

Statement of Common Ground

between

Charnwood Borough Council
Persimmon Homes North Midlands
William Davis Ltd
English Heritage
Leicestershire County Council

**Charnwood Local Plan 2006 to 2028
Core Strategy Pre-submission Draft July 2013**

Policy CS22 West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension

Purpose

1. This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared to assist the Inspector with objections made by English Heritage with respect to the West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) proposal under Policy CS22.

Proposal

2. Land West of Loughborough, north of Garendon Registered Park and Garden is identified under Policy CS22 in the Submitted Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy for residential led mixed use development, involving about 3,000 homes, 16 ha employment, a local centre, primary schools and recreational provision.

Objections by English Heritage

3. English Heritage in their representation on the Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy dated 22nd July 2013 (reference 1805), have raised the following broad concerns with the proposed development West of Loughborough which have been the basis of discussion between the parties to this statement. English Heritage's objections to the Submitted Core Strategy related to their concerns over:
 - a) The overall lack of evidence regarding the impact of the Core Strategy proposals at land West of Loughborough upon the historic environment
 - b) The site selection process for identifying the West of Loughborough, against other options, as a location for a sustainable urban extension for the North Charnwood Area
 - c) The substantial harmful impact of the proposed access road through Garendon Registered Park and Garden
 - d) The substantial harmful impact upon the setting of the heritage assets of the proposed housing adjoining the northern boundary of the Historic Park
 - e) The appropriateness of mitigation proposals for Garendon Registered Park and Garden in terms of its restoration and long term management.
4. This statement sets out how these concerns have been addressed, and where there have been areas of agreement. The extent of residual concerns is identified.

Joint Working to Resolve Issues/Concerns through Development Management Pre-application Discussions

5. Since the publication of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy in June 2013 and receipt of the objections by English Heritage, Persimmon Homes and William Davis have entered into a formal Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) in respect of the preparation of a planning application for outline planning permission on land to the West of Loughborough SUE. The PPA has established a governance structure comprising of a Steering Group and Technical Sub-Groups to address several aspects of the proposals. The Sub-Groups include Transport, Heritage and Social Infrastructure Sub-Groups. English Heritage representatives have attended Heritage Sub-Group Meetings arranged through the PPA since October 2013, following a period of very limited constructive engagement between the parties.
6. In summary, these constructive meetings have resulted in agreement on the following matters:
 - a) The alignment of the road and the road design criteria (WYG Drawing No. A084018/35/12/17A)
 - b) Landscape mitigation
 - c) Massing/layout of housing adjoining historic park and garden
 - d) The phasing of Development
 - e) Restoration and long term management principles for heritage assets

Agreed Historic Environment Matters and Principles

7. Discussions between parties have led to progress and agreement on the following matters and design principles for the future planning application:

New Evidence to support of the Sustainable Urban Extension

8. Evidence has been produced working closely with English Heritage on the following documents:
 - a) Strategic Link Road Route Options Review Report - WYG dated 22 July 2013
 - b) Strategic Link Road Route - Options Appraisal Report - WYG dated 18 February 2014
 - c) Conservation Management Plan - Heritage Collective dated July 2014
 - d) Concept Masterplan - FPCR,
 - e) Road Principles and Response Document

9. It is agreed by all parties that these documents will be added to the Core Strategy evidence base. All parties are satisfied that the evidence is proportionate and appropriate. The recognition of this in the Core Strategy ensures that English Heritage's concerns in respect of this matter under paragraph 3 (a), above are satisfactorily addressed.

Alignment and Design Criteria of Access Road through Garendon Park

10. WYG Consultants have prepared an Options Appraisal report entitled for Persimmon and William Davis, which forms part of the extended evidence base. This has been prepared at the request of English Heritage in liaison with Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council (the Highway Authority) and the Highways Agency to provide an updated evidence base on the reasons for the selection of the route through the Historic Park as the preferred option.
11. There is agreement between English Heritage and the parties in this Statement of Common Ground that the report demonstrates that alternative routes of the A512 to A6 strategic link road cannot be viably delivered.
12. It is agreed between English Heritage, CBC, the Highways Agency, Leicestershire County Council Highway Authority and the developers that the alignment and design approach of the strategic link road currently being considered and reflected in the WYG Options Appraisal report is less harmful to the Park than the route under consideration through the published Pre-Submission Core Strategy and the site master planning work carried out up to September 2013.
13. It is agreed, on the basis that the proposed West of Loughborough SUE is sound in principle, that the strategic link road north from A512 through the Registered Park should:
 - a) be aligned as close as possible to the M1 Motorway with not greater than a 40 metre gap between structures associated with M1 Motorway and the link road, subject to 7.3 metre wide carriageway (with 1 metre Hard strips) and a lit junction at A512 entrance into site;
 - b) conform to not less than the minimum curve radii and satisfy the gradient criteria for design of the road specified by Leicestershire County Council Highway Authority;
 - c) follow the natural contours of the ground as far as possible and be accompanied by sensitively designed re-grading of the landform to minimise the effects of any otherwise necessary areas of cut and fill;
 - d) have the character of an open road through an estate whereby there is limited signage, there are no kerbs or lighting within the Park and

- foot/cycleways are omitted and directed along alternative routes using the existing estate roads;
- e) have local gateway features where the road enters the Park from the south and north;
 - f) be contained to the west by new parkland woodland planting and the east by appropriate fencing to contain grazing livestock; and
 - g) there should be no full height lighting columns within the registered park with alternative lower level lighting to be provided.
14. It is agreed that the above measures will be reflected in the Core Strategy. Specifically paragraph 10.24 of the supporting text will be amended as well as reference within the Policy text under 'transport'. English Heritage are satisfied that on the basis of points (a) to (g) in Paragraph 13, above, and the subsequent amendments to the Core Strategy, the level of harm caused to heritage assets and their setting by the Road is reduced to 'less than substantial'. This is also in conjunction with further landscape mitigation within Garendon Park.

Massing / Layout of Housing Adjoining Registered Park and Garden

15. The constructive dialogue has led to modifications to the masterplan which address English Heritage's concerns over the relationship between new housing area immediately north of the Park and the Park. A Masterplan has been agreed between the parties in this Statement of Common Ground with amendments showing:
- a) A fragmented and varied edge to the proposed development with residential blocks broken up and softened by swathes of open space;
 - b) Increased open space by the edge of Garendon Park which forms a transitional landscape between the park boundary and proposed buildings;
 - c) The revised layout of the residential development which is positively informed by Garendon Park and its historic features, whereby green corridors incorporating footpath links and avenue trees are aligned with those in Garendon Park and extend through the residential development; and
 - d) Lower densities around the edges of the proposed housing blocks.
16. All parties agree that the concept masterplan contained within the Core Strategy will be amended to illustrate this matter. English Heritage are satisfied that on the basis of the amendments to the concept masterplan that the level of harm to the setting of designated heritage assets from the adjacent housing is reduced from substantial harm to less than substantial harm. This is also in conjunction with further landscape mitigation within Garendon Park.

Landscape Mitigation, Restoration and Long Term Management Principles for Heritage Assets

17. There has been a constructive dialogue on the landscaping required to mitigate the impact of the housing development and access road adjoining Garendon Registered Park and Garden. The general approach to landscape mitigation is agreed. It has been agreed between parties in this Statement of Common Ground that the landscape mitigation will be shown as a series of photomontage showing current views, the same views with development and no landscape mitigation, those views with mitigation after 5 years and finally those views with mitigation after 20 years. An illustrative aerial perspective has been prepared to show the proposed interface of the residential development adjoining the area of the Hermitage, and Garendon Park. Appropriately detailed mitigation plans will be worked up as part of the formal application for outline planning permission.
18. English Heritage agree that the proposed restoration of Garendon Park should be broadly in accordance with the 1777 Estate Plan and include:
 - Conversion of some of the existing arable fields to pasture; and
 - Restoration of formal avenues and planting of other loose groups of parkland trees.
19. Small scale woodland planting along the western edge of Garendon Park (to the west of the proposed access road) should include a range of native and ornamental species in keeping with the wider character of the park.
20. It is agreed that the Historic Park and its monuments are deteriorating. As submitted, the West of Loughborough SUE proposal in the Core Strategy under Policy CS22 includes the requirement that the Park is restored and that public access is achieved in conjunction with the development.
21. A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) has been prepared by Heritage Collective on behalf of Persimmon Homes and William Davis Limited in consultation with English Heritage and CBC. It is agreed that the CMP can usefully form part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. Work has been completed which has assessed the condition of the existing heritage asset structures and provided costs and priorities for restoration. The priorities and works recommended in the CMP are agreed to be appropriate. Their implementation can be secured through the grant of planning permission for the West of Loughborough SUE. The CMP forms part of the extended evidence base for the Core Strategy.

22. The priority for the restoration of historic structures should be determined by their prominence and importance. However, the order of restoration will be determined also by condition and urgency of need for the works to be undertaken.
23. The use of suitable buildings within the existing farm complex at the northern edge of Garendon Park as a potential visitor centre has been agreed. A plan has been prepared by FPCR on behalf of the developers, which provides an indication of how a visitor centre could be created in this area as part of the future management of the area in accordance with requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS22. This is agreed to be feasible.
24. It is agreed between the parties in this Statement of Common Ground that public access to the Park will be broadly low key in character and the area will continue to be farmed with public access encouraged along footpaths, cycle paths and bridle routes. In the north east of the Park informal recreation will be encouraged closest to planned new and existing housing areas. The Park will not be promoted as a country park or equivalent.
25. There has been constructive dialogue leading to agreement on aspects of phasing of the Sustainable Urban Extension at West Loughborough. All parties agree that planting needed to mitigate the impact of development should be delivered very early on in process.
26. All parties agree that the concept masterplan contained within the Core Strategy should be amended to illustrate the landscape mitigation. In addition all parties agree that there should be amendments to the Core Strategy Policy CS22 and its supporting text. Specifically, these include amendments under paragraphs 10.27, 10.28 and 10.35, as well as policy amendments under 'Environment' to reflect the changes identified in this Statement. On the basis of this, English Heritage are satisfied that the mitigation and restoration proposals are appropriate and reduce the level of harm to heritage assets to 'less than substantial'. English Heritage also considers that the proposals for public access to the Registered Park and Garden are compatible with the conservation and significance of Garendon Park and its assets.

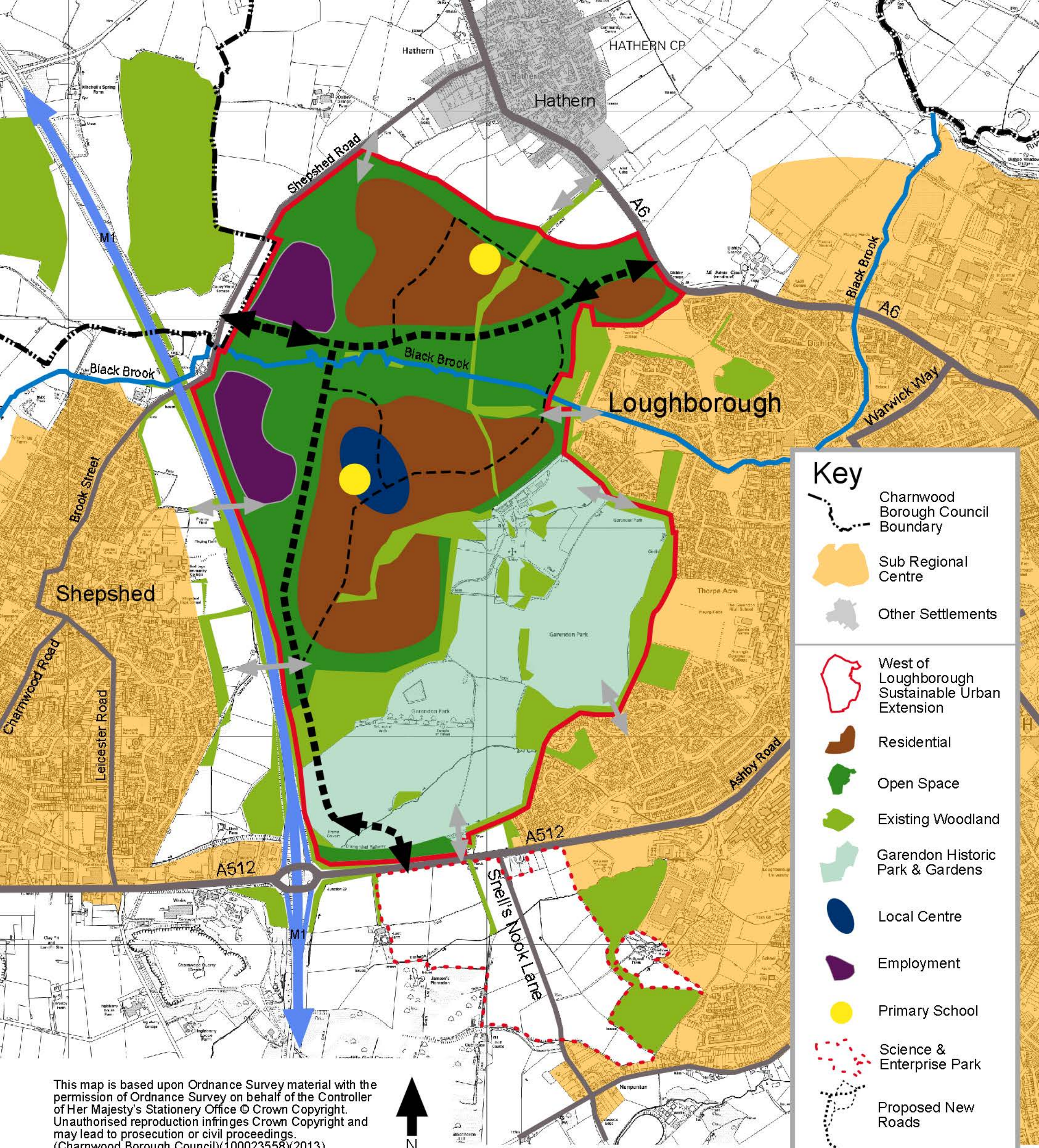
Proposed Amendments to the Core Strategy

27. To address the representations the following modifications to the Core Strategy are proposed in response to the duly made objections by English Heritage, having regard to the constructive engagement between the parties, as set out above:
 - Addition of documents outlined under paragraph 8 to the Core Strategy Evidence Base

- Concept masterplan (p121) amended to show realignment of strategic link road, blocks of housing, and mitigation. Appendix 1
- Agreed amendments to the supporting text of Policy CS22 – paragraphs 10.24, 10.27, 10.28 and 10.35. Appendix 2
- Agreed amendments to Policy CS22 Appendix 3

Conclusion

28. Of the objections made by English Heritage and listed in paragraph 3 above, English Heritage confirm the following:
 - Matter 3(a) regarding a lack of evidence in support of the proposals at Garendon within the Core Strategy is resolved.
 - Matters 3(c-e) relate to the substantial harmful impact upon designated heritage assets at Garendon Park resulting from the road, impact of the housing upon setting, the mitigation and the conversion and long term management of Garendon Park. English Heritage confirm that on the basis of the ongoing dialogue between parties for the planning applications and the resultant amendments to the Core Strategy summarised under paragraph 27, English Heritage consider that for matters 3(c-e), the level of harm to heritage assets is reduced from substantial harm to less than substantial harm
29. In respect of the Core Strategy Item (b) of paragraph 3 relating to the principle of this allocation, the site selection process against other options, remains unresolved between English Heritage and the other parties listed in this Statement of Common Ground.



- ### Key
- Charnwood Borough Council Boundary
 - Sub Regional Centre
 - Other Settlements
 - West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension
 - Residential
 - Open Space
 - Existing Woodland
 - Garendon Historic Park & Gardens
 - Local Centre
 - Employment
 - Primary School
 - Science & Enterprise Park
 - Proposed New Roads
 - Access Routes
 - Restricted Access Routes

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WEST OF LOUGHBOROUGH SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION

Appendix 2: Amendments to Core Strategy – Policy CS22 West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension and Supporting Text

(NB – underlined text either adds to or replaces previously proposed text)

- Updated concept plan on page 121 to illustrate re-alignment of the road and the masterplan.

10.24 Whilst we will maximise the opportunities to walk and cycle there will still be a need for new roads to serve the new development, provide links to the wider road network, support high frequency bus services and to avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring communities. The sustainable urban extension will deliver a new strategic distributor road from the A512 to the A6 north of Loughborough. This will run through Garendon Registered Park and Garden, aligned closely with the M1 motorway. Through the Park, this will have the character of an estate road and be designed sympathetically to help reduce impact on the heritage assets. This strategic distributor will include a link to Hathern Road which connects the development to Shepshed and Hathern. Improvements will also need to be made along the A512, at least to the west of Snell's Nook Lane, and at Junction 23 of the M1 motorway. The sustainable extension will also include a new road which provides a high street for the development which will be a focus for community and commercial uses.

Environment

10.25 The sustainable urban extension will provide a high quality environment respecting and responding to the landscape, ecology and heritage in this area.

10.26 The topography in this location rises from the site southwards up to the Temple of Venus in the Historic Park and Garden and northwards to the ridgeline south of Hathern. We expect the design of the sustainable urban extension to protect the identities of Hathern and Shepshed and respond to the landscape including the relationship the site has with Charnwood Forest. This should include avoiding development on the ridgeline south of Hathern and ensuring that important views are protected and, where appropriate, used to full effect.

10.27 The sustainable urban extension is located to the north of Garendon ~~Historic~~ Registered Park and Garden. The Park includes a Cistercian Abbey and Mansion, with fishpond and

mound which is a scheduled ancient monument. It also includes a Grade I listed building called the Triumphal Arch, a Grade II* listed building called the Temple of Venus and a number of other Grade II listed buildings. English Heritage has registered the park and garden because of its importance and identifies the registered park, Triumphal Arch and Temple of Venus as being at risk due to their condition, maintenance and uncertain future. There is also potential for unscheduled archaeology in the area. ~~The development provides the opportunity to restore the park and garden and its monuments and provide public access for the first time, securing its long term future.~~

- 10.28** ~~We expect the registered park and the heritage features to be borne in mind at the start of the design process and any adverse impacts to be mitigated through careful design of the development and road in consultation with English Heritage. The development provides the opportunity to restore the park and garden and its monuments and provide appropriate public access for the first time, securing its long term future. We expect these opportunities, together with careful design to inform a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the impact of development on the Park.~~
- 10.29** The area includes a number of key wildlife corridors which are part of the network connecting the Charnwood Forest to the Soar Valley. These corridors are associated with the Black Brook, Hathern Drive, a series of woodlands along the western edge of Loughborough joining a disused railway line and links from these corridors into the Hermitage Local Wildlife Site.
- 10.30** We expect the development to respect and enhance these wildlife corridors for their important biodiversity value and, where appropriate, create new wildlife networks. There are opportunities to create a network across the landscape along the north-south and west-east axis. There is an opportunity to re-connect isolated ecological sites, such as the Site of Special Scientific Interest at Oakley Wood. Activities that have the potential to disrupt wildlife should be focussed elsewhere in the site.
- 10.31** We want the sustainable urban extension to be designed so that it is resilient to climate change. We expect the development to maintain a greenfield run-off rate and protect and enhance water quality. We have worked with our partners to explore opportunities to reduce flood risk. Our evidence suggests that there is a need for appropriate run-off management and provide a reduction in flood risk of areas downstream. This should include providing upstream balancing capacity and management of runoff to reduce flooding in the existing urban area of Loughborough. This should include investigating opportunities to

reduce flood risk associated with the Black Brook and to reduce flood risk in Loughborough through storage options on the site.

- 10.32** The sustainable urban extension offers the potential to reduce our carbon footprint through design including the careful layout and orientation of buildings. We have an aspiration that the scheme will result in a 10% reduction in CO2 emissions when compared to Building Regulations as set out in Policy CS16, where viable.
- 10.33** The site has the M1 motorway running along its western boundary. We expect the layout and design of the site to mitigate the impacts of noise and pollution associated with the M1 motorway.
- 10.34** We want to see the sustainable urban extension provide good access to open spaces, sports and recreational facilities to benefit both new and existing residents in accordance with Policy CS15.
- 10.35** The sustainable urban extension will provide *appropriate* public access to Garendon Historic *Registered* Park and Garden. *This will provide a formal park, including We want this to provide a recreation and leisure space focal point for the development in keeping with the character of the historic park, and reduce pressure from large visitor numbers on Charnwood Forest.*
- 10.36** We expect biodiversity, open space and climate change to be considered and planned in an integrated manner together with walking and cycling links.

Infrastructure

- 10.37** We want to see the necessary physical and social infrastructure being delivered at the right time for the new community to foster sustainable lifestyles. The full range of infrastructure items and when they will be delivered are included in the Infrastructure Schedule in Appendix 2.

Appendix 3: Agreed Amendments to Policy CS22

Policy CS 22

West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension

We will allocate land to the west of Loughborough as a sustainable urban extension to deliver a community of approximately 3,000 homes. The development will make a significant contribution to meeting our housing needs by delivering at least 2,500 homes by 2028 and the remaining homes beyond the plan period.

The sustainable urban extension will create a balanced community and a safe, high quality and accessible environment. We will do this by:

Housing

- Seeking 30% affordable homes to meet local needs in accordance Policy CS3;
- Seeking a range of tenures, types and sizes of homes in accordance Policy CS3; Supporting extra care housing where it meets the needs of our ageing population in accordance Policy CS3; and
- Requiring a permanent site for gypsies and travellers of at least 4 pitches and a site of 4 plots for showpeople in accordance with Policy CS5.

Employment

- Providing up to 16 hectares of employment land to help meet our strategic and local employment needs and support the regeneration of Loughborough and Shepshed in accordance with Policies CS6, CS7 and CS8;

Community Facilities

- Providing two primary schools as appropriate to meet the need for school places, as focal points within the new community;
- Contributing to the provision of secondary school places if necessary to meet the need for school places;
- Providing one accessible Local Centre, delivered as part of an early phase of development, including as a minimum, local shops and a small supermarket (up to 2,000 m² net), small scale employment and a range of non-retail and community facilities and services in accordance with Policy CS9;
- Including opportunities, where appropriate, for an additional smaller centre where it complements the main centre, is well related to the school and meets community needs in accordance Policy CS9; and
- Supporting the provision of excellent electronic communications networks for all homes and businesses in accordance with Policy CS10.

Transport

- Requiring well connected street patterns and walkable neighbourhoods that provide high quality, safe and direct walking, cycling and public transport routes in accordance with Policy CS17;
- Requiring the retention of walking, cycling and road connections with Loughborough and Shepshed and where possible the creation of new links in accordance with Policy CS17;
- Requiring a comprehensive package of transport improvements in accordance with Policies CS17 and CS18 and including:
 - new and improved cycling and walking routes, well related to the green infrastructure network, connecting to new and existing employment areas including the Science & Enterprise Park and Dishley Grange, new and existing centres and Garendon Historic Park and Garden;
 - new and enhanced bus services linking the new community with local employment opportunities, Loughborough Town Centre, Shepshed District Centre and Loughborough Railway Station;
 - a new road providing the function of a high street where it passes through the new main centre;
 - a new strategic distributor road through the development to connect to the A512 at the south and the A6 (south of Hathern) to the north,
 - a new road link from the distributor road to Hathern Road,
 - dualling of the A512 between Snell's Nook Lane and M1 motorway J23;
 - capacity improvements to M1 motorway J23; and
 - other network improvements as identified by an appropriate Transport Assessment.

Environment

- Protecting the separate identities of Hathern and Shepshed and their Conservation Areas;
- Responding to the landscape and surrounding areas to create a locally distinctive development in accordance with Policies CS2 and CS11;
- Protecting and mitigating impacts on historic and archaeological features including Garendon ~~Historic~~ Registered Park and Garden, and the scheduled monument and listed buildings within the Park in accordance with Policy CS14.
- Protecting and enhancing existing wildlife corridors and where appropriate, provide new corridors to create a coherent biodiversity network in accordance with Policy CS13;
- Encouraging the development to, where viable, exceed Building Regulations for carbon emissions in accordance with Policy CS16;
- Delivering buildings and spaces that have been designed to be adaptable to future climatic conditions including extremes of temperature, drought and flooding in accordance with Policy CS16;
- Requiring development that provides appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems and flood alleviation measures and where possible reduces flood risk in Loughborough in accordance with Policy CS16;

- Including appropriate measures to mitigate any noise and air quality impact from the M1 Motorway; and
- Provide public access to, restoration and long term management of Garendon Historic Registered Park and Gardens as a public park and ~~historic~~ heritage assets consistent with their significance.
- Provide an accessible, comprehensive and high quality network of multi-functional green spaces in accordance with our open space standards in accordance with CS 15 and CS12. The package of green space should include:
 - parks totalling around 1.5 hectares;
 - around 3.4 hectares of amenity green spaces;
 - around 14 sites providing facilities for children;
 - around 14 sites providing facilities for young people;
 - around 22.8 hectares of outdoor sports provision including around 9 hectares
 - of playing pitches and around 4 tennis courts;
 - around 3 indoor courts; and
 - around 2.5 hectares of allotments

We will do this by working with our public and private sector partners and will require the following to support a planning application:

- a Development Framework, including delivery and phasing arrangements and a masterplan informed by an independent Design Review Panel and community consultation including key design principles to ensure the development of a comprehensive sustainable urban extension;
- A Heritage Strategy to inform the detailed mitigation proposals for the restoration and long term management of heritage assets.
- a Green Infrastructure Strategy to inform the development of detailed proposals and long term management; and
- a Sustainability Assessment that identifies the developments response to carbon emissions reduction and climate change resilience.

Before outline planning permission is granted we will require a development brief, design code or equivalent to be prepared to inform detailed planning applications or reserved matters applications.