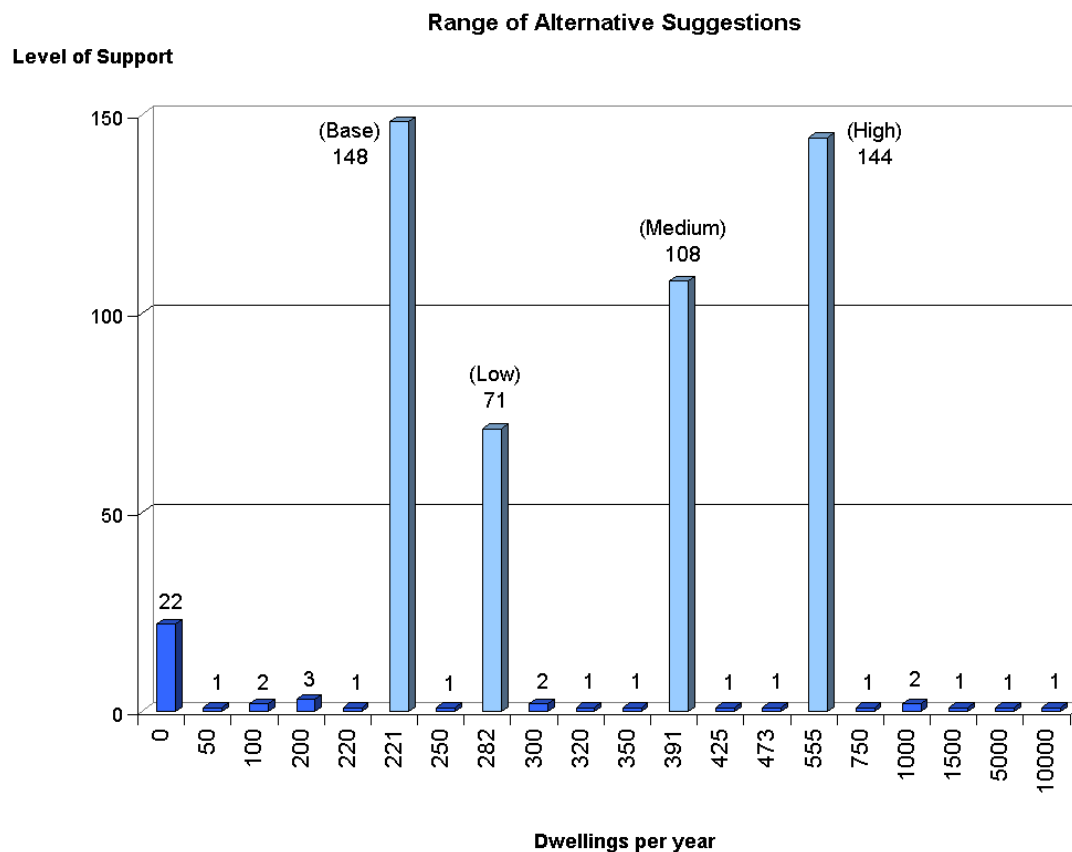
- Option C maintains the labour force at 2008 levels and is insufficient to deliver the economic aspirations of the District Council. The SCS states that dwelling and employment growth will provide the basis for economic growth and improved quality of life for local people but this option does not secure any forecast growth in the labour force. It maintains the status quo rather than being in line with the Governments' growth agenda.

5.45 In addition to the above comments, a number of sites / areas which could help meet the high dwelling requirement were also put forward, in addition to the formal Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process. It was also stated that the improvement of Market Warsop town centre should be a key priority as its general neglect needs addressing urgently, and another consultee also highlighted that the future of Market Warsop's High Street should be preserved. Berry Hill was also suggested as an area for development by one consultee.

5.46 It was also suggested that Mansfield District may be in a position to benefit from the 'Balanced Migration' approach to housing provision currently 'preferred' by the Greater Nottingham Authorities. This negative approach to housing provision and constraint of sites could potentially lead to an increased demand for sites in the Mansfield area.

<b>Alternative Suggestions</b>
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5.47 The following chart shows the range of alternative dwelling targets which were submitted during the consultation period, compared against the amount of support for each option. Not all respondents who suggested alternatives gave a figure. Some suggested alternative approaches to the delivery of the target. Others suggested both "minimal" levels and "as many as possible" / "555 as a minimum". The alternative approaches are detailed below.



5.48 The reasons (where given) for each suggestion are shown below:

Alternative Targets Suggested	Summary of Justification / Comments
<b>0 – 220 (per year)</b> (Lower than the Base Option)	<p>There was a lot of concern relating to the amount of existing empty / unfit properties which should be utilised / refurbished before building new houses. It was suggested that these could provide affordable homes for first time buyers, as well as any refurbished Council housing being able to reduce waiting lists and generate income. It was suggested that social housing tenants should be moved into smaller homes as their needs change to free up family homes.</p> <p>Unfinished housing developments – due to affordability of the new houses - were also mentioned. It was felt that there is sufficient housing already and that the projected demand is unproven as based on an over optimistic forecast of an increased workforce, as well as the perception that the Council would be selling off land for profit, rather than because of need. Affordability of existing houses was also raised as an issue, which can increase the waiting lists for social housing.</p> <p>There were many comments in relation to using brownfield sites, such as the General Hospital and the Brewery, first and</p>



	<p>protecting Greenfield sites (often referred to as greenbelt), such as the Lindhurst site and essential recreation grounds. The importance of green spaces for relaxing, people's wellbeing, exercising, dog walking and wildlife was emphasised.</p> <p>There were also concerns over the workforce, and that there are already too many homes being built but no new jobs created. There was concern that new properties would end up as buy-to-let properties rented out to migrant workers. In terms of employment, it was suggested that as there are many vacant shops and businesses, the council's priority should be to get the town centre back on its feet before attracting more business to the town.</p> <p>Infrastructure was another issue raised by those who suggested a figure which was lower than the Base Option. People stated that the local infrastructure, especially the A60, cannot cope with more residents. It was suggested that MDC and NCC should work on a plan for new roads, better use of existing roads and road widening. Community infrastructure, such as school places, was also raised. It was stated that many services are already oversubscribed and development will put further strain on them without an increase in council tax.</p> <p>It was stated that Mansfield is overpopulated due to social issues such as immigration and people having large families. These were stated as reasons why we should adopt a figure lower than the Base Option. Other social issues such as the fact that most young people will move out of Mansfield when they get older were also raised. One consultee suggested zero as they don't 'like' people.</p> <p>Another point raised was that the presentation (at Citizen's Panel meeting of the 26th Jan) suggested to go for the high option.</p>
<b>250 (per year)</b> (Between the Base and Low Options)	This consultee suggested the reuse of old shops in the town centre rather than using green land.
<b>300 – 350 (per year)</b> (Between the Low and Medium Options)	<p>Comments in support of a figure between the Low and Medium options included recognition that we need to build for the future but that this should be on brownfield land in need of improvement rather than greenfield land.</p> <p>It was also raised that employers need to come into the area before a higher amount of houses can be built. If we build 555 a year now the houses will stand empty for the next 2-3</p>

	<p>years.</p> <p>One consultee stated that they have already suggested the figure of 350 to the Mayor.</p>
<p><b>425 – 473</b> <b>(per year)</b> (Between the Medium and High Options)</p>	<p>The consultee who suggested 425 dwellings a year stated that the job market is full unless new manufacturing is brought into the area. They also said that low cost homes for young people are needed or they will leave.</p> <p>473 dwellings a year was suggested as it is the mid point between the medium and high levels to overcome the shortfall indicated of going for the medium level. However the consultee would be disappointed to see the release of more land for development.</p>
<p><b>750 – 10,000</b> <b>(per year)</b> (Above the High Level)</p>	<p>Comments from consultees who suggested a figure above the High Option included the aspiration to apply for 'City' status as this would boost Mansfield as an upwardly moving centre for living and working and help to encourage business and investment to the area. It would also significantly increase the population of the area, and increase revenue which can be spent on better infrastructure to cope with the increased demand.</p> <p>It was also stated that we would be able to house the present back log and the children they will produce there could still be 1,000 on the waiting list in 10 years time. It was also stated that housing is needed for old age pensioners.</p>

- 5.49 As mentioned above, not all respondents who suggested alternatives gave a figure. The suggested alternative approaches to the delivery of the target were:

<b>Alternative Approaches Suggested</b>	<b>Summary of Justification / Comments</b>
Graded / phased approach	This approach was suggested due to concerns that none of the options are appropriate. It was stated that excessive development will bring down residential property values significantly, at a time when there is almost no demand for development in Mansfield, and will also mean that the Council will have to play an unsustainable catch up in numbers in later years. It was considered that the only viable option would be a graded or phased year on year increase in numbers over the period, starting relatively low and growing to a larger but still practical number over the period.
Minimum of 555 a year / As many as	It was stated that this figure is justified on the basis of Mansfield's failure to recover from the mining industry decline, and its 'bottom 10%' economic performance.

possible	Intervention is needed as an ageing population will not generate the necessary wealth and opportunities to improve. Bold steps are required for future prosperity and for jobs and housing to be available for young people. The first 'bold step' is the acceptance of a high housing target above 11,100.
No figure given / Minimal	It was stated that allowing more new housing estates to be built, even though it can help provide 'social' housing is incomprehensible. Other ways to provide 'social' housing such as the redevelopment of run down areas should be looked at. There are many unfinished developments as no one is buying the houses, which creates a bad environment for residents. It was suggested that the Council thinks carefully about the quantity of housing as well as the position of the developments and their effect on estates already in development before they go agreeing to the building of more housing.

### **Officer's response**

- 5.50 Taking account of all the comments made in relation to a specific option or alternative figure, Officer's respond as follows:
- 5.51 In relation to the significant concerns raised over the amount of empty properties within the district that could be utilised, Planning Officer's have liaised with Officer's from the Housing department in order to investigate this further. The concerns raised through the consultation revolved around the view that long-term void properties could meet a proportion of the requirement and therefore reduce the amount of Greenfield land take-up.
- 5.52 Following discussions with Housing Officers, in relation to both Council owned and privately owned properties, it is considered that long term vacant properties (or 'voids') do not have a significant impact on the dwelling requirement. This is because, other than properties due for demolition, there are very few unfit Council properties that require refurbishment (currently under 10). In addition to this, the Council has a dedicated Officer who helps private owners of empty housing to either find tenants, or progress with the sale of property. This is done in an attempt to reduce the Council's costs in relation to dealing with anti-social behaviour linked to empty properties and to generate Council Tax revenue when a house is re-occupied. However as the properties are privately owned, unless the properties are in such a poor state of repair that they require some form of enforcement action being taken, their occupancy can only be 'encouraged' rather than enforced. Statistics indicate that while the Council's service is successful in negotiating the occupancy of many long-term voids, for each that is re-let or sold there will often be another property that is vacated. Therefore it is considered likely that this will continue throughout the plan period and the number of privately owned empty properties will be fairly consistent. As such, Officers are of the opinion that it is unnecessary to make an allowance for the

refurbishment of Council and privately owned housing within the long-term dwelling requirement.

- 5.53 As long-term voids are generally less expensive to purchase than new homes, encouraging existing owners to sell their unused properties is considered to be a positive method of ensuring there are affordable properties available to first time buyers.
- 5.54 In order to take account of unfit houses which are due for demolition, such as those at Pleasley Hill, we propose to change our monitoring processes which currently count all demolitions as losses. These changes would allow any demolished properties which were not providing a 'home' at the start of the plan period to be counted as 'net new dwellings' when rebuilt (rather than gross), and will therefore help meet the dwelling requirement.
- 5.55 It should be noted that taking account of the dwellings due for demolition does not impact directly on the initial dwelling target, but will mean that the 'residual requirement' (i.e. the initial dwelling target minus the supply) is reduced and mean that less Greenfield land is required for allocation.
- 5.56 Many people raised concerns in relation to ensuring that previously developed or 'Brownfield' land is used first. Whilst this is important, it is more an issue of where development should take place, rather than how much development is required, although it is recognised that the higher the target, the more pressure will be put on Greenfield sites. It is accepted that a lower target would limit the amount of Greenfield land required and be most beneficial to health indicators in relation to both environmental and social impacts. There was a view that the Council would be selling off land for profit, however much of the land in question is in private ownership.
- 5.57 Phasing the release of land either through Core Strategy policies or through the re-introduction of a Greenfield moratorium is an issue that can be further investigated as ways in which to ensure the most appropriate sites are delivered first. The quota approach which was suggested is considered to be an interesting idea to ensure that the development of difficult brownfield sites comes forward but does not stifle other schemes, and is also something that will be investigated as part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report.
- 5.58 In relation to the viewpoint that there are enough houses already (both those that aren't selling, and those which are not yet complete), the forecasting work underpinning the options provides an evidence base which highlights that this is not the case. The Base Option (lowest figure) was based on scenarios which concentrated on providing for the changing dwelling needs of just the current population of the District over the next 20 years and found that an average of 221 dwellings a year would be required. There were a few comments which supported the idea of just providing for the current population due to immigration issues. It should be noted that these scenarios could never be enforced; but were provided in order to give the minimum level of development that would be acceptable to meet the needs of the District.

- 5.59 It should be noted that the dwelling target relates to the overall amount of dwellings that are required to be built over the next 20 years. There were many references made to the need to reduce the Council waiting lists but the majority of dwellings will be built by private developers, despite the fact that the Council have recently started building new social housing again after many years. There was also a view that social housing tenants should be moved into smaller houses as their needs change. This would be a wider Council decision and is not within the remit of the planning system.
- 5.60 In response to comments received which stated that the housing supply figures were out of date as based on the position as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, the dwelling figures provided in previous reports have been partially updated\* to give a more transparent indication of the amount of additional land that would require allocating. This update reflects the position on a number of significant sites, namely Lindhurst, Penniment Farm, and land at Clipstone Road Forest Town. Whilst 'Lindhurst' and Penniment Farm do not technically have a planning permission, (as S106 agreements to date remain unsigned), these sites will clearly be significant, in terms of calculating future requirements for housing allocations.

*\*A full update on the supply position will be provided on production of the 2012 Housing Monitoring Report due to be published around July 2012.*

Option	Total dwelling requirement 2011-2031	Dwellings per year	Indication of supply from planning permissions and significant sites with S106 agreements to be signed	Additional dwellings to be found	Hectares of additional land which would need to be found for housing**
Base	<b>4413</b>	221	(2358 + 2593) <b>4951</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Low	<b>5643</b>	282	(2358 + 2593) <b>4951</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>23</b>
Medium	<b>7828</b>	391	(2358 + 2593) <b>4951</b>	<b>2877</b>	<b>96</b>
High	<b>11100</b>	555	(2358 + 2593) <b>4951</b>	<b>6149</b>	<b>205</b>

*\*\* This is based on 30 dwellings per hectare and is predominantly likely to be Greenfield sites outside of existing urban areas*

- 5.61 It should be noted that the number of additional dwellings to be found does not represent the number of new houses that could be built. For example while the above table indicates that zero additional dwellings would need to be found (and therefore no allocations needed) if the base option were adopted, there is already an existing supply for an additional 4,951 dwellings that are still likely to be constructed under existing permissions and contribute to the economic aspirations of the Council.
- 5.62 In response to the comments which raised the point that additional housing does not, in itself, lead to more jobs, and that unemployment would actually increase if a high housing target is set and the jobs fail to follow, Officers recognise that new dwellings do not guarantee jobs. Should the housing be provided and the employment fail to be delivered, continuation of high dwelling rates could be counterproductive to the aims of increasing

employment opportunities. Officers therefore consider that any house building target should be closely linked to the economic situation and adjusted where appropriate.

- 5.63 Many people stated that the employment growth should be delivered before the housing, especially as there is currently a shortage of jobs; however this is not just a problem in Mansfield. Most of the UK is suffering from high unemployment, so it is important that Mansfield is in a good position to entice new employers to locate their businesses in the District once the economic situation improves. The housing target is just one element of this, and the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report will demonstrate how the Council intends to deal with employment development through the LDF process, in balance with other forms of development, and with the protection of the environment / green infrastructure. The Preferred Options Report will also address how issues relating to the provision of affordable housing, mix of housing, good design, and conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment, amongst other matters, will be dealt with through the LDF, meeting the aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).
- 5.64 The utilisation of empty shops for homes was raised by a number of people. Town Centre living is an important issue which will be addressed within the Preferred Options Report, however there is a need to get the balance right between shops and homes and not allow primary shopping areas to become too infiltrated by non-retail uses. It may be more appropriate to make use of upper floors of shops, provided access arrangements are adequate.
- 5.65 The impact of the target upon infrastructure was another issue that was raised by a lot of people during the consultation. Officers are currently working towards commissioning a Transport Assessment (TA) to form part of the evidence base to the Core Strategy. The TA will look at the impact of whichever target is selected and inform the Council of what road and junction improvements would be required as a result, above any existing maintenance / improvement plans. In addition to this, an Infrastructure Study is also being worked on and will look at the current plans of service providers such as utility companies, emergency services, health providers, telephone and broadband companies etc, in order to identify what additional growth will be required in order to accommodate the adopted level of housing development. This will then inform our Infrastructure Delivery Plan which sets out how the Core Strategy will be delivered, and transparently shows what developer contributions will be required.
- 5.66 It was suggested that bodies such as Parish Council's and utility companies should have more of a role in the development of the district, as well as the community. As stated previously Officers are currently working with utility companies to ensure they are aware of the Council's development plans. The Council already attempts to involve the Parish Council and members of the public in its plans through consultation events, however the Localism Act strengthens this role by enabling them to write their own Neighbourhood Plans, and create Neighbourhood Development Orders.

- 5.67 In response to concerns raised over the cost of the survey, the Council did its best to keep costs to a minimum, this included the distribution of option cards by Councillors instead of by post, and the use of online consultation tools. All presentations were carried out in an attempt to get the information to as many people as possible and were done so in an unbiased manner to allow people to make up their own minds about which option to support.
- 5.68 The promotion of specific sites will be considered through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process, which will inform the Site Specifics and Allocations document that will be produced after the Core Strategy. Market Warsop's High Street is an area that is likely to be covered by policies within both the Core Strategy and the Site Specifics and Allocations document.
- 5.69 Comments received which stated that the High Option most reflected the EMRP target are correct, however the Council are required to revisit the requirement due to the imminent revocation of the EMRP. Officers are well aware that any new target will need to be fully justified and must remain confident that any figure to be contained within the Core Strategy is deliverable over the plan period. Evidence base studies which are informed by the housing target (such as those mentioned above) have been programmed in order to incorporate the adopted target. Therefore any modelling work will not be carried out until the housing target is agreed.
- 5.70 In response to a comment regarding how changing housing targets would effect the evidence base report by Experian, this report focuses on how existing economic sectors currently inter-relate and predicts what impact this will have on jobs through their future growth and 'buying power' across the East Midlands region. Generally, the EMRP housing requirements made up a small 'consumer' element to the modelling exercise and as such housing requirement changes would only have a small impact, if at all. The report considers that Mansfield's location within the centre of the UK is an advantage as it is in close proximity to larger conurbations such as Nottingham, Derby, Birmingham and Manchester; however it is accepted that the further away the city, the more tenuous the link is.
- 5.71 Although, as stated, the population forecasting work which underpins the options (and was referred to in the Consultation document) can be considered as estimation and therefore not guaranteed, it is the standard method of predicting the required amount of housing over a long period. The work carried out by Edge Analytics Ltd was commissioned on behalf of District Council's across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire in order to ensure a common approach, and the forecasts were based on the most up to date information available at the time. Officers monitor the delivery of housing on an annual basis and therefore, through this work, are able to identify any under or over supply each year. This can be used to justify an adjustment of the dwelling requirement figure if considered necessary, or if sites are phased it can be used to trigger the start of each phase. This would avoid the build up of an unsustainable carry over (which can lead to rising costs) if there are periods of under-supply.



- 5.72 As was pointed out during the consultation, whichever target is adopted needs to be deliverable in order for the Core Strategy to be classed as 'sound' by an Inspector during an Examination in Public. Whilst there was a lot of support for the High Option, and even higher alternative suggestions, many consultees (including a number of developers, representatives of the business community and adjoining Local Planning Authorities) were concerned over its deliverability and stated that setting an unrealistic target could be counterproductive to growth aspirations by stagnating the market further, as well as impacting adversely on regeneration schemes. As such there needs to be very careful consideration about the best way to balance the Council's growth agenda with a deliverable target. Past completion rates indicate that house building completions have rarely exceeded 350 dwellings per year even in strong economic climates, with the average being 300 per year for the last 20 years. Setting an optimistic housing figure which has a reasonable chance of being delivered is therefore considered essential.
- 5.73 The suggestion of phasing the release of land to reflect build rates is considered to be a valuable contribution from consultees. There are numerous ways in which this can be implemented and while phasing can be considered a management tool in the delivery of any figure rather than something that informs the figure itself, the issue of phasing and setting a target are closely related. An incremental increase in land release to reflect build rates can be seen as a responsive and flexible step which marries aspiration with reality, and balances supply with demand. This would still allow for a wide selection of housing sites, but would put the emphasis on the development industry to complete sites in order to trigger a higher rolling 5 year supply target. Such a stepped (or graded) approach would mean that a number of Greenfield sites would only be developed if it was demonstrated that there is a demand.
- 5.74 In terms of the other dwelling requirement targets which were suggested, it is not considered that those lower than the Base Option, and those above the High Option would be 'sound' at an Examination in Public. As discussed above, our evidence base highlights that the minimum number of new homes required is the Base Level. In addition, there are concerns over the deliverability of the High Option, therefore a figure any higher than this would raise greater concerns.
- 5.75 In addition to supporting an option or suggesting an alternative, consultees were also able to make comments on the report itself through the Council's online consultation portal, or by letter / email / comment cards. These are summarised, per section, below:

## General Comments

5.76 There were a number of general comments made. Many of these comments thanked the Council for the opportunity to get involved and registered interest in being kept informed of the progress of the LDF. One person hoped that making comments wasn't a waste of time. The following additional comments / points were made:

- Many consultees mentioned that existing empty properties should be refurbished and re-used.
- More family-sized homes and homes suitable for first time buyers are needed. Properties should be sustainably constructed, but they shouldn't be too small.
- Appropriate evidence should be available with regard to the protection / provision of open space, and a sports facilities strategy is needed to ensure that appropriate contributions which reflect the impact of the development on existing facilities / creation of demand for new facilities can be sought. Concern was raised that children's play areas will be lost, leaving them with nowhere to play.
- Identification of individual sites should avoid harming the historic environment and specific heritage assets and their settings.
- As the effective operation of our towns is dependent upon the network of services that protect us from flooding, deal with waste and sewerage, and provide clean water, robust evidence that demonstrates that the environmental infrastructure has capacity to accommodate the levels of future housing provision and growth without causing harm is important. Wastewater treatment capacity has been identified as a potential constraint to growth and discussions with Severn Trent Water Ltd have been initiated.
- It is important that we protect the existing green space and incorporate new, strategically planned, green infrastructure as part of development to ensure no net loss of biodiversity. An assessment of environmental capacity should underpin strategic development decisions. Significant development puts increased pressure on the natural environment but if new development is carefully planned, designed, developed and managed it is possible to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of our present and future communities.
- More emphasis should be given to the positive contribution of multi-user trails, and the rights of way network, in terms of sustainable travel and promoting good health and wellbeing, and developer contributions for appropriate green infrastructure should be maximised wherever possible.

- A higher density target could help reduce the amount of Greenfield land released. The SHLAA should be considered to determine whether differing densities should be promoted.
- It was stated that the rationale behind the favoured option needs more justification if adopted as a 'preferred' option. Implications upon adjoining authorities and the wider context are not explored and the 'duty to co-operate' is not demonstrated. It would be worthwhile referring to the RSS housing target, as the evidence, in particular the sub-regional context, is something that the Council should have regard to.
- It was mentioned that the consultation document should have noted that MDC has received 398 planning applications since 1/4/2011 and had an estimated 300 existing site applications.
- It was also stated that the evidence base, including the Sustainability Appraisal, provides insufficient emphasis on planning for greater resilience in the face of peak oil and climate change. Anticipating climate change is central to planning policy, (PPSI Supplement on Climate Change). The high and medium targets risk running contrary to national Government policy. It should be noted that with greater housing numbers come greater demands on the finite carrying capacity of the District. Alongside increase in housing numbers, plans should be promoted to deliver increases in local food production and protection from flood risk. Currently the medium and high are likely to diminish resilience, and increase flood risk.
- Full requirements for market and affordable housing in the housing market area need to be met. The RSS incorporated an adjustment to the (then) housing trend projections plus 11.9%. A simple updating of the RSS figure (using the commissioned projections) would give a housing provision of around 435 dpa.
- One consultee stated that the rationale behind the high option approach seems sensible but depends on the market and an improvement in the economy, therefore a medium option approach, based on recent levels of house building would be more realistic, given current market conditions.
- Another consultee stated that the high option would be well in excess of the Government's trend based population projection requirement of 388 dpa for the District. It would provide sufficient housing to meet the aspirations for employment growth within the District; with few implications for adjoining districts to help meet the trend-based housing requirements.
- It was highlighted that location of development is the key factor when assessing likely significant transport impacts. Development should be restricted to suitable locations that are already well served by good bus, cycling and walking networks or can be adapted. A district-wide transport study is needed to establish existing highway infrastructure capacity. Specific concern was raised in relation to the A60 and MARR as well as the impact of increasing traffic upon children's health.

- It was stated that whatever option is chosen there will be elements of infrastructure that will need to be provided through developer contributions, possibly through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), however it is by no means certain that the true cost of these could be fully covered by developer contributions raised from that development.
- A suggestion to abolish the right to buy, reclaim all ex-council property from speculative landlords, and secure all empty homes was made. Concern was raised by another consultee that council tax payers' money would be spent on new Council homes when the old stock has been sold off or boarded up and left derelict.
- Other comments included the opinions that new houses are built just because they look good and it is an easy option, and that people will leave Mansfield for other countries / places in the UK. One person also stated that they were too old. There were also some criticisms of the process which stated that the Council will do what they want, whatever people say, and one person (who commented via a card) questioned how they could choose when there are no facts about housing needs in the area. They asked whether the document is legal when no facts or figures were available.

### **Officer's response**

- 5.77 The Council values each comment made and considers that this has been a worthwhile exercise to obtain as many views on this important issue as possible, before deciding on the correct approach. Many of the general comments made are reflective of those made by people who also supported a particular option and have been addressed above.
- 5.78 Many of the other issues raised, such as sustainable construction, density, impact upon the historic environment, sports facilities, green spaces, green infrastructure, resilience to climate change and environmental capacity will be addressed within the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report, which will be the next stage in the plan preparation process once the dwelling requirement is agreed.
- 5.79 It was stated that the 'duty to co-operate' and the implications upon adjoining authorities had not been explored, however the forecasting work had been commissioned by District Council's from both Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and Mansfield's growth aspirations are well known to adjoining authorities. Despite taking account of comments of adjoining authorities, this is the first consultation on the issue therefore more feedback and involvement can take place during the preparation of the Preferred Options Report.
- 5.80 The suggestion to abolish right to buy is an issue which is outside the remit of the planning system and would need to be a central government policy decision. Whilst reclaiming all ex-Council property bought by speculative landlords may be possible through the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders,

this would be an extremely costly and lengthy exercise for the Council to undertake, and is therefore unlikely to be viable. Should Councillors wish to have this investigated, that is for them to decide, however it would require a cross-department approach as this is not purely a planning issue. As discussed above, the Council does have a dedicated officer who concentrates on trying to get vacant private stock (which would include ex-Council properties) back into use.

- 5.81 New houses are provided to cater for the projected population growth and not because it is the 'easy option', as suggested. Whilst there a number of advantages associated with new properties, such as them being more energy efficient, ways of utilising existing stock is will be considered in order to limit unnecessary development of new homes, particularly on greenfield land.

## **Section 1 – Introduction**

- 5.82 Comments made in respect of the introduction to the Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement Report welcomed the need to set a clear housing target and also suggested that the consultation should have been made available at the 'Comment on it' section of the Council's web site.

### **Officer's response**

- 5.83 These comments are noted. Although the consultation documents didn't appear on the Council's 'Comment on it' web page, it was available at [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement) (which was publicised) and the Council's homepage. We will take this comment on board and add Planning Policy consultations to this page in the future.

## **Section 2 – Setting a Long-term Dwelling Requirement**

- 5.84 This section set out the context for setting a new dwelling requirement, and provided information on the evidence base and forecasting work that was used to underpin the options put forward for consultation purposes. It also gave information on the possible implications of each option, before stating how the chosen figure will be used to inform a number of policies within the 'Core Strategy', as well as future land allocations in a 'Site Specific and Allocations' document.
- 5.85 Comments received generally supported the job growth approach however concerns were raised that economic growth will not be achieved unless the jobs are created and unemployment is reduced. It was stated that the target should provide for the population required for Mansfield to have a real prospect of future economic growth to support and enhance its status as a Major Sub Regional Centre for business and shopping. It was also recognised

that high quality housing is important for attracting new business into Mansfield, not just the standard of employees, and that both brownfield and greenfield sites should be considered.

- 5.86 Concerns were raised regarding the figures used for the forecasting work as they do not take account of the current recession. It was suggested that the projections should be regularly reviewed to overcome this. One consultee also stated that this should not be seen as an indicator that the high levels of growth cannot be achieved
- 5.87 One comment referred to the fact that this is a good opportunity to renew the evidence base for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation as there is no policy direction post 2012 due to the imminent revocation of the EMRP.

### **Officer's response**

- 5.88 The comments are noted and where consultees have also chosen a preferred option as part of the consultation this has been reflected in the results at paragraph 5.3 above.
- 5.89 It is accepted that the figures used for the forecasting work are based on 2001 Census data and subsequent estimates. However this was the best information available at the time. Should more up-to-date information, when released, be significantly different to the estimates there may be a case to review the forecasts in the future.
- 5.90 Reviewing the requirement for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation will be an important piece of evidence for the 'Site Specific and Allocations' document. We will endeavour to work with adjoining authorities to ensure the need is met across the Housing Market Area.

<h3><b>Section 3 – The Council's Favoured Approach</b></h3>
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- 5.91 This section of the report set out the process that was taken in order for the Council to select a favoured approach for consultation purposes. It also provided a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) outcomes (more details in the appendices – see below), before stating that the High level was the Council's favoured approach for consultation purposes.
- 5.92 Comments made regarding the process included criticism that the consultation should have taken place before the Council made a recommendation, as this could influence public opinion. Another comment implied that the consultation is just paying 'lip service' to the requirements.
- 5.93 Another point was made which stated that the targets, especially the high level, are inappropriate in this financial climate. Until house prices begin to

rise, developers are unlikely to commit themselves to building houses that may remain empty. Unmet housing targets will create a roll-over each year, and lead to a rise in land / material / labour costs; pricing these houses out of the reach of local first time buyers.

- 5.94 In relation to the summary of the Sustainability Appraisal undertaken, there were concerns raised that the appraisal was not fully explained, with some inconsistent conclusions, such as there being no differences reported between the provision of the lowest and highest level of housing, in achieving the objective to meet the housing needs of the District. It was suggested that necessary mitigation measures need to be made more explicit if the favoured option is taken forward, and that a more complete report of the SA should be provided to support the formal consultation on any preferred option.
- 5.95 There were further comments made, one of which disagreed that a lack of housing availability limits employment in the area, stating that Mansfield's good transport links reduce the need to build houses to attract a workforce to then attract new businesses. It was stated that as Mansfield does not have full employment there is a workforce already. Any employer relocating / creating a new business would need to train new employees or bring in skilled workers from outside of the area in any case.
- 5.96 Other comments raised included the opinion that destroying greenfield land, which plays an important part in cooling Mansfield's climate, and act as a soak away during heavy / prolonged rainfall - preventing flooding, will not attract high earners but will result in the exodus of residents who have the choice, and make the situation much worse. Another comment stated that developing on the existing 'green wedges' between settlements could put off investors or those relocating to the area for work.
- 5.97 There was also disagreement that 'farmland has limited recreational benefits' as this assumes that its off limits to the public and also under estimates both the health and wellbeing benefits to communities. Arable land may also be of ecological importance, depending upon locality in relation to SSSI etc. As such Phase I ecological surveys need to be completed before consideration for development. Any loss of habitat should be avoided and all SSSI and Local Wildlife Sites should be protected from development and potential negative impacts of nearby developments.
- 5.98 There were also a lot of comments regarding the summary of the Habitats Regulation Assessment. These included that the HRA process appears to have been done consistently, and highlighted concerns associated with higher levels of housing, as well as those which relate more to the location of development.
- 5.99 There was agreement that development in the Warsop / Meden Vale area would have the most impact upon the nearby Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserve (NNR) and a possible future Sherwood Special Protection Area (SPA).



- 5.100 It was stated that increased recreational activity will not only affect bird species but will harm footpaths, car parks, bridges / stiles etc. Dog fouling and litter will also impact upon ecology of the area. It was stated that creating new public green open space within new developments to mitigate the impacts of recreation on sensitive sites won't work as Sherwood Pines / Major Oak are major visitor attractions acting as honey pots.
- 5.101 There is also little scope for increasing lowland heath habitat (important for Nightjar and Woodlark) in Mansfield district, therefore few opportunities to mitigate the loss of a site due to development.
- 5.102 It was emphasised that as much of the SAC, SSSI's and possible future SPA are located outside of the Mansfield District boundary, neighbouring Councils, especially those with ecologically important sites close to proposed development, should be consulted before permission is granted.
- 5.103 There was concern raised over the delivery of the target in the context of the possibility that an SPA (or pSPA) could be declared during the plan period. It was stated that if sites with planning permission don't come forward it (i.e. have permission but have not been built) could block further proposals for more realistic developments as the required appropriate assessment must judge impact in combination with the hypothetical impact of all of those developments that were previously permitted - even if this is unlikely due to viability etc. In such circumstances the high and medium options are ineffective and counter-productive.
- 5.104 There were a number of suggestions made, including:
- that developer contributions towards mitigation measures are paid to landowners / managers to ensure monies are spent on the correct land;
  - that new developments include green open public spaces to avoid use of vulnerable sites;
  - that money is allocated for improvements to LNRs which regularly score above more formal parks in satisfaction surveys;
  - that LNRs and Local Wildlife Sites (known as SINC's in Nottinghamshire) are treated the same as SSSI's to ensure that developments do not cause the loss of any of this land;
  - that specific reference is made to protected species (under both British and European law) as their presence is a material planning consideration (PPS9); and
  - the impact of all development upon the possible future SPA will need to be considered.
- 5.105 Comments received in relation to the favoured approach include that it needs to be strongly established and justified. It was also raised that jobs

cannot be guaranteed for the resident workforce as it is illegal under EU law to reserve a percentage of jobs for local residents.

- 5.106 Concern was also highlighted regarding the weight given to the economic benefits of a high target, stating that the environment of the district is being compromised on a growth agenda that has little supporting evidence. If the promised 'economic growth and investment isn't forthcoming it will result in a degraded environment for the future. Little of the RSS / PPSI policies regarding protecting and enhancing the environment are included in this document.
- 5.107 There was also a comment in support of the preferred approach stating that greater priority needs to be given to economic growth.

#### **Officer's response**

- 5.108 Again many comments raised issues that have already been addressed above, however any 'new' issues are considered below:
- 5.109 The reason a favoured approach was selected for consultation purposes was in order for the Council to gauge the level of support or concern over what was considered to be the best approach at the time, in order to ensure that any concerns were address prior to a figure being included within the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report. An agreed figure was also needed to inform further evidence base studies, as discussed above.
- 5.110 Comments made in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) summary stated that the process was not clear, however a brief explanation and a link to a fuller explanation (within the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report) was given within the introduction.
- 5.111 It was stated that there were inconsistencies within the SA conclusions and an example given. Officers considered that all options positively contributed to meeting the housing needs of the district when assessed against the decision making criteria, on the basis that the forecasting work told us that the Base Option would be the minimum level required to cater for the population of Mansfield over the plan period. It is important to note that the SA is not intended to compare options to one another, but to assess each option on its merits / faults. In addition it was made clear within the appraisal that the higher options would allow affordable housing to come forward at a higher rate, but that it was reliant on other policies within the Core Strategy.
- 5.112 It is noted that mitigation measures could be made more explicit, and this will be taken account of in the SA Progress Report which will accompany the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report.
- 5.113 It is agreed that Mansfield has good transport links to other conurbations, but this does not reduce the need to increase in the resident workforce in order to attract higher quality job opportunities. It would be unsustainable to become a commuter town that relies on other areas for employment. There

may be a workforce in Mansfield already, however the population is ageing, therefore the workforce is gradually reducing in size and Mansfield statistically has low levels of educational attainment. The area is therefore less attractive for an employer when they could locate in Nottingham or Sheffield, which both have a constant supply of graduates. Increasing house building rates, coupled with ensuring a good mix of housing types is considered one method of keeping Mansfield's young qualified adults within the district, and addressing this problem. This obviously needs to be balanced with protecting the environment, for all the reasons given by consultees, in order to ensure the area is attractive for people to want to live here.

- 5.114 All sites proposed through the SHLAA process have been initially screened in terms of their ecological importance. Further work will be carried out when the Site Specifics and Allocations document is being prepared to ensure that the development of sites with ecological value is avoided wherever possible. The statement that 'farmland has limited recreation benefits' was a generalisation made to demonstrate that the development of some green spaces can help deliver new green infrastructure and formal recreational facilities and actually increase public access to quality open space.
- 5.115 In terms of the comments on the summary of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), all Core Strategy policies, such as the preferred dwelling requirement policy, will need to be assessed for possible impacts on the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and possible future Sherwood SPA. This will need to include assessing other factors such as location and distribution of growth, size and scale of development, phasing of development and design considerations in order to avoid and minimise any impacts. The HRA in this report is part of a wider Core Strategy HRA which will inform the development of other policies at the Preferred Options stage of the Core Strategy. Natural England has already been consulted on this HRA methodology which received positive feedback. Comments submitted as part of this public consultation will also help inform the HRA work. Outside the HRA process, MDC Planning section has developed a Risk-Based Approach to assessing current planning applications with respect to the possible future Sherwood SPA; this has been designed in response to guidance from Natural England (June 2010/July 2011).
- 5.116 The creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is an approach advocated by Natural England as a measure to help mitigate (minimise) impacts from recreation (mainly walking and cycling) on sensitive ecological sites. SANGs are green spaces with a natural element and large enough to encompass about a 2km walk. This approach has been adopted by the Thames Basin Heath SPA. It is impossible to dictate where people chose to go for a walk and therefore promoting the development of new, and improvement of existing, SANGs in the district is considered a reasonable approach when addressing recreational impacts, giving people an alternative choice for where they chose to recreate. It is also important to recognise that this is not the only approach. The management and improvement of existing green spaces and green corridors is also a key consideration.

- 5.117 It is acknowledged that the ability to create new heathland habitat in and around the district is limited to specific locations, especially if housing growth increases. The draft boundary for a possible future SPA, encompasses most, if not all, of existing heathland in the district and adjacent areas; if a formal pSPA/SPA was designated, the chances of reasonably mitigating for habitat loss would be reduced as the areas within this boundary would be considered as 'functional habitat' and would not count as a legitimate mitigation measure. In the absence of an SPA/pSPA designation, there is, perhaps, more opportunity for identifying key opportunities for creation through different approaches, one of which might be through developer contributions. Work undertaken as part of a Green Infrastructure evidence base for the LDF identifies possible areas for creation and enhancement of heathland habitat which will help inform Core Strategy policy development. Again, this is not the only solution to minimising impacts from development. Appropriate management (access and habitat) of existing areas is a key consideration.
- 5.118 If a SPA was declared, all existing planning permissions that have been granted but have not yet completed would be subject to HRA review and possibly an Appropriate Assessment, if potential impacts were identified (or if there was uncertainty about impacts). Presently the possible future Sherwood SPA is not formally designated as a SPA or potential (pSPA) which both have a recognised status in the planning system and UK and EU legislation. It is recognised that Nightjar and Woodlark are Annex I listed birds under the Wild Bird Directive, Schedule I listed birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and Nottinghamshire BAP priority species. It is recognised by MDC Planning that this legislation needs to be taken into account when assessing planning applications and designing Core Strategy policies (as a material planning consideration). As mentioned previously, MDC Planning section has adopted a risk-based approach as per Natural England guidance to address issue of a possible future SPA and recognises the importance of Nightjar and Woodlark and their habitats.
- 5.119 In addition to the comments above, below is a response to other suggestions made about addressing possible impacts from development on the natural environment:
- These suggestions will be considered when writing Core Strategy policies at the Preferred Options stage such as protecting and enhancing the natural environment; funding infrastructure improvements, etc.
  - A Nottinghamshire County partnership is currently being established to trial a Biodiversity Off-Setting Scheme as described in the Government's Natural Environment White Paper (June 2011). If Mansfield District Council adopts such an approach, this is one resource that may help address funding issues with regards to creation of new habitat and management of existing habitat.
  - SINC, LNR and SSSI in the district will continue to be afforded appropriate protection. It is important to also recognise that these sites form a wider biodiversity/ecological network; this should be taken into consideration when

writing new Core Strategy policy and is an approach advocated in the Government's Natural Environment White Paper and National Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 9.

- 5.120 Finally, in relation to the comments made on the Council's favoured approach, it is accepted that a lot of weight has been given to the economic aspirations of this Council. This consultation process has highlighted that pursuing the High Option is likely to be undeliverable and difficult to justify at an Examination in Public, and could therefore compromise the environmental quality of the district unnecessarily. It is therefore recommended that the dwelling requirement figure is lowered. Please see the Conclusion to this report.
- 5.121 In relation to jobs for the resident workforce, the Council are not suggesting that jobs are guaranteed (which would break EU law) but that it is more likely that employers would locate in Mansfield if there was a larger resident workforce, therefore increasing job availability.

#### **Appendix I – Sustainability Appraisal of the Options**

- 5.122 There were two sets of comments made on the Sustainability Appraisal which accompanied the main report. One set of comments concentrated on the whole of the appraisal, and the other focused on the appraisal of the high option.
- 5.123 The comments which cover the full appraisal highlight some specific points which the consultee considers are flawed.
- 5.124 The following comments were raised in relation to SA Objective 2, which aims to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.
- Improving green spaces would be good for people's health so the Base Option (A) should score higher than Option D;
  - CIL and S106 do not make major positive contribution to existing population - they offset harm, not compensate (indeed Option D may not accommodate sufficient land to offset damage, creating a worse environment). Also, if biodiversity offsetting is implemented, its not guaranteed that losses would be made up within the District, resulting in a net loss to the District;
  - The Base Level appraisal assumes provision for the elderly is dependent on contributions intended to mitigate against the impact of new development. Unmet needs should be addressed by MDC and partners. Should not assume that additional housing development will result in a net gain for health provision- it would do little more than meet the needs of the new population, plus reduction in green space would negatively impact upon health and wellbeing.

- 5.125 Comments in relation to SA3 (*to provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the district's heritage*) stated that the impact should be classed as red (negative) for the medium and high options across short term (ST), medium term (MT) and long term (LT) on the basis that our heritage includes undeveloped land, and the loss of green spaces would result in the loss of heritage regardless of mitigation / compensation, as heritage assets are irreplaceable / damage is irreversible.
- 5.126 The following comment was made in relation to three objectives. SA8 (*to manage prudently the natural resources of the district*), SA9 (*to minimise waste and increase the reuse, recycling and composting of waste materials*) and SA10 (*to minimise energy usage and develop the district's renewable energy resource, reducing dependency on non-renewable sources*). Red (negative impact) is deserved for medium and high options, but not justified for low or base options, because developments granted permission may not come forward (and because the relative scale of 'damage' would be less).
- 5.127 The final point made was in relation to SA12 (*to create high quality employment opportunities*). The states that the impact of the base and low options should be green (positive) as protecting employment land and green infrastructure supports ST, MT and LT high quality employment opportunities. In addition, if land that would otherwise be used for high quality employment opportunities is developed for housing then this would impact negatively on SA12 and therefore the 'high' and 'business as usual' options should be given a 'red' score.
- 5.128 The comments made specifically on the appraisal of the high option were as follows:
- SA1: Increasing the range and affordability of housing is counter to the desire to increase higher paid workers. Homelessness and the number of unfit homes will not be reduced.
  - SA2: Health inequalities will only be reduced by diluting the numbers and not by solving the problem. Access to health facilities will not be improved if the required housing is on the edge of town. The proposed figure will reduce opportunities for recreational physical activity.
  - SA3: The proposed figure will be in direct opposition to this objective to provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the district's heritage.
  - SA4: Improving community safety is not dependent on the number of houses.
  - SA5: Over development is not going to improve access to, and residents satisfaction with community facilities and is unlikely to build a community.
  - SA6 & SA7: Agrees that the proposed figure will be in direct opposition to SA6 (*to increase biodiversity levels across the district*) and states that the same

applies for SA7 (*to protect and enhance and restore the rich diversity of the natural, cultural and built environmental and archaeological assets of the district*).

- SA8 & SA9: Agrees that the proposed figures are not likely to produce the quality of development that will help meet SA8 (*to manage prudently the natural resources of the district*) or meet SA9 (*to minimise waste and increase the reuse, recycling and composting of waste materials*).
- SA10: Minimising energy usage is not dependent on the number of houses built, but improving the existing housing stock would achieve this.
- SA11: Development on the outskirts of town is only likely to make the transport infrastructure and its impact on the environment worse.
- SA12, SA13 & SA14: Building houses is not likely to improve employment or the diversity of the employment of existing residents of Mansfield. Building unattractive housing will not improve the average earnings as these people are more likely to commute than make compromises.

5.129 It was also stated that incentivising brownfield developments will improve all aspects of sustainability and that the validity of the report should be reconsidered.

### **Officer's response**

5.130 The Sustainability Appraisal is a process that helps guide decision-making by highlighting positive and negative impacts of policy options upon a set of environmental, social and economic objectives. The process is not intended to be used to select the Preferred Option, but to appraise each option and flag up any negative impacts in order that mitigation measures can be considered and utilised should that option be preferred.

5.131 The appraisal process looks at how each option performs against the framework of objectives and decision-making criteria in isolation and does not compare options against one another. This addresses comments which question why certain options have been rated the same as others when the level of impact is greater. In addition, a full appraisal will be undertaken at the Preferred Option stage of the Core Strategy which will show the links between different policy areas and how one policy can often counteract negative impacts of another.

5.132 For example, the Base Option target would aim to provide 4,413 homes by 2031, and whilst this option would see the least Greenfield development it does not indicate that those spaces and / or access to them would be improved without the intervention of other policies. Population trends show that our population is ageing, which can put pressure on health services. As it is unclear whether all existing planning permissions are due to make a contribution towards health facilities we could be in a position where access to health is worsened, should there be a shortfall between facilities needed and facilities planned for by the health services.



- 5.133 Whilst it is accepted that developer contributions towards new facilities do not result in a net gain for the district, as they are required to meet the needs of the development, it is likely that some existing residents may also experience a benefit from having new or extended facilities nearby, unless as stated, they are located on the edge of the town.
- 5.134 It is accepted that the issue of biodiversity offsetting is different in that losses can be made up outside of the district, therefore related policies within the Core Strategy will need to carefully consider this issue. As discussed above, all SHLAA sites have been screened to avoid the development of those with ecological importance and further work will be carried out in that respect.
- 5.135 In terms of SAI it is considered that a greater amount of market housing would allow for a greater amount of affordable housing to come forward as a percentage of each site, or through contributions towards improving existing stock etc, which is why a positive result has been given to the High Option.
- 5.136 Comments regarding the appraisal result for SA3 are accepted and this will be changed to reflect a negative result for the Medium and High Options. However the results for the Base and Low Options in terms of SA8, SA9 and SAI0 will not be changed on the basis that even if the sites with planning permission currently do not come forward, the Council would still need to allow permission for that amount of houses to be developed within the plan period. It is accepted that improving existing stock would help minimise energy usage, however as discussed above it is not considered appropriate to make an allowance for properties that are brought back into use within the dwelling requirement figure.
- 5.137 Community safety can be linked to the number of new homes built on the basis that high numbers can cause overcrowded, densely populated developments where people can feel vulnerable, whereas lower numbers can reduce the amount of greenfield land permitted for development, therefore focusing efforts on the regeneration of rundown brownfield sites that may have become crime hotspots.
- 5.138 Comments regarding SA5 are accepted and this will be changed to reflect a negative impact.
- 5.139 As SAI1 relates to the transport infrastructure, the impact is very much related to the location rather than the number of new homes. However it is accepted that the higher the dwelling requirement, the more pressure will be put on the existing network, especially if a lot of sites are on the outskirts of the town.
- 5.140 In terms of SAI2, SAI3 and SAI4, it is accepted that the less land that is used for housing means that more is available for employment uses and green infrastructure, however, as discussed above, without providing suitable housing for a larger workforce with a wider range of skills, this alone is unlikely to create quality and diverse job opportunities.

- 5.141 It is agreed that incentivising brownfield land would improve all aspects of sustainability, and the Council works hard to identify funding that can be utilised for this purpose.

## **Appendix 2 – Habitat Regulation Assessment of the Options**

- 5.142 There were also comments made on the Habitat Regulation Assessment that accompanied the main report.
- 5.143 It was stated that the analysis is broadly accurate but should also include an assessment of the following likely impacts on the possible future Sherwood SPA, as well as more detail of the scale and severity of the likely impacts:
- Disturbance from people;
  - Disturbance from dogs and direct predation of adult birds, chicks and eggs;
  - Risk of increased predation from domestic cats, which present a serious risk to ground-nesting birds (woodlark and nightjar);
  - Disturbance from increased noise levels from traffic and construction activities;
  - Disturbance from the introduction of lighting to former dark areas of countryside; and
  - Risk of direct loss of feeding or breeding habitat.
- 5.144 Another consultee acknowledged the HRA work undertaken and the potential effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC it identified. Comments made supported MDC's 'risk-based' approach in terms of considering the implications of a possible future SPA classification in the Sherwood Forest area. Appropriate mitigation and/or avoidance measures should be used to reduce the likelihood of significant impacts which might adversely affect breeding nightjar and woodlark populations occurring.
- 5.145 Comments made were in support of the proposed environmental capacity study approach recommended for the higher options, and agreed that the location of development would also need careful consideration in combination with the identified key impacts. It was stated that mitigation may minimise potential adverse effects, however as dwelling requirement figures increase, the land take increases and the ability to mitigate is restricted.
- 5.146 It was also stated that the SA and HRA should be integral to the development of the Core Strategy to find the most sustainable solution or highlight where mitigation will be necessary. The results of the SA and HRA should continue

to influence the plan, triggering amendments to eliminate or reduce potentially damaging effects on the European site. If adverse effects could or would occur, the plan can only be adopted in specific circumstances meeting further tests, and after notifying Government.

- 5.147 Another comment stated that reference should be given to the Birds Directive within paragraph 2.5 and suggested some wording that could be used.

#### **Officer's response**

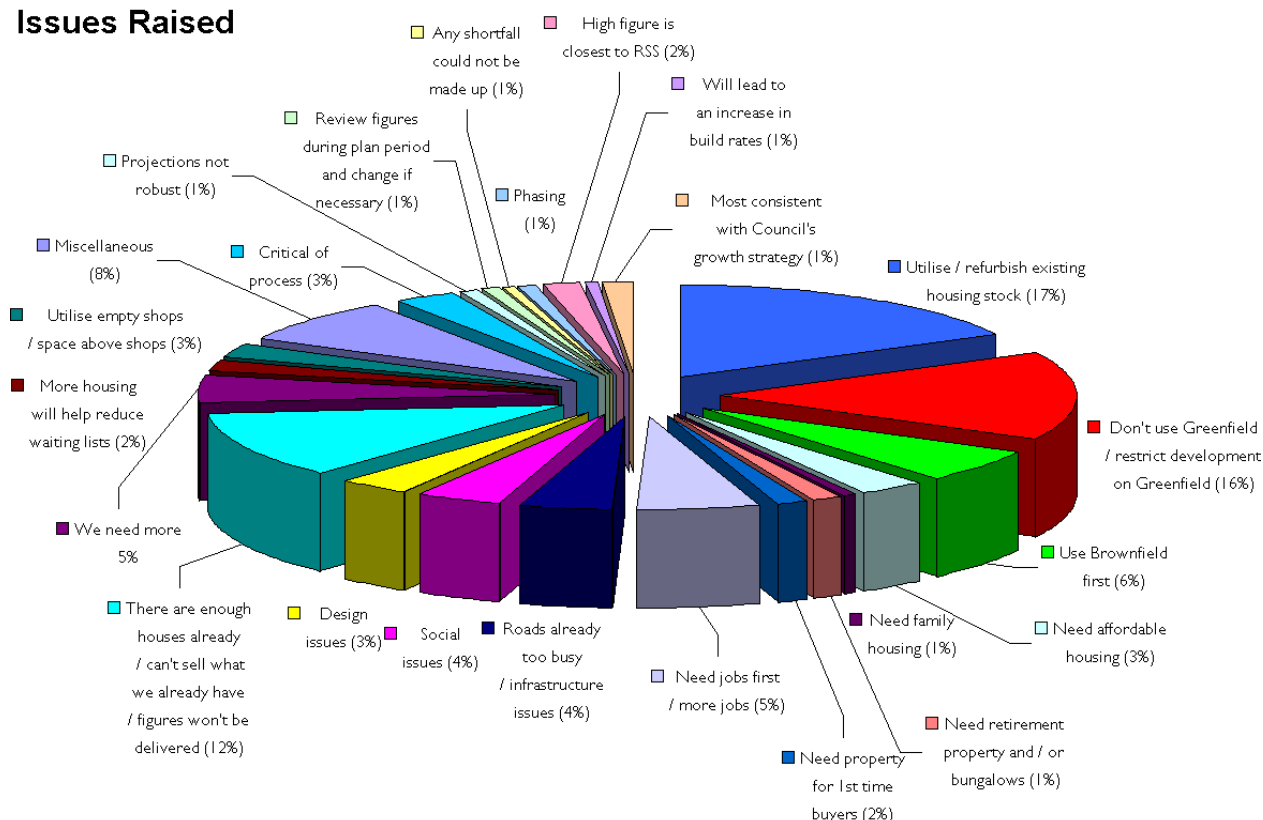
- 5.148 Like the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) process is an important tool for assessing the robustness of and to help flag up potential impacts that a plan or project (alone or in combination) may have on an area, in this instance the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC. Following guidance from Natural England (June 2010), the HRA a possible future Sherwood SPA alongside this assessment process. It is difficult at this point in time to assess in detail the impacts of the different proposed housing growth figures; thus in a sense, this is our best estimate based on limited knowledge with regards to factors such as location and distribution of growth, nature and scale of development, environmental capacity and phasing of development. All these factors will need to be considered alongside the chosen housing figure in order to inform robust Core Strategy policy development at the Preferred Option stage. Planning Policy has recently consulted Natural England (statutory consultee) on a HRA methodology for assessing the Core Strategy; feedback has been positive. This will provide information to ensure Preferred Option policies take into account possible impacts and to modify these, where needed, in order to avoid and/or mitigate impacts. Comments received through this consultation will help improve the HRA for the Core Strategy (e.g. inclusion of habitat loss with habitat fragmentation).
- 5.149 The EU Birds Directive is translated into UK legislation (England) through the Habitat Regulations (2010), the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) and other processes such as the UK Biodiversity Action Plan/Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan and other national and local monitoring schemes. With regards to the protection of Nightjar and Woodlark in the absence of a formally designated SPA or pSPA and HRA assessment, this will need to be addressed through a combination of actions carried out through involvement with the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group Partnership, Core Strategy policy development, Sustainability Appraisal assessment and monitoring, and the assessment of individual applications as they come forward. Mansfield District Council's Planning section has developed a Risk-based Approach (based on Natural England's guidance and internal and external consultation) to help with the assessment of individual planning applications. This is to be implemented shortly.

## 6.0 Conclusion

6.1 As this was consultation concentrated on the single issue of housing numbers, it allowed the Council to engage with members of the public much more successfully than when consulting on wider ranging documents covering a number of issues. As such this has generated a much greater level of interest and involvement than is normally achieved.

6.2 The following pie chart shows the range of comments that were raised by consultees, as well as how popular each issue was:

**Issues Raised**



6.3 As a result of the comments made through the consultation, and the HRA and SA consideration, there is a need to consider a lower figure than that which was favoured in December 2011. A better balance is needed between deliverability and the Council's growth aspirations, in order to increase the likelihood that the Core Strategy will be found 'sound' when examined by an Inspector.

6.4 As was stated by one consultee, the negative approach towards housing development that is being 'preferred' by Greater Nottingham Authorities could potentially increase demand in Mansfield. On this basis, consideration will be given to issues of phasing and the possibility of a separate 'reserve' phase of housing sites being identified that could be released if development rates indicated a need for more growth.

- 6.5 Based on the forecasting work carried out, the figure of 7,828 (Medium Option) would maintain the existing workforce, therefore this approach, which allows for realistic growth to come forward so long as the demand is there, is in accordance with the Sustainable Community Strategy aspirations for dwelling and employment growth. It also reflects some of the alternative suggestions which were made.
- 6.6 This approach, if agreed by Full Council in April 2012, will form part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report which will be subject to further public consultation later in the year.
- 6.7 The following are ways in which responses to this consultation have been / will be taken account of include:
- Changing our housing monitoring process in order to count demolished properties which were not providing a 'home' at the start of the plan period as 'net new dwellings' when rebuilt (rather than gross) to help meet the dwelling requirement;
  - Recommending a lower target, and phased approach to the delivery of the target, to the Executive Mayor
  - Partial revision of the housing supply figures for Council consideration, to take account of the significant sites granted permission since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 (and those with outstanding S106 agreements) to make this issue more transparent prior to the full revision based on the position as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012, which will not be available until this summer.
  - A quota approach to ensure that the development of difficult brownfield sites comes forward without stifling other schemes will be investigated as part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report
  - A phasing of site releases will also be investigated as part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report
  - The Sustainability Appraisal result for SA3 will be changed to reflect a negative impact for the medium and high options, and SA5 will be changed to a negative impact for the high option.
  - Officers will ensure future consultation documents appear on the Council's 'Comment on it' web page.

## Appendix

### 'Option / Comment Card'

# Making plans for Mansfield

## Mansfield District Council is looking to set its Long Term Dwelling Requirements

**How many new homes?**

We need to decide how many new homes should be built within the District between now and 2031. To help us do this we want your views on which one of four dwelling options you would prefer. We would also welcome any alternative suggestions you may have.

[www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement)

CORE STRATEGY



Mansfield District Council

### The dwelling options:

(Please tick one preference only and return by 31 January 2012)

BASE LEVEL

☐ **BASE LEVEL – 4,413 (about 221 new homes being built per year):** This option is based upon limiting new dwelling numbers to less than what has been achieved in the past. Forecasting suggests that this level of new homes would not be sufficient to cater for an increase in the resident workforce. However it may help focus house building on previously developed land and would require the least amount of Greenfield development.

LOW LEVEL

☐ **LOW LEVEL – 5,643 (about 282 new homes being built per year):** This option would allow sufficient land for house building to continue at similar levels to that achieved over the last 10 years. However forecasts suggest there would be insufficient housing to provide for an increase in the workforce.

MEDIUM LEVEL

☐ **MEDIUM LEVEL – 7,828 (about 391 new homes being built per year):** This option is based upon encouraging developers to build approximately 25% more new houses each year. Although it should provide enough new homes for an increase in population, forecasting suggests it may still fall short in terms of allowing enough new homes to be built to cater for an increased workforce.

HIGH LEVEL

☐ **HIGH LEVEL – 11,100 (about 555 new homes being built per year):** This option is based upon encouraging the development industry to almost double house building completions, by releasing much more land for development. Should new houses be built at these levels, forecasting indicates there would be enough to cater for both an increased population and an increased workforce. *(Please note that this is currently the Council's favoured option).*

OTHER

☐ **I HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION**  
My preferred figure is \_\_\_\_\_ equating to an average of \_\_\_\_\_ new homes being built per year.  
Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information visit [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement) or call Planning Policy on 01623 463 322 or email [ldf@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@mansfield.gov.uk)  
Please return in the pre-paid envelope supplied. No stamp is required.

Mansfield District Council



## Poster

# HAVE YOUR SAY!



Consultation period ends 31st January 2012

## Making plans for Mansfield

### Mansfield District Council is looking to set its Long Term Dwelling Requirements

#### How many new homes?

We need to decide how many new homes should be built within the District between now and 2031. To help us do this we want your views on which one of four dwelling options you would prefer. We would also welcome any alternative suggestions you may have.



[www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement)



-  Base level – 4,413 (about 221 new homes being built per year)
-  Low level – 5,643 (about 282 new homes being built per year)
-  Medium level – 7,828 (about 391 new homes being built per year)
-  High level – 11,100 (about 555 new homes being built per year)
-  Other – Do you have an alternative option in mind?

Please pick up a leaflet below or at the reception desk to select your option and leave at the collection point provided or ask reception for a free post envelope



### **List of Venues where document / poster / cards were available**

Rainworth Library	Warsop Lane, Rainworth, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 0AD
Ladybrook Library	Ladybrook Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5JH
Warsop Library	High Street, Warsop, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG20 0AG
Forest Town Library	Clipstone Road West, Forest Town, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 0AA
Clipstone Library	First Avenue, Clipstone, Mansfield, NG21 9DA
Mansfield Woodhouse Library	Church Street, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8AH
Mansfield Woodhouse Area Housing Office	High Street, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire
South Area Housing office	79 Sandy Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire
Civic Centre Reception	Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 7BH
Northfield Focus Point	Vale Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8DR
Turning Point	Ladybrook Place, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5JP
Titchfield & Oakham Children's Centre - (West Titchfield Matters)	73 - 75 Princess Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5SL
The Heath Community Centre	Fritchley Court, Oak Tree Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 8QE
River Maun Recreation Centre	Barringer Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 2DF
Pleasley Landmark	Chesterfield Road North, Pleasley, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 7SP
Warsop Town Hall	Church Street, Market Warsop, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG20 0AL
CVS	Community House, 36 Wood Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 1QA
Park Road Resource Centre	53 Park Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8ER
Bellamy Children's Centre	14 Trowel Court, Bellamy Road Estate, Mansfield, NG18 4NT
Forest Town Children's Centre	Clipstone Road West, Forest Town, Mansfield, NG19 0AA
Mansfield Woodhouse Children's Centre	Swan Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse, NG19 8BT
Meden Vale Children's Centre	Netherfield School, Netherfield Lane, Meden Vale, NG20 9PA
Oak Tree Children's Centre	Jubilee Way North, Oak Tree Lane Estate, Mansfield, NG18 3PJ
Pleasley Hill Children's Centre	Woburn Lane, Pleasley, Mansfield, NG19 7RT
Ravensdale Children's Centre	54-56 Sanders Avenue, Mansfield, NG18 2DN
Sandy Bank Children's Centre	Bilborough Road, Mansfield, NG18 2NZ
Sherwood East Children's Centre (Clipstone)	1A Sure Start Braemar Road, Clipstone, Mansfield, NG19 0LL
Sherwood West Children's Centre (Rainworth)	Lake View Primary & Nursery School, Rainworth Water Road, Mansfield, NG21 0DU
Warsop Children's Centre	Mansfield Road, Warsop, NG20 0AN
Manor Sport & Recreation Centre	Kingsley Avenue, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8JY
Rebecca Adlington Swimming Centre	Westdale Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 7BZ
Water Meadows Swimming Complex	Titchfield Park, Bath Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 1BA
Four Seasons Shopping Centre	Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 1SU
Warsop Parish Council Centre	Church Warsop, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire

## The Mayor's Column in the Chad

(21/12/11)

# More from the MAYOR

Executive Mayor Tony Egginton

Produced by and on behalf of Mansfield District Council



**AS Christmas approaches we are all busy with the happenings of the festive season, but I want to distract you from that for a moment.**

I am sure that you are aware that in 2012 the Queen will be celebrating sixty years on the throne.

To mark the special occasion, a series of Diamond Jubilee Beacons will be lit across the country and I want to encourage community groups within the District to take part.

Any community group, organisation or individual can register to host a Jubilee Beacon provided there is a suitable area to build and light a traditional Bonfire Beacon. Choosing to host a Jubilee Beacon can be a great way for your local community to come together and celebrate the Diamond Jubilee.

The aim is to light 2,012 Beacons across the country between 10pm and 10.30pm on Monday 4 June 2012 with Her Majesty The Queen lighting the National Beacon. A special book listing all the Beacon sites for The Diamond Jubilee will be given to

the Queen after the event.

To host a Beacon, you must register at [www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk](http://www.diamondjubileebeacons.co.uk) where you can complete an online form and also download A Guide to Taking Part, which includes guidance on constructing beacons and other useful safety advice. You can also contact the Council for advice on any licences you may need for your event.

I hope people across the District will take up the opportunity to host a Jubilee Beacon and join in the celebrations. In the meantime enjoy the Christmas festivities.

### What do you think?

The Council needs to consider how much housing growth to plan for over the next 20 years.

A consultation has started looking at options between 221 and 555 homes per year for the area. Further information is available on the Council's website or at <http://mansfield-consult.timehouse.co.uk/portal/consultation/dwellingrequirement>

## Project ends with success

**MANY of you, particularly in the Warsop and Mansfield Woodhouse area will know of Meden Valley Making Places (MVMP) - an organisation formed to address the housing and community infrastructure in areas across the District.**

MVMP is scheduled to cease operating from 23 December this year on the conclusion of its award-winning regeneration goals.

The MVMP Chief executive Officer told me: "This has been an immensely successful project that I have personally been very proud to have been associated with and which has transformed the lives of a great number of people living in the districts of Mansfield and Bolsover."

"As part of the planned closure of the company, we have now moved out of our offices in Market Warsop and have relocated to new premises at the I-centre in Mansfield for the final few weeks of operation."

"MVMP has been a partnership project that has truly benefited from the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders and I would like to express

my thanks on behalf of the MVMP staff team, Board and residents' Community Forum, for all the contributions that have helped to make the company the success it has been."

"Looking to the future and making use of all the skills and experience gained from MVMP, it is intended that the I-centre is to become the registered office of a new initiative - Making Places Regeneration Company."

"In the meantime - thank you once again for helping to make the project the undoubted success it has been. Very best wishes for the future from us all."

On behalf of all those people who have benefited from the project over the last few years, I want to express the appropriate thanks and also acknowledge that there were some difficult issues to overcome that were both emotive and sensitive.

All the staff at MVMP should be congratulated for the hard work and the successful achievements of all their efforts.

MVMP can be contacted at Mansfield I-centre, Oakham Business Park, Hamilton Way, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BR or on 01623 600839.

## DIARY DATES

**21-23 Dec** Christmas Make and Take, Mansfield Museum, 10am-12pm, £1  
**Until 8 Jan** Jack and the Beanstalk, Mansfield Palace Theatre, 01623 633133.

**Please Note: Council meeting times and dates can change. To check, visit the Council's website or call 01623 463 301**

Tel: 01623 463 463 Email: [mayor@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@mansfield.gov.uk)

[www.mansfield.gov.uk](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk)



(04/01/12)

# More from the MAYOR

Executive Mayor Tony Egginton

Produced by and on behalf of Mansfield District Council



**YOU know that I am passionate about our democracy and that I want everyone to be part of it.**

Democracy is not just about casting your vote at election time. It is about being able to shape the way decisions are made and influencing the way future plans that affect our daily lives are rolled out.

You can submit your views on the future development of homes across the district in a consultation, which runs until 31 January. I know that the issue of new developments can be an emotive subject for people. The pros and cons are often debated in equal measure.

Since the Government abolished the East Midlands strategy that proposed Mansfield's target for future housing development should be 10,600 homes, Councils have to set their own targets with the priority of forecasting future demand for homes and creating employment and regeneration for the District.

I am very much in favour of the regeneration of our District. It is necessary for the Council to put some target figures into the plan so that we can be proactive in achieving the outcomes that are right for our District taking into account all of the

Making plans for Mansfield

**Mansfield District Council is looking to set its Long Term Dwelling Requirements**

How many new homes?

We need to know how many new homes Mansfield District Council should be planning for over the next 20 years. To help us do this we need your views on what you think the right number is. We will be holding a series of public meetings to discuss this and we would like you to come along and share your views.

[www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement)



relevant factors.

I am urging you to take part in the consultation and let us know your thoughts and aspirations for development of our District. You can take part by either visiting the stands in Mansfield town centre, logging on to

[www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement) or telephoning the Council's Planning Policy team on 01623 463 322.

## Exciting summer ahead

**NOW 2012 has arrived we can look forward to what promises to be a wonderful year of celebration with the London Olympics and Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.**

Mansfield will be taking part with the nation to mark all the special events and to create opportunities for all our community to share in the remarkable and once in a lifetime experience.

I've provided details below of some of the main events that are scheduled over the summer. Further information and locations will be broadcast through this column, on the Council's website and in the Chad during the coming months.

I look forward to sharing the events with you and hope that many members of our community will join in with the celebrations. The Queen's Jubilee Beacons will be lit by communities across the district on 4 June. In the run-up to the Olympic Games seven community event days - Inspire Mansfield - will take place at the secondary schools in Mansfield between 18 June and 26 June. Each event will have a sports village where sports clubs will showcase sports and the cluster school finals of the Tri Athletics

Challenge and other physical activities. The grand final will be on 27 June.

Inspiring Mansfield - a community celebration of the Olympic Torch Relay coming to Mansfield - will take place on 27 June.

The Olympic Torch Relay comes to Mansfield on 28 June.

The Armchair Club and MDC will host a dinner and send-off for Olympic hopefuls on 30 June.

Mansfield's Cultural Festival week takes place from 7-15 July. Mamefelde to Mansfield theatre production in the town centre will take place on 14-15 July. Look out for My Mansfield My Story events giving you the opportunity to contribute to this project by sharing your stories of Mansfield.

● This time of year always brings the opportunity to celebrate the Council's Long Service Awards. Employees who have served the Council and community for both 25 and 40 years were honoured for the high level of commitment they continue to show. Their skills and experience are a credit to the Council and along with the Managing Director it was good to acknowledge and congratulate their longevity.

## DIARY DATES

**4 Jan** Fitball, 1pm-2pm, River Maun Recreation Centre, 01623 463551.  
**6 Jan** Boot camp, 7am-7.45am, River Maun Recreation Centre, 01623 463551.

**Please Note: Council meeting times and dates can change. To check, visit the Council's website or call 01623 463 301**

Tel: 01623 463 463 Email: [mayor@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@mansfield.gov.uk)

[www.mansfield.gov.uk](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk)





# WANTED: Your view on homes

**MANSFIELD District Council is asking for people's views on how many new homes should be built across the District over the next 20 years.**

People are being asked to choose one of four options they think is right for the District as a target for the number of homes to be built in the coming years.

The District's target up to 2026 of 10,600 homes, as set out in the East Midlands plan, will need replacing due to Government proposals to abolish these regional plans. This means that the Council needs to set a new target for the next 20 years.

Once set, the housing target will be included in the Council's Core Strategy, which sets out the long term vision, objectives and strategy for future development of the

District. The options put forward take into account the future demand for housing in Mansfield based on various scenarios and an idea as to the amount of land that would be needed.

In December councillors selected their favoured option which was the highest option (11,100 new homes between 2011 and 2031 – an average of 555 dwellings per year). However, councillors stressed that public consultation was important.

● People can take part in the consultation by visiting [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement).

Information stands will also be held in Mansfield town centre during January.

For further information visit [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement) or call 01623 463 195.



**(23/12/11)**

## **Residents get a say over housing**

THE future of housing development in Mansfield will be decided by residents.

Mansfield District Council is asking people to vote on how many houses they would like to see built in the area in the next 20 years.

Until January 31 people will be able to choose one of four options as a target for the number of homes to be built until 2031.

The lowest option is 4,413 homes and the top limit is set at 11,100.

There is also an opportunity for people to put forward an alternative suggestion.

Once decided, the housing target will be included in the council's "core strategy", which sets out the long-term vision for future development of the district.

People can take part in the consultation by visiting [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement).

Information stands will also be set up in Mansfield town centre during January.

**(29/12/11)**

## **Have your say on area homes**

PEOPLE in Mansfield are being asked for their views on how many homes they want to see built in the district over the next 20 years.

The district council is surveying residents until January 31.

The first option is for 4,413 homes, with the others being 5,643, 7,828 and 11,100.

The latter would see 555 homes built per year.

The council has said the options put forward take into account the future demand for housing in Mansfield.

For further information visit [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement)

### **District council's reminder**

## **Don't forget to have your say on district's housing strategy**

RESIDENTS in Mansfield are being reminded to have their say on how many new homes should be built over the next 20 years.

Mansfield District Council is due to end a public consultation into future housing targets on January 31.

It has drawn up four options for people to choose from, ranging between 4,400 homes and 11,000 new properties.

There is also an opportunity for residents to put forward alternative suggestions.

Mansfield Executive Mayor Tony Egginton said: "It is really important people have their say and take part in this consultation. Your views will help us to set the figure for how much new housing is accept-

able within our district, therefore determining how Mansfield will develop over the coming years."

Council planning officers will be at Warsop Market from 8.30am to noon on Thursday to answer any questions. They will also be at the Four Seasons Shopping Centre in Mansfield from 9am to 5pm on January 24, and January 27.

Further information is available from libraries, community centres, council leisure centres, housing offices and the Civic Centre.

For more information call the planning policy team on 01623 463322, e-mail [ldf@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@mansfield.gov.uk), or visit [www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/dwellingrequirement).



## **Summary of Mansfield Developers Forum Discussion**

### **MANSFIELD DEVELOPMENT FORUM 14/12/2011 FEEDBACK ON HOUSING NUMBERS**

The following feedback reflects what was recorded at the meeting following a presentation on Housing Numbers. It does not purport to be the agreed expression of the group, but a note of comments that were made.

**Base Level Option (221 dwellings per annum)** – This was seen as a non-starter by all of the group and there was no discussion about it.

**Low Level Option (282 dwpa.)** This is based on past trends and one person suggested that it was the best approach, however generally it was seen as inadequate to meet the growth and regeneration needs of the District.

**Medium Level Option (391 dwpa.)** This approach received a significant amount of support. It was seen as an achievable but aspirational target and being in line with Governments ONS projections was seen as being a strong support for it. It was noted that it is also close to the growth figure we had in the Draft RSS which we had supported at that time. It was also suggested that if the economy did improve and house building rates soared, the Council could always make a higher provision later in the plan period.

There was a discussion around the issue of Mansfield recognising that it could have a strong role as a dormitory/ supporting town to the growing economic base of Nottingham, as a stepping stone to being a more self sufficient town in the future. Examples of similar scenarios in the south east were given.

**High Level Option (555 dwpa.)** This was seen as being too aspirational and not deliverable. It was thought that whilst the past level of demolitions has reduced our net development figures, there is less likelihood of that in the future so that may help. Although this may only lift us from past (low level) rates to the medium level rates. It was considered that this would be very hard to sell as a realistic proposition in the current climate.

There were significant concerns that it would generate too many opportunities which would devalue land and may lead to sites stagnating, as there is unlikely to be enough strength in the market to support all of the sites that could come forward in a viable manner.

**Overall** - The general consensus appeared to be that somewhere on or just above the medium level option would be the best approach as it would provide more than adequate opportunities without flooding the market with too many possible sites such that developers would not have confidence in attracting sufficient purchasers.

## **Youth Consultation**

### **Summary of Consultation with School Council's**

Manor Academy - 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 - 8.30am

Many good points were raised by the group. These included the idea that vacant properties should be refurbished and reused to reduce the number of new homes needed. There were questions in relation to affordability, density and housing mix, as well as ensuring that jobs, facilities and infrastructure all come forward. There were comments made about building on open spaces, with some of the group wanting to protect open spaces and the countryside from development, and others saying they are not all needed.

Summary of options selected:

Option	Frequency	Reasons / Comments (when given)
Base	2	It would make sense to reuse vacant houses first. To not use fields, who would want to get rid of the environment?
Low	1	Reuse and redevelop, make jobs first.
Medium	6	Fill the empty houses first either through refurbishment or regeneration. This option shall increase the rate of development but control density and demand of property if buying isn't high. All empty properties should be brought back into use as a priority and more consideration should be given to true and realistic need as opposed to projections.
High	3	-
Alternative	-	-

Queen Elizabeth Academy – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 - 9.00am

No officer was present during this session.

One card was received from the Queen Elizabeth Academy by the end of the consultation period, but unfortunately no option was selected or alternative given. However two students did attend the Youth Forum event (please see below) to put forward the views from the school.



### Samworth Church Academy – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012

No officer was present during this session.

Summary of options selected:

Option	Frequency	Reasons / Comments (when given)
Base	8	-
Low	6	-
Medium	9	Don't use greenbelt. Don't need too many, ruins the environment. It increases population and makes Mansfield more appealing to businesses without using too much land.
High	7	Because the population is always increasing. But limit greenfield use.
Alternative	2	0, most people will move away from Mansfield when older. 0, too many people already.
Comment Only	1	People are going to leave Mansfield, move to different countries, or somewhere else in the UK.

### Brunts Academy – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 - 3.30pm

This group had a good discussion about the impacts of different housing targets. Many were of the opinion that brownfield land and derelict buildings should be reused first, before greenfield land. One student made the point that if lots of green spaces are built on, and the population increases, there will be nowhere for children to play. Another point of discussion was around boosting the economy by allowing more houses to be built. However it was suggested that we should review the figures if the economy isn't picking up and employers not locating here. One student said that if we increase house building but businesses still don't decide to come to Mansfield it would increase unemployment because there would be more people but not more jobs.

Summary of options selected:

Option	Frequency	Reasons / Comments (when given)
Base	3	Use up the brownfield sites first.
Low	3	It wouldn't use as much greenfield land and there would still be plenty of room for parks and animals.
Medium	9	-
High	3	Mansfield needs more employment opportunities to encourage young people to buy houses and stay in the area.
Alternative	-	-

## Summary of Consultation with other youth groups

### Skills 4 Employment (formerly E2E) – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 - 1.30pm

The group made a number of good points in relation to the issues around setting a housing target. There was lots of discussion about the protection of greenfields, (especially playing fields, and areas used by wildlife), as well as the recycling of derelict buildings and refurbishing unfit homes. The use of compulsory purchase orders was also discussed. Some people were of the view that if we need the houses we should allow them to be built.

Summary of options selected:

Option	Frequency	Reasons / Comments (when given)
Base	1	-
Low	1	-
Medium	5	-
High	1	-
Alternative	-	-
Comment Only	1	You should not build on greenfields because people like to do things like sports.

### Youth Forum – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012 (Representatives from each of the above schools)

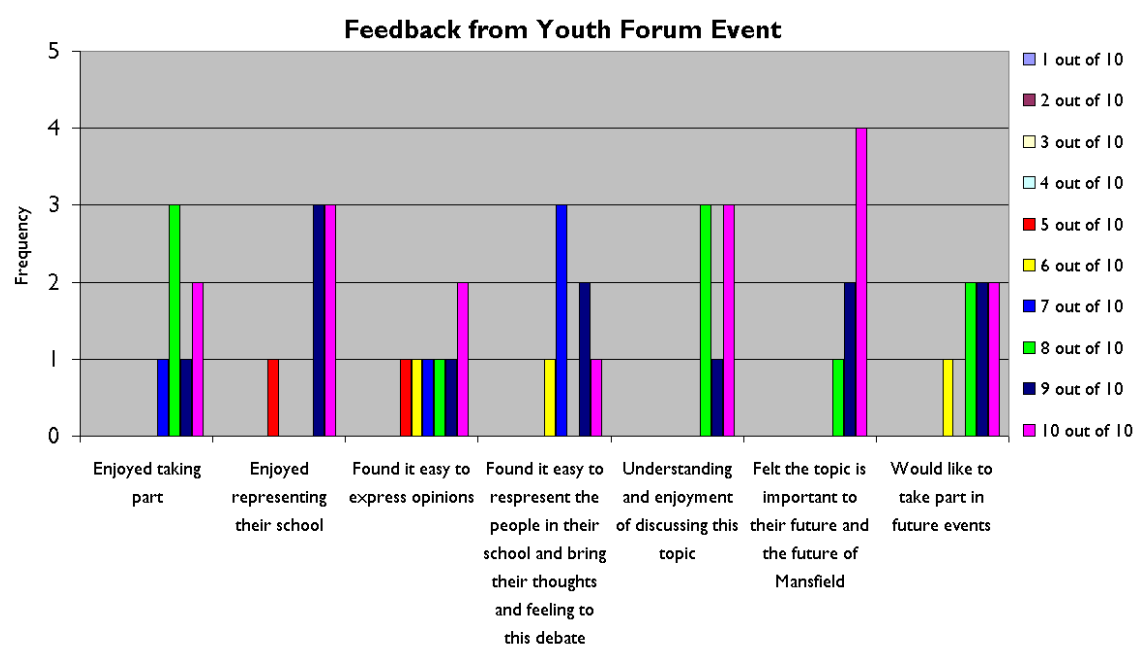
This was a very successful event attended by representatives from each of the above schools as well as a representative from the Mansfield Learning Partnership. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor lead a debate on 'Economic Regeneration Vs Protection of the Environment' which generated a lot of discussion. Some of the main points raised are highlighted below:

- There are lots of boarded up houses that could be used first. They currently 'scare' people / businesses off.
- Mansfield is a town not a city, its going to end up too cramped.
- New houses aren't affordable - the older houses are cheaper.
- Old / unfit houses should be restored / refurbished. This can be linked into apprenticeship schemes which include programmes for renovation of council housing.
- The development of brownfield land should be prioritised.
- Building on the outskirts of Mansfield could cause a rise in property prices, which most people can't afford. However, if more availability of houses it could also make them cheaper.
- If the increase in workforce doesn't happen then we'll end up with empty houses and will have built on the countryside. Should try to attract businesses first.
- Mansfield 2020 business network could be expanded across Nottinghamshire.
- Need to strike a balance between attracting companies and providing good housing to make Mansfield attractive.
- Sell the benefits of new houses to the community.

- Benefits of the high level include a stronger workforce, which would create a more respectable environment that people will want to look after and violence could go down. It would also inspire young adults to go out to work more.
- The impact of development can drive people away from the area.
- There should be houses built, but they should be of different price ranges.
- A lot of housing will mean less space for open spaces and force people into a smaller area, causing urban tension.
- Brunts are all for the medium option, it allows for a balance between people that will be wanting housing for their future, and those who are younger who will be more interested in protection of open spaces for having fun.
- MyPlace is a large youth centre, more places like that could be built. However facilities are needed in areas other than the town centre as not everyone can afford to get there. Nearest place in Forest Town is KFC.
- Need to attract companies here, but local companies sometimes can't compete for work. Link with companies based at Junction 29a?
- Need to ensure that the emergency services can cope with all the new development.
- If base / low option chosen it would slow down Mansfield's grow - we need to address the credit crunch. Businesses wouldn't come here as it wouldn't be attractive.
- We need quality housing with an amount for different age groups so there's a mix.
- Need a balance between the low option (which is not enough) and the high option (which could be too much – if houses aren't filled there wouldn't be space for anything else, and unfinished houses ruin the landscape). The medium is the equal of both debates. It protects important green spaces and wildlife by not building too many houses that would make the area overcrowded. We can always build more if needed. Review the situation, and up the numbers if needed.
- Everyone around the table agreed on the medium option, with priority on refurbishing existing houses.

The vote at the end of the debate was 7/7 in favour of the medium option. This is reflective of the opinions gathered from each of the schools and the Skills 4 Employment group.

At the end of the Youth Forum debate the attendees were asked to complete a feedback form. The results are as follows –



## **Recommendation of the Youth Mayor**

### Youth report on new homes being built

With collaboration from representatives of; the Manor Academy, Samworth church Academy, Queen Elisabeth Academy and The Brunts Academy over the proposal of the amount of new homes being built over the next 20 year period. They as a collective have come to the conclusion that the medium level of houses should be built with a maximum of an extra 100 home le-way on top of the medium level depending on the success of the project. Furthermore they believe that this criteria and reasoning should be considered;

- Old homes around the Mansfield area should be renovated to make the area more attractive
- There should be an equal introduction of New homes and Businesses to ensure that both of them are attracted to the area
- There should be an evaluation every 5 years on the success and regeneration of the new buildings and businesses in the area, if there is a proven success the 100 home maximum le-way should be implemented to help the development grow further
- In all new areas of homes there should be a green reserve of land be it large or small
- Homes of all sizes must be build to encourage a wider variety of population
- Homes for family's should be built closer to schools or have easy access to schools
- More homes should be built on brown land compared to that of green land
- There should be a fair equilibrium of Land, homes and businesses
- If homes for families were built far from the town, there must be some sort of amusement for the youth i.e.; parks or youth clubs.
- There should be a large variety of new homes for all walks of society that should be built to a good quality to ensure that new areas are respected
- There should be more tailor accommodation for elderly residents
- The construction agencies and other companies should provide work experiences and apprenticeships for local people

I hope these concerns and ideas are taken into full consideration when the decision for the new homes is made, the youth of Mansfield are entrusting their voices with me and I hope they will be put across fairly. Thank you.

## **Citizen's Panel Feedback**

As part of the consultation process Members of the Mansfield District Council Citizens' Panel were invited to participate in focus groups on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2012. The 20 volunteers who attended were given a presentation describing the factors taken into account by MDC in arriving at the four options and then raised questions about the options and completed a card to indicate their formal position.

### **Comments recorded at Session 1**

1. Concern on infrastructure to support development – case need to be proved
2. More clarity required on true development potential before informed discussion can take place.
3. Can decisions taken now change in ten years time?
4. How would any new infrastructure be paid for
5. Could / should specific accommodation for (older people, retirement properties, not care homes) or (single) people be planned for?
6. Was the quality of the existing stock suitable to up grade for future needs?
7. Are un finished developments like the "Shoe Co" taken into account?

Whilst many of these issues are for the 'Preferred Options Document' which will come forward next, a general discussion was had.

### **Summary of discussions, session 1**

There was no particular issue with any of the options.

Participants were rather more concerned about how any development could be supported through the necessary improvements to the local infrastructure. (Points 1 and 4)

There was surprise over the number of permissions already in place and concern that that developments may not necessarily reflect the demographic needs of the district, for example, meeting the needs of an ageing population (5).

Participants were somewhat confused with regard to what counted as a dwelling provided/ built or a permission given and the flexible nature of permissions with regard to changing numbers on developments because of for example, changing economic preferences.

### **Comments recorded at session 2**

1. Why can't we simply agree that we will release all potential sites so permission can be given "on demand" thereby giving confidence that development is viewed positively
2. Four specific areas of concern around Mansfield's present situation were expressed and these were discussed
  - a. Town centre – not attractive (physically) to encourage people in
  - b. Need to protect green field sites.
  - c. Concern over unemployment, there are limited jobs available.
  - d. Wider infrastructure – roads, schools etc.
3. How have previous developments e.g. Berry Hill Quarry, influenced any growth in the local economy?
4. Should Mansfield continue to press for its own economic development or be comfortable in being a dormitory town for Nottingham?
5. Could (S106) development money, be spent to improve the centre of town rather than just in the area where development might take place?
6. What percentage of land is needed to be allocated to commercial use in a development scheme
7. What is affordable housing and how do we know how much is needed?

### Summary of discussions, session 2

There were no particular issues raised with any of the options.

A discussion was held around factors seen as influencing housing provision. (2 a,b,c,d). Why was a “high level” of provision required when unemployment was particularly high and how could it be demonstrated that new housing provision would necessarily attract more jobs or economic development to the district? (3)

Suggestions that housing development would provide for new infrastructure development did not sit easily with group members whose concern was how present residents could be appropriately, or better provided for. A major point was whether new housing provision could improve the quality of the district or if an improved quality district would encourage more economic development to come to the area. (2,5)

Only one panel member had any sympathy for the view that large amounts of land could be allocated for development with permission be considered on demand.

### **Summary of both groups.**

Participants from both groups were eager to understand the presentation and give an informed view. There was a feeling that there should be a ‘right’ answer that more information would help them reach, rather than an acceptance of the need to relate it to individual visions for the future of the area that they may hold.

Panel members seemed to adopt a conservative view to the options. The majority were in favour of using up present permissions and possibly only granting further permissions for brownfield sites. Generally they considered that Green wedges or green field sites should not as be developed ahead of brownfield. The majority of the group therefore opted for low to base levels of development.

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#### Polish

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#### Bengali

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