

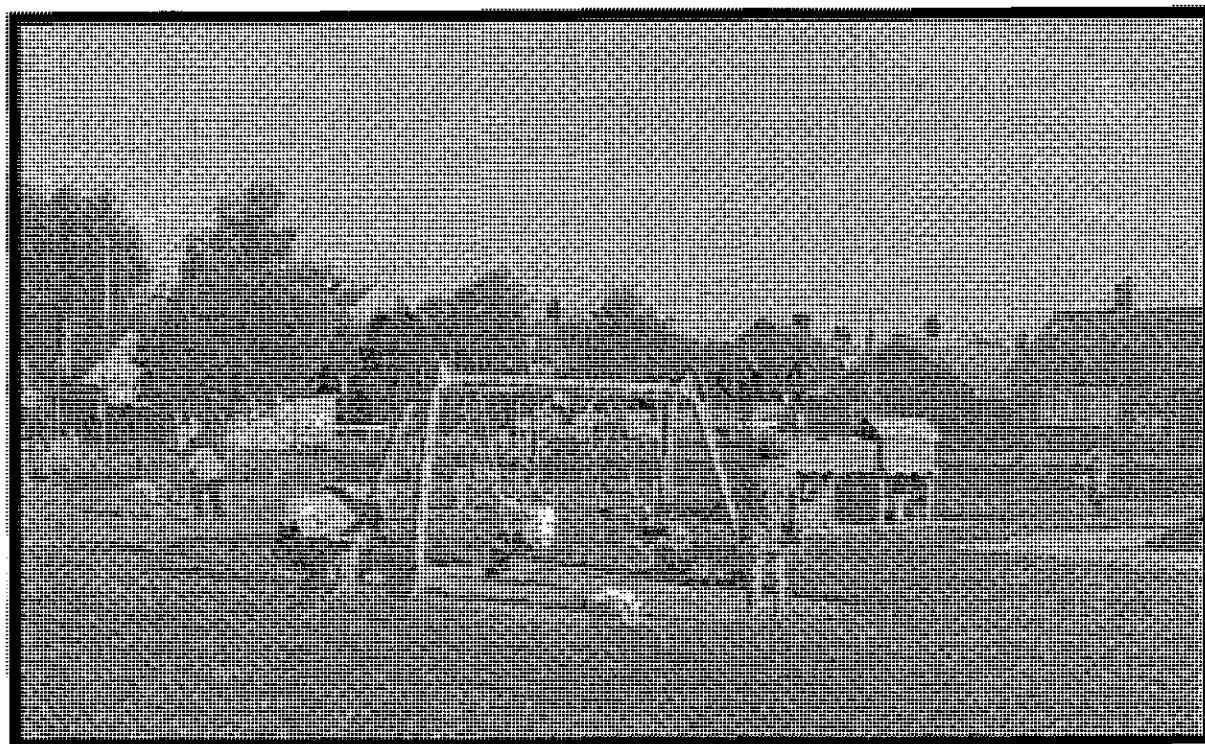
RECREATION, SPORT, LEISURE AND TOURISM

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

Where appropriate, policies from the approved Leicestershire Structure Plan (1994) are included in this Local Plan. These appear in *italics*.

The Local Plan policies and proposals are in **UPPER CASE BOLD TYPE**.

All of the policies must be considered together before a view can be determined on a particular proposal.



Ellis Park, Stamford Street, Glenfield.

RECREATION, SPORT, LEISURE AND TOURISM

RECREATION, SPORT, LEISURE AND TOURISM - POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

PLANWIDE POLICIES

The Location of Sport and Recreation Development

- 8.51 Sport and recreation are now accepted as important aspects of life. The recognition of their social and economic benefits has been accompanied by increasing expectations on the part of the public for a wide range of high quality, easily accessible facilities.
- 8.52 In accordance with Government advice in PPG 17, the Structure Plan seeks to ensure that adequate and properly located leisure facilities are available and accessible to the people of Leicestershire. Leisure Policy 1 states;

"Provision will normally be made for recreational development:

- (a) Within and adjoining settlements for formal recreation facilities.*
- (b) On the fringes of Leicester and adjoining settlements, the main towns, and in the countryside for land extensive uses which do not include substantial built development.*

Provision will be made for suitable formal and informal facilities for recreation within major new built development.

Provision will be made for large new recreation facilities which relieve pressure on Charnwood Forest and Rutland Water".

- 8.53 The District Council shares the aim of improving sport and recreation opportunities for all sections of the community, subject to the policies contained in this Local Plan, including those concerning access, parking, traffic flows, the countryside and other open land.
- 8.54 "Noisy sports" embrace a range of activities which, because of their perceived nuisance, often experience particular difficulty in finding acceptable sites. The Structure Plan considers that

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further sites for these activities could be established in the County and states in Leisure Policy 9;

"Where existing facilities are inadequate sites suitable for noisy sports will be identified, which do not cause unacceptable disturbance to residential areas or other environmentally sensitive areas and are accessible to their potential users".

The District Council does not seek to impose an embargo on the above activities, although it considers them to be particularly unsuitable within, or close to, primarily residential areas.

In addition, the following Local Plan policy will apply;

L1 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR SPORTS AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ANCILLARY PARKING, FENCING, FLOODLIGHTING, CLUBHOUSE, CHANGING AND EQUIPMENT STORAGE FACILITIES NECESSARY FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT, EXCEPT WHERE THIS WOULD:

- (i) HAVE A SIGNIFICANTLY DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF THE AREA, INCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS OF HOURS OF USE, VEHICULAR ACTIVITY, PRIVACY, ILLUMINATION, NOISE, DISTURBANCE AND AN OVERBEARING EFFECT; OR**
- (ii) BE OUT OF KEEPING WITH THE APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER OF THE AREA.**

WHERE A PROPOSED SPORT OR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY IS LIKELY TO GENERATE NOISE, CONDITIONS MAY BE IMPOSED LIMITING THE LEVEL OF NOISE, DURATION OF THE ACTIVITY, AND THE PRECISE AREA WHERE THE ACTIVITY MAY BE CARRIED OUT.

8.55 The District Council has identified on the Proposals Map a number of broad policy areas, which include Primarily Residential Areas within the built-up area and countryside, green wedges and areas of separation outside of settlements. Any proposal for sport or recreation development will have to meet the requirements of the policies controlling development in the particular area in

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which it is located. This will also apply to any non-recreational component of a proposed mixed-use development, for example, a golf course with "fairway housing".

- 8.56 The scale, nature and location of any built development will be a fundamental consideration in the District Council's assessment of a proposal. This will normally be best located within or directly adjacent to the built-up area. The District Council will take into consideration the likely disturbance to occupiers of nearby properties from a proposed development, particularly where clubhouse facilities, parking and floodlighting are involved.
- 8.57 Proposals for appropriate recreation facilities will be encouraged in countryside and other open areas which offer a high degree of accessibility, in particular by means other than private transport.

The Protection of Recreation Land and Buildings

- 8.58 Government guidance urges planning authorities to take full account of the community's long-term needs for recreational space, having regard to current levels of provision and deficiencies, and to resist pressures for the development of open space which would conflict with the wider public interest.

The Structure Plan has taken this issue into consideration and has extended the protection of recreation facilities to both recreation land and buildings. Leisure Policy 3 states;

"Planning permission will not normally be granted for the development of land or buildings, in recreational use and serving a particular community, for other uses unless:

- (a) *suitable alternative provision is made close enough to serve the same community; or*
- (b) *the site does not provide open space which is essential for private or public use or to protect the quality of the urban environment".*

In addition to the above Structure Plan policy the following Local Plan policy will apply:-

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L2 RECREATION LAND AND BUILDINGS (INCLUDING ALLOTMENTS) WILL BE PROTECTED FROM NON-RECREATION DEVELOPMENT. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE PROVISION CAN BE MADE WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE TO, AND OF EQUAL BENEFIT TO, THE COMMUNITY OF THE AREA OR WHERE REDEVELOPMENT ON A SMALL PART OF THE SITE IS NECESSARY TO SECURE THE RETENTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES. THE PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE RECREATION FACILITIES MAY BE SECURED BY A LEGAL AGREEMENT.

- 8.59 The above policy will apply to land and buildings used for all types of recreation, irrespective of their present condition. In its assessment of whether a recreation deficiency exists, or would be created by the development, the District Council will have regard to both current and longer-term needs.
- 8.60 In terms of sports pitches and playspace the minimum standards which are required by the District Council for new residential development represent a general guide to the level of provision which will be sought to serve existing areas. A number of communities are unlikely to have a level of provision which satisfies current and longer term requirements. Where these circumstances exist the District Council will seek to ensure that recreation provision is not diminished.
- 8.61 Allotments provide opportunities for recreation of a specialised nature. The District Council does not have any clear evidence of recent changes in demand, neither has it established a minimum standard of provision. It considers, however, that allotments generally should be protected for their recreation, amenity and nature conservation value.
- 8.62 In some parts of the District, privately owned facilities make a considerable contribution to recreation provision. The District Council intends that all recreation facilities, irrespective of ownership, will be subject to policy L2. The Local Plan Inspector has clarified that this equally applies to school playing fields and that they are by definition recreation land, notwithstanding that public access may be restricted. Government guidance states that both school fields and facilities owned by private clubs and voluntary organisations, if no longer required for their

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original purpose, may be able to meet the recreation needs of the wider community. The guidance does not, however, consider the financial implications of acquisition.

- 8.63 The District Council recognises that in certain circumstances, development for non-recreation purposes can generate financial resources which can be used to improve recreation provision, either on the existing site or at a suitable location elsewhere in the area, thereby resulting in an overall recreational benefit. Where it is part of a site which is proposed for development, the precise location and amount of land which may be acceptable will be determined according to individual circumstances.

AREA AND SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES

Soar Valley South

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- 8.64 It is known that sand and gravel reserves are present within the Soar Valley South area, although the precise locations of economically workable deposits are at present uncertain. Extraction commenced in part of the area in June 1991 and was suspended in March 1992 due to prevailing market conditions and the nature of deposits. It is possible that extraction could resume within the plan period and in such circumstances the above policy would guide restoration and subsequent development.
- 8.65 The proposal is consistent with the established policies of both the District and County Councils and recognises the shortage of water based recreation facilities in this area. A phased restoration of sand and gravel workings would allow recreation uses to be introduced at an early stage providing that this would not prejudice a comprehensive approach to the area nor affect mineral extraction.
- 8.66 A draft Development Brief (May 1992), which illustrates the preferred specifications and distribution of land uses to guide restoration, has been subject to public consultation. The Brief will be reconsidered when further details concerning mineral operations are available. Once adopted the Brief will be a material factor in assessing a restoration scheme and applications for development within the area.
- 8.67 The District Council recognises that facilities of a built nature may be necessary to create a successful recreation environment. The area is located in a proposed Green Wedge, however, and should remain generally open in character. Reference should also be made to policy L1.
- 8.68 The Council's preference is the creation of a large water area which would offer potential for a variety of activities. Noisy uses will not be permitted if they would be seriously detrimental to the amenities of the site and its surrounding area. Reference should be made to policy L1 regarding noisy sports.
- 8.69 The recreation routes proposed for the area are in accordance with the aims of Structure Plan Environment Policy 3 concerning Green Wedges.
- 8.70 Enderby Road provides the most satisfactory point of vehicular access to the area in terms of both highway safety and minimizing the impact of traffic on nearby residential areas, secondary access is also available from Everard Way. Further consideration will be given to the access and circulation arrangements in the Development Brief.

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Landfill Site, Cork Lane, Glen Parva

L4 21.9 ACRES (8.9 HA) OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE FORMER BLABY BRICKWORKS, GLEN PARVA, IS PROPOSED FOR PREDOMINANTLY OPEN RECREATION USES. PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT PROVIDING THAT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:

- (i) THE CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THE SOAR VALLEY SOUTH AND SENCE VALLEY GREEN WEDGES IS NOT DAMAGED;**
- (ii) THE CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THE GRAND UNION CANAL AND TOWPATH IS NOT DAMAGED;**
- (iii) A SATISFACTORY RELATIONSHIP IS CREATED WITH NEARBY DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ACTUAL OR COMMITTED DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER BLABY BRICKWORKS.**

8.71 Landfill operations have taken place at this former claypit since the early 1970's and are now complete. It is known that the deposited material is presently generating landfill gas. The extent to which the material has consolidated is undetermined and there may be problems of ground instability. These two factors suggest that ground conditions currently render the site generally unsuitable for built development (see also policies M2 and M3). In addition, the present means of vehicular access to the site is poor and can only be achieved via a Primarily Residential Area.

8.72 In the present circumstances the District Council considers that open recreation uses, providing that they do not generate a high volume of vehicular traffic, are a suitable use for the site.

8.73 The site is visually prominent on the edge of the river valleys and directly adjacent to the Grand Union Canal. Development should not be detrimental to the enjoyment of these areas for informal recreation. The site of the former brickworks lies within a Primarily Employment Area and is currently vacant.

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- 8.74 The District Council acknowledges that the aforementioned constraints to built development may be capable of satisfactory resolution within the plan period, for example, the construction of the Glen Parva Bypass may offer an acceptable means of vehicular access. Any material change in circumstances regarding this land will be taken into consideration by the District Council on the first review of this Plan.

Former Landfill Site, Carey Hill Road, Stoney Stanton

L5 6.2 ACRES (2.5 HA) OF LAND ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER CAREY HILL QUARRY, STONEY STANTON, IS PROPOSED FOR OPEN RECREATION USES.

- 8.75 This area was proposed for open space recreation in the Draft Blaby District (South West) Local Plan 1985, once filling of the former quarry was completed. The landfill which accommodates waste from the building and construction industry, was subsequently completed in the late 1980's. It is known that the deposited material is generating landfill gas. The extent to which the material has consolidated is unclear and there may be problems of ground instability.
- 8.76 In addition, the site occupies a visually prominent position in the centre of the village. The District Council considers it important to retain its open state and will therefore protect the land from development which would be detrimental to the form and character of the built environment (see policy C10 (xi)).

Other Proposals for Public Open Space

L6 THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE PROPOSED FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE USE:

- (i) 1.7 ACRES (0.7 HA) OF LAND SOUTH OF DOG AND GUN LANE, WHETSTONE;**
- (ii) 2.3 ACRES (0.9 HA) OF LAND NORTH OF DOG AND GUN LANE, WHETSTONE.**

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- 8.77 The two areas above were proposed as public open space in the Blaby, Glen Parva and Whetstone Local Plan (1983) in order to maintain a linear open area alongside the Whetstone Brook and to provide for the recreation needs of residents of the housing development proposed in the vicinity. This Local Plan reaffirms the proposals.

**(iii) 51.2 ACRES (20.7 HA) OF LAND EAST OF LUBBESTHORPE WAY,
BRAUNSTONE**

- 8.78 The District Council considers that it is important to protect the open land to the east of Lubbesthorpe Way to provide a buffer zone between the established residential area and existing and committed leisure, hotel and employment development in the vicinity (see policy C10(ii)).
- 8.79 Part of the buffer zone is already public open space. The District Council considers that this is an appropriate use for the entire buffer zone and one that is compatible with policy C10(ii). The proposed public open space will allow additional recreation opportunities for both residents and employees in the vicinity. Given the shape and topography of the area this facility is appropriate mainly for informal recreational activities.
- 8.80 In addition, there is potential to enhance the ecological value of the buffer zone. The District and County Councils are jointly preparing a Management Plan which will seek to establish a satisfactory relationship between recreation and nature conservation interests.

Recreation Routes

- 8.81 The benefits of securing improved access into the countryside are recognised in Structure Plan Leisure Policy 6 which states inter alia:-

"Where appropriate, advantage will be taken to secure improved access into the countryside, including opportunities presented by development schemes."

The District Council has already implemented a number of its proposals to create new recreation routes and intends to develop the network further.

L7 RECREATION ROUTES TO PROVIDE FOOTPATHS AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS ARE PROPOSED IN OR ADJACENT TO THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP:

- (i) BETWEEN THE GREAT CENTRAL WAY, THE GRAND UNION CANAL TOWPATH AND JUBILEE PARK;**
- (ii) THE FORMER RAILWAY LINE, CROW MILLS TO COUNTSTHORPE AND TOWARDS BROUGHTON ASTLEY;**
- (iii) THE FORMER RAILWAY LINES, GLENFIELD TOWARDS GROBY AND GLENFIELD TOWARDS RATBY;**
- (iv) THE FORMER GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY LINE, WHETSTONE AND COSBY TOWARDS DUNTON BASSETT;**
- (v) ON THE WESTERN AND EASTERN SIDES OF THE PROPOSED GLEN PARVA BYPASS BETWEEN BLUE BANK LOCK AND AYLESTONE HOLT AT THE NORTHERN END AND THE "BLACK PAD" (FOOTPATH Z109) AT THE SOUTHERN END, GLEN PARVA.**

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR ANY PERMANENT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ABOVE RECREATION ROUTES.

8.82 The former railway lines, (ii) - (iv) offer significant potential for use as "linear open spaces", linking areas of considerable population with green wedges and the countryside. The other two routes capitalise on the opportunity provided by the green wedge to provide informal recreation. In addition to their recreation potential, these routes may also provide the opportunity for safer and more convenient journeys for other purposes, in line with "Transport Choice" and Government policy in PPG 13. The proposed route to the west of the proposed Glen Parva Bypass, in particular, may be suitable for inclusion in the "Green Ringway" and the Inverness to Dover National Cycleway.

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- 8.83 Parts of all routes, except (iii) are already in the ownership of Local Authorities. An application to include (iii) on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way has been considered by the Department of the Environment and two sections of the route are to be included as bridleways. Negotiations with landowners to include the entire route are ongoing.

The Grand Union Canal

- 8.84 The value of the waterways and waterside in Leicestershire, for both recreation and wildlife habitats, is a feature of the Structure Plan. Leisure Policy 7 allows for the provision of related recreation facilities;

"Provision will normally be made for the development of new areas of water recreation use.

Provision will normally be made for the development of related recreation facilities in the vicinity of the waterways network on sites in or adjoining settlements."

- 8.85 The District Council considers it appropriate that the waterways environment merits particular protection from insensitive development.

L8 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ADJACENT TO, OR VISUALLY IMPINGES UPON, THE GRAND UNION CANAL IF THIS WOULD NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO:

- (i) THE HERITAGE OR CHARACTER OF THE CANAL AND ITS TOWPATH;**
- (ii) THE USE OF THE CANAL AND ITS TOWPATH FOR QUIET, INFORMAL RECREATION;**
- (iii) SITES OF ECOLOGICAL VALUE;**
- (iv) PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE CANAL AND ITS TOWPATH.**

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE CANAL TO INCORPORATE A PUBLIC FOOTPATH/CYCLEWAY ALONG AND ADJACENT TO THE WATERSIDE, WHERE THERE IS AN APPROPRIATE ORIGIN AND DESTINATION.

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- 8.86 The Grand Union Canal, which runs through the District for approximately two and a half miles, is a valuable recreational and ecological feature. British Waterways (BW), in association with the District Council, has undertaken a programme of improvement works to enhance the environment and to provide further recreation opportunities for a range of uses. The works include the resurfacing the towpath, installing access ramps and fishing places for the disabled and creating a small number of linear moorings. In addition, the County Council has created a picnic site at Crow Mill, South Wigston, immediately outside of the District. British Waterways are currently dredging this length of the canal to improve navigation. This may well extend the appeal of canal-based tourism.
- 8.87 The District Council considers that the environment of the canal merits particular protection. The value of its ecology is already recognised, with the canal classified as being of District-level significance. The County Council is considering designating the canal as a Conservation Area. The District Council considers it important that development which is alongside or will visually impinge on the canal should present a "fair-face" to the waterway, in order that the amenity of the area is not diminished. Improved public access to the waterside is in general desirable.

Disused Quarries

L9 RECREATION AND CONSERVATION USES ARE PROPOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING DISUSED QUARRIES:

- (i) CLINT HILL QUARRY, STONEY STANTON;
- (ii) SAPCOTE QUARRY, SAPCOTE;
- (iii) GRANITETHORPE QUARRY, SAPCOTE.

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR APPROPRIATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING ANCILLARY FACILITIES TO SUPPORT SUCH USES, PROVIDING THAT IT IS NOT DETRIMENTAL TO SITES OF ECOLOGICAL OR GEOLOGICAL VALUE.

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY RESIST PROPOSALS TO INFILL THESE DISUSED QUARRIES.

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- 8.88 The District Council considers that the three former quarries offer potential for organised, passive recreation and conservation uses. Not only do they contain water and natural vegetation which, over the years, has resulted in an attractive environment for wildlife, but they are also sites of important geological formations. In most cases access is necessarily restricted in the interest of public safety. With proper safeguards and management, these quarries could be made accessible to those who want to enjoy specialist recreation pursuits connected with the attractive habitat and geological formations. Ancillary facilities may be appropriate in the form of hides, viewing areas and pathways.
- 8.89 Because of the likelihood of a significant effect on the environment, the District Council will normally resist infilling proposals.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- 8.90 The key role that sensitive and well-planned tourism development can play in assisting economic development, providing that detrimental effects on the environment are minimised is recognised in the Structure Plan. Leisure Policy 2 states;

"Provision will be made for tourism development which supports:

- (a) the role of Leicester and adjoining settlements, and the main towns as centres for tourism;*
- (b) the County's heritage;*
- (c) opportunities to create employment in the Priority Areas;*
- (d) appropriate water recreation and leisure facilities;*
- (e) the improvement and establishment of sports facilities which provide for a regional or national need;*
- (f) proposals which reduce pressure on areas presently experiencing the greatest recreational and tourism demand;*

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(g) *schemes which will attract foreign and business visitors.*"

- 8.91 The District Council consider that each of the nine attractions below have particular potential to extend their appeal to visitors; (i) to (iii) are based upon the heritage of the District, while (iv) to (ix) have a recreation and leisure emphasis.

L10 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE ANCILLARY FACILITIES WHICH WILL COMPLEMENT FEATURES OF TOURISM SIGNIFICANCE, IN PARTICULAR THE FOLLOWING ATTRACTIONS:

- (i) KIRBY MUXLOE CASTLE AND ITS SETTING;**
- (ii) THE FOSSE WAY, BETWEEN HIGH CROSS AND STONEY BRIDGE;**
- (iii) HIGH CROSS MONUMENT AND SETTLEMENT;**
- (iv) THE PROPOSED WATER-BASED RECREATION IN THE SOAR VALLEY SOUTH, (BRAUNSTONE, ENDERBY, GLEN PARVA AND WHETSTONE);**
- (v) THE PROPOSED INVERNESS TO DOVER NATIONAL CYCLEWAY;**
- (vi) THE GRAND UNION CANAL;**
- (vii) STONEY COVE WATER SPORTS CENTRE, STONEY STANTON;**
- (viii) THE LIMES EQUESTRIAN CENTRE, SAPCOTE;**
- (ix) THE COUNTY ARENA, BLABY.**

- 8.92 The type of facilities which the District Council will consider appropriate will depend upon individual circumstances. Subject to other policies of the plan, these could include buildings for

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administration, information, storage, maintenance and hire of craft, horses and bicycles, changing and toilet facilities, food and drink uses, and small retail outlets selling products directly related to the attraction. The District Council will continue to protect areas of archaeological, geological and ecological value and in the case of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or its setting (see Appendix 3) there will be a presumption in favour of its physical protection in accordance with Government advice, currently contained within PPG 16, and Environment Policy 2 of the Leicestershire Structure Plan.

- 8.93 In terms of hotels, other overnight accommodation and conference facilities, the District Council shares the County Council's intent to encourage the upgrading of existing and development of new accommodation, conference and exhibition facilities. It is inappropriate for the District Council to identify specific sites as the impetus for such development must come from the private sector. Proposals will be judged on their own merits, within the criteria set out in Policy L11 and other relevant policies of the Plan. A site suitable for the development of a single, large scale exhibition and conference facility (Structure Plan Employment Policy 10) has not been identified for the reasons given in paragraph 4.18 of the Employment section of this plan.

- 8.94 The District Council has identified on the Proposals Map a number of broad policy areas within the built-up areas, where it is necessary to restrict development to uses which are not detrimental to the character and amenity of that area.

Caravan and Camping Sites

- 8.95 Caravan and camping represents a significant part of the self-catering tourism sector in the UK. According to the Heart of England Tourist Board, however, Leicestershire contains only a small number of units/pitches. The County Council is aware that there are pressures for the development of additional sites, but is concerned with their visual impact and levels of traffic generation. Structure Plan Leisure Policy 8 states;

"Provision will not normally be made for static holiday and touring caravan and camping sites unless they are in visually unobtrusive sites with good access to the road system."

- 8.96 The District Council shares the County Council's concerns. At present the only provision in the District is made by bona fide caravan organisations, who have certificated 2 small sites for use by their members only. Modest potential may exist for a site which is open to the general public particularly in association with those tourist attractions in policy L10 which have a recreation and leisure emphasis. The above Structure Plan policy, in conjunction with the appropriate policies of this plan, will be used to assess proposals.