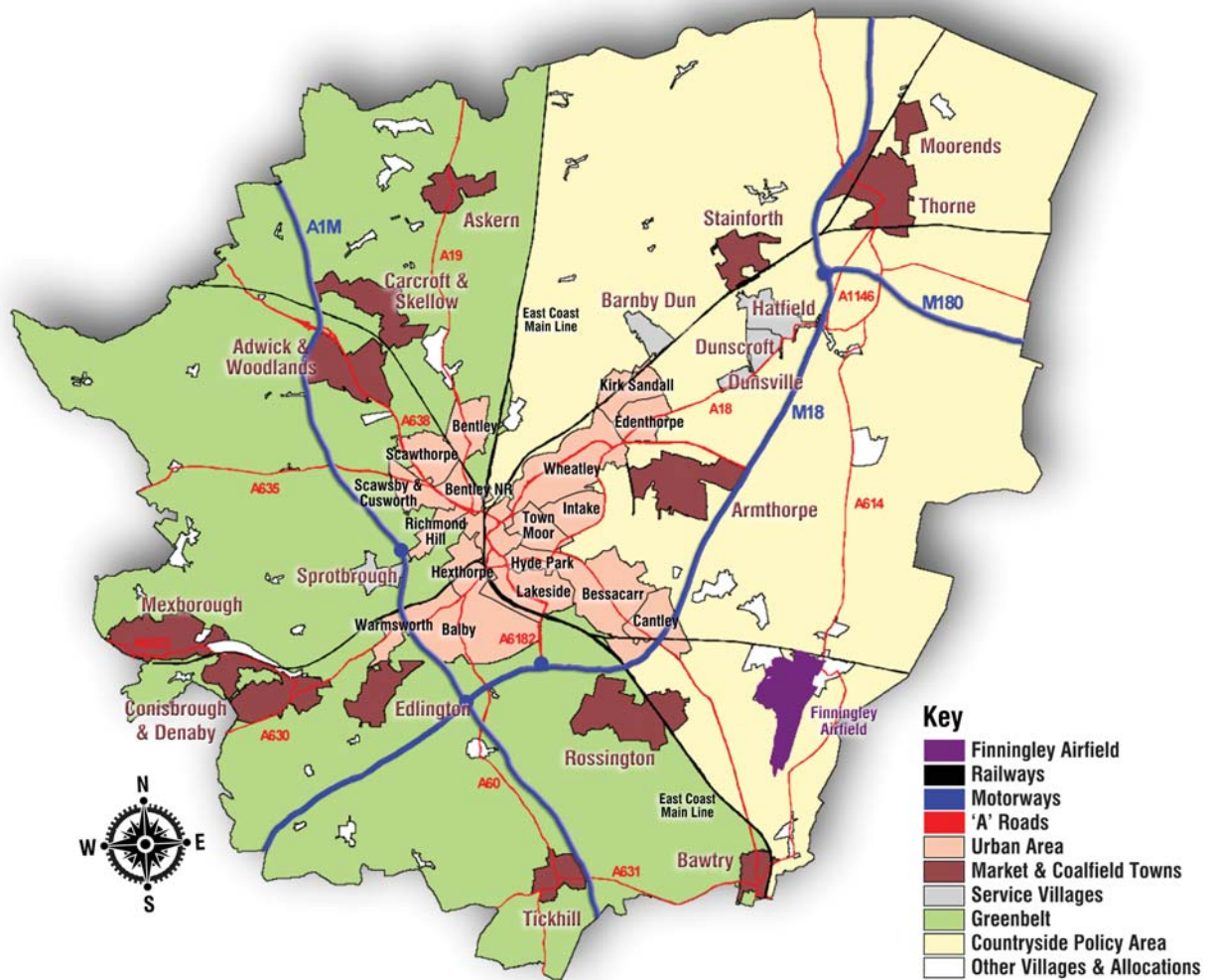


# Doncaster Unitary Development Plan Review 2001-2016

## KEY ISSUES SUMMARY REPORT





## DONCASTER BOROUGH - Key Facts & Figures

- Doncaster Borough covers 226 square miles and is the largest metropolitan borough in the country by area. 67% of the land is in agricultural use. The countryside in the western 'half' of the Borough is Green Belt.
- The 2001 Borough population is 286,900; it has fallen by 1.4% since 1981 but this is a smaller rate of decline than elsewhere in South Yorkshire. A major element of housing need is generated by falling household size which has decreased from a national average of 2.7 in 1981 to its current rate of 2.3.
- In 2001/02 Doncaster Council received 2241 planning applications of which 103 were for major development.

### Housing

- More than 5000 new homes have been built in Doncaster over the last five years. 42% of these have been built on brownfield land. As at 1st April 2002 planning permissions existed sufficient for 1741 houses.
- House prices in Doncaster rose faster in 2001 than anywhere else in the country but the Borough also contains areas of poor housing and housing market failure; some areas have been included in the Government's recent Housing Market Renewal Scheme.

### Waste

- In 1999/2000 800,000 tonnes of controlled waste was deposited in landfill sites in Doncaster; 40% of this was household waste; the rate nationally is 15%. Waste streams from mining, quarrying and agriculture is excluded from this figure.

## **DONCASTER BOROUGH - Key Facts & Figures continued...**

### **Employment**

- Over the last five years 849,000 sq metres of employment floor space has been occupied with 14,149 jobs created and £361million invested in Doncaster. There are currently 483 hectares of vacant land designated for employment purposes
- Unemployment in the Borough is currently 4969, a rate of 4.3% (UK rate 3%). The Borough contains a substantial low wage economy and pockets of high unemployment and social deprivation but now benefits from European Objective 1 status.

### **Built Heritage**

- Doncaster has a very diverse settlement pattern with urban and suburban areas, mining and market towns, agricultural and dormitory villages, hamlets and farmsteads with a huge variety of building types representing a succession of styles from medieval to modern. There are 41 Conservation Areas, approximately 800 Listed Buildings and 48 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

### **Natural Heritage**

- There are 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and approximately 300 sites of local nature conservation interest. Thorne and Hatfield Moors are of international importance. 300 Tree Preservation Orders cover a large number of individual trees and woodlands and there are 2290 kilometres of hedgerows including many ancient hedgerows.

### **Transport**

- Major transport proposals include a new international airport at Finningley, a road-rail interchange in Doncaster town centre, and dualling of White Rose Way. M18 link roads to serve Rossington, Hatfield and Finningley Airport are also under consideration.

### **Minerals**

- Doncaster has very substantial deposits of limestone, sand and gravel, coal and peat all of which have been worked for many years. Natural gas and recently coalmine methane is also exploited. Peat extraction on Thorne and Hatfield Moors is to cease in recognition of their international importance for nature conservation.

### **Shopping**

- Doncaster town Centre contains approximately 1 million square feet of shopping floorspace. The proposed Interchange scheme will add 300,000 sq ft of shopping space in the form of an extension to the Frenchgate Shopping Centre.

### **Greenspace**

- Doncaster has 21 parks covering 200 hectares; (and attracting 21 million visits a year) and approximately 1000 other green spaces including amenity areas, allotments and play areas. Generally there is an undersupply of Greenspace when assessed against national standards and a general lack of quality facilities.

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## Foreword

Doncaster's first Unitary Development Plan was adopted in June 1998. This was the first Borough Wide plan setting out a comprehensive framework of planning policies and proposals for land use in Doncaster. They set out the land use strategy to help rebuild the local economy and communities of Doncaster, badly affected by earlier economic restructuring. It set out to achieve economic and environmental regeneration, and reduce social inequalities.

Much of what the first UDP set out has now been achieved, with much development having taken place, and important aspects of our environment protected and enhanced.

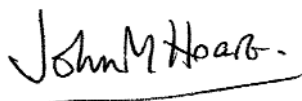
Since the UDP was adopted however, many important changes have occurred. South Yorkshire now has Objective 1 status, Regional Planning Guidance for Yorkshire and the Humber has been approved by the Secretary of State, and Doncaster has prepared a Borough Strategy setting out a vision and major transformational goals to revitalise Doncaster's future.

The Council understands the importance of an up to date and relevant Development Plan and the need for local communities and businesses to be involved in its preparation and content. This spatial strategy for the Borough will form an important element of the Council's drive to achieve its Transformational Goals set out in the Borough Strategy.

Therefore I am pleased to invite you to participate at this initial stage of preparing the Review of the UDP. This Issues Report sets out the main Issues that are considered to face the Borough, and that need to be tackled in this review. This Report is not the next Plan, but is designed to give you the opportunity to have your views made known at the outset, and prompt a debate about the most important questions facing us, that need to be answered in the reviewed Plan.

The next stage after this debate should see an Initial Draft Plan published in early 2004.

Please help us and participate in the future planning of your area, and help the Council and all in Doncaster to achieve their full potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M Hoare". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Councillor John Hoare  
Cabinet member and portfolio holder  
for Urban Renaissance and Transport

2002 saw the publication of **The Doncaster Borough Strategy**; it sets out an exciting and ambitious vision for the future of the Borough; prepared by Doncaster Strategic Partnership, it proposes amongst other things: an urban renaissance with higher quality development; more use of brownfield land rather than Greenfield land; a high growth economy; widespread improvements in quality of life with particular attention to disadvantaged areas; and a more sustainable Borough with Doncaster exceeding all major national targets for sustainability

**The Doncaster Unitary Development Plan** (UDP) will play a key role in helping to achieve this vision. The UDP is the Borough's statutory development plan. It sets down the strategic and local planning policies necessary to guide and coordinate land use and development, contains the policies necessary to protect the built and natural heritage, forms the basis for determining planning applications and provides the Borough Strategy with a spatial framework.

**What should this spatial framework look like?** The Council is seeking the views of anyone with an interest in the Borough on the key issues about the scale and location and form of new development in the Borough and how best to protect and improve the local environment.

The current UDP covered the period 1986 to 2001 (although it provided for some development requirements such as housing and employment well beyond this period); consequently it needs to be reviewed in order to provide a planning and land use framework for the new plan period up to 2016.

**The UDP Review** is required to deal with a wide range of planning and land use issues; it needs to decide where to allocate land for Doncaster's housing, employment and other development requirements; review existing allocations which have not yet had planning permission; include policies to protect the Green Belt, greenspace, and the built and natural heritage; protect and promote Town and District Centres; ensure that new development is of a high quality and contributes to a more environmentally, economically and socially sustainable Borough over the next fifteen years.

Since the current UDP was prepared in the early 1990s Doncaster has seen many changes in social, economic and environmental circumstances which have been reflected in the Borough Strategy and which require a fresh look at the Borough's planning framework:

**National planning guidance** has changed significantly with a much greater emphasis on urban renaissance, minimising the need to travel, and on sustainable and quality development which uses brownfield land and avoids areas liable to flood. **Regional Planning Guidance** now interprets national guidance at a more local level and applies specific targets to Doncaster including the number of new houses to be built and the percentage to be built on brownfield land. The Council has also produced a number of other **Borough-wide strategies** which the UDP Review will need to complement; apart from the Borough Strategy these include the Housing Strategy, Greenspace Strategy and Local Transport Plan. The UDP will also need to have regard to **Community Action Plans** which are being produced by a number of communities; these

need to have regard to national and regional guidance and are likely to include policies and proposals within the remit of the UDP Review.

Doncaster along with the rest of South Yorkshire now benefits from European **Objective 1** status (the highest level of European funding); the M18 corridor, Dearne Corridor and Doncaster Urban Centre have been identified as funding priorities with Integrated Development Plans (IDPS) put in place; these are not land use policy plans but will be influential in terms of new allocations.

A series of **major transformational development projects** are at various stages of planning or implementation including Doncaster Interchange, Doncaster Waterfront, the New Community Stadium, the restoration and redevelopment of the former colliery sites (Bentley, Brodsworth, Askern, Edlington and Armthorpe), Lakeside, Racecourse/Conference development, and perhaps most significantly the proposed Finningley International Airport.

The Doncaster UDP Review needs to take account of these and many other factors in producing a spatial framework which will maximise the potential of the Borough in economic, social and environmental terms.

The Council has produced a **Key Issues Report** which highlights some of the most important, and perhaps inevitably controversial, choices about development and land use which the UDP Review will need to address. It also sets out the UDP Review process. This is just the first stage in that process and there will be a number of opportunities for comment and involvement before the new UDP is adopted.

**The Consultation Strategy** including contact

details and the anticipated timetable for the rest of the Review Process are also set out in the main report. This **Key Issues Summary Report** summarises the main content of the Key Issues Report.

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## 2. Future Development Strategy

This will be established in detail following the Key Issues Report consultation exercise but it will be strongly influenced by national and regional planning guidance, the Borough Strategy and other Borough-wide strategies, various regional and sub-regional strategies, and community action plans. The Key Issues Report hopefully makes it clear that establishing a new development strategy and spatial framework for the Borough will involve some important and often difficult choices but it is considered that the future development strategy will be underpinned by **20 Key Strategic Principles**:

- 1 Developing an **economic strategy** that seeks to broaden the base of the local economy
- 2 Supporting an **Urban Renaissance**
- 3 Building in environmental, economic and social **Sustainability** into all aspects of development, waste disposal, and renewable energy
- 4 Aiming for **high quality** design in all new developments
- 5 Promoting more **mixed-use developments**
- 6 Maximising the use of **brownfield** land and promoting its use before Greenfield land
- 7 Using land more efficiently by **increasing housing densities**
- 8 **Safeguarding the natural environment**
- 9 **Safeguarding the built heritage**
- 10 **Avoiding building in areas liable to flood**
- 11 Meeting the Borough's **annual housing requirement**
- 12 Protecting and enhancing the **role and function of Doncaster Town Centre**, and other key centres
- 13 **Integrating land use and transport provision**
- 14 Retaining the existing general extent of the **Green Belt**
- 15 **Protecting the countryside** for the sake of its landscape, wildlife, amenity, agriculture and natural resources
- 16 Supporting the development of **Finningley** as an international civil airport
- 17 Supporting the development of the **major transformational projects**
- 18 Supporting **A Rural Renaissance**
- 19 Protecting the Borough's **Greenspace**
- 20 Supporting **waste recycling**

## 3. Economy and Employment

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### Key Facts

- Unemployment is currently 4969 (a rate of 4.3%; the national rate is 3%). The Borough contains a substantial low wage economy and pockets of high unemployment and social deprivation. The low GDP rate in Doncaster/South Yorkshire resulted in Objective1 designation
- Over the last five years 849,000 sq metres of employment floorspace has been occupied with 14,149 jobs created and £361 million invested in Doncaster. There is currently 483 hectares of vacant land designated for employment purposes
- 70% of Doncaster's workforce are employed in service industries, 18% in manufacturing and 9% in construction. Mining now employs very few people in Doncaster with only two remaining pits in operation (Rossington & Hatfield/Stainforth). Agricultural employment is also very modest despite agriculture being by far the biggest land use in the Borough (67%).

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- UDPs should adopt a realistic approach to employment land requirements, and provide an appropriate range of employment land for different types of occupier which is capable of development and well served by infrastructure.
- The UDP should adopt policies and proposals to assist in the need for restructuring of the local economy towards a

more modern and sustainable mix of employment opportunities in growth sectors of the economy.

### Current UDP Policy

- Allocated sufficient employment land for up to 2006 in a wide range of locations and types of site. This included some very large sites alongside motorway junctions as part of a positive approach to attracting inward investment following the loss of jobs in the mining and manufacturing industries

### How much Employment Land is needed?

Doncaster has 500ha or more than 20 years supply of employment land given current rates of development (25ha per year) although take up of land has increased since the mid 90's and varies by location with the M18 corridor currently having a high demand. Whilst overall supply of employment land is therefore adequate there may be a need for more land in high growth areas and in the Objective1 Strategic Employment Zones.

Having regard to the overall current supply of employment land, if new sites are to be brought forward, existing allocations (especially greenfield sites) which are less likely to come forward for development need to be considered for de-allocation or re-allocation to more suitable uses including housing.

### **Where should employment land be located?**

Factors to consider include local unemployment and deprivation, availability of brown-field land, number and types of job generated, transport integration and access, and potential funding sources. Availability of Brownfield land capable of attracting inward investment is however limited and for Doncaster to attract inward investment new Greenfield Employment sites are likely to be needed.

There is a continuing national trend for developers preferring sites out of town with good car related access. In Doncaster this will be reflected by a strong demand for new employment allocations along the M18 corridor with easy access to existing or new junctions, and along the A1(M) corridor. New businesses are likely to be attracted to the proposed Finningley Airport and a link road to the M18 would potentially create further development opportunities; new allocations may need to be identified now and possibly phased to become available as the airport grows.

### **Should specific types of employment use be restricted to specific sites?**

Within traditional employment allocations there is scope for a wide range of potential users with different impacts in terms of economic regeneration, land-take, employment creation, environmental and traffic impact and so on. There are potential advantages to be gained

from identifying strategic employment sites and safeguarding them from piecemeal development whilst the concept of business clustering is being widely promoted to enable business to benefit from proximity to similar related activity. To maximise this potential sites may need to be allocated for specific economic activity.

### **Should employment land be identified specifically in all or most large settlements?**

Residents in the most deprived areas can often be excluded from employment opportunities in the most economically active parts of the Borough through access difficulties. This issue can be tackled in part through Green Travel plans. Conversely employment sites in the most deprived areas can often be relatively remote and unable to attract inward investment, and as a consequence remain undeveloped.

Other Economy and Employment Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include whether sites should be allocated for 'bad neighbour' employment uses and whether major new employments should demonstrate clear and

## 4. Housing

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viable alternatives to the private car for travel to and from work?

### Key Facts

- The population of the Borough as at 2001 is 286,900; it has fallen by 4,000 or 1.4% since the mid 1981 estimate of 290,000. This is a significantly smaller fall however than that for Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham. Doncaster has retained a large economically active population albeit with fewer males, more older residents, and a higher than average number of single parents.
- Council policies have sought to retain existing population but a major element of demand for housing is the continuing fall in average household size which is a national phenomenon. National average household size has fallen from 2.7 in 1981 to 2.48 in 1991 and is currently 2.3.
- More than 5000 new homes have been built in Doncaster over the last five years. 42% of these have been built on brownfield land.
- As at 1st April 2002 planning permissions existed sufficient for 1741 new houses in Doncaster
- House prices in Doncaster rose faster in 2001 than anywhere else in the country reflecting a buoyant local housing market.
- Parts of the Borough have been included within the Government's Housing Market Renewal Initiative reflecting the fact that there are areas of poor housing and housing market failure in the Borough.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- Doncaster's housing requirement to be 735 dwellings per year for the plan period 1998-2016
- Brownfield sites to be developed before Greenfield sites. Doncaster's provisional brownfield housing target is 70%
- New housing to be directed to urban areas as part of an urban renaissance and in accordance with a search sequence for sites
- Housing land to be released in accordance with a Plan, Monitor and Manage approach rather than "predict and provide".
- Land to be used more efficiently by building at higher densities and reducing the amount of land for car parking.

### Current UDP Policy

- Provided sufficient housing land for the period 1986-2003 and beyond in order to retain the existing population and attract key workers into the Borough
- Allocated housing sites to provide for a wide range of housing type, tenure, size, cost and location; the priority was to provide for flexibility and choice and to bring forward sites in regeneration priority areas.
- Includes significant Greenfield (and brownfield) allocations which have not yet received planning permission.

### **Should the use of brownfield land for housing be maximised with the aim of achieving the 70% brownfield target?**

The Council's Urban Potential Study will establish just how realistic the 70% target is. There may not be sufficient brownfield land on appropriate sites or in sustainable locations. Old declining employment sites could be reallocated for housing. The plan, manage and monitor approach will affect the rate, timing and order of the release of new housing land. Different targets could be applied to different housing phases. There are a number of other possible objectives relating to the location of future housing which may or may not be entirely consistent with pursuit of the 70% target see below.

### **Where should new housing development be located?**

Apart from maximising the use of brownfield land the location of new housing sites could have regard to the following objectives:

- Maximising accessibility to jobs, shops and other services by means other than the car in the interests of sustainability
- Directing housing to urban areas and priority regeneration areas in support of an urban renaissance
- Providing a reasonable choice of opportunities across the Borough
- Avoiding loss of green belt except in exceptional circumstances
- Taking account of the capacity of utilities, infrastructure, schools and other services and of development constraints including flood risk, contamination, wildlife, conservation and landscape value, etc.
- Providing a modest amount of housing in rural areas to support local services and to provide for local housing needs.

Regional Planning Guidance provides a search sequence for looking for new housing sites as follows: within the main urban area (Doncaster, Balby, Bentley, Bessacarr, etc.); on the edge of the main urban area; in the coalfield and market towns; other sustainable locations; rural housing elsewhere should be to meet local needs and/or support local services.

### **Should new housing developments be built to an average density of 38 dwellings per hectare**

Widespread concern about the loss of countryside has prompted new guidance promoting higher housing densities. A minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare with densities up to 50 per hectare in appropriate locations (e.g. town centres) is now advised. Current net densities in Doncaster on new medium/large housing developments are typically about 30-35 per ha and are usually dominated by detached properties with minimum size gardens.

The more efficiently land is used the smaller the housing land requirement will be. Doncaster's 70% provisional brownfield target is based on the assumption that average density will be 38/ha. Different densities will be

appropriate in different locations. Higher densities will be more suitable in town centres and other locations with good access to public transport and services. Different approaches to housing developments with fewer detached properties and more imaginative design solutions can increase density and quality.

### **Should current UDP affordable housing Policy be changed in respect of the balance between built units and commuted sums?**

Planning makes an important contribution to the delivery of affordable housing. Current UDP policy requires normal market housing developments of 25 dwellings or more to provide up to 15% of the houses as affordable housing; this can be built units on site or a sum of money (a commuted sum) to be spent on affordable housing on another site in the vicinity.

The Council's preference has been for built units on each site and this accords with Government objectives of creating mixed communities. On the other hand commuted sums can in some cases offer greater flexibility e.g. using them for refurbishment of dilapidated properties. In some cases they allow more affordable houses to be built for the same money on another site.

### **Are new policy approaches needed to deal with rural housing needs?**

Because most market housing will be located in urban areas so as to meet urban renaissance and sustainability objectives the scope

for meeting rural affordable housing needs through normal affordable housing policy is limited and a specific rural policy may be needed such as requiring affordable housing on sites of less than 25 dwellings or increasing the proportion of affordable units to above 15%. Alternatively an "exceptions policy" allows for the development of small sites for affordable housing on the edge of villages as an exception to normal green belt/countryside policy area restraint policies.

Other Housing issues examined in the Key Issues Report include whether more amenity open spaces should be provided within housing sites; whether urban intensification should be resisted in some existing housing areas;

and how areas of poor housing might be remodelled.

strategy for the location of employment, shopping, leisure, entertainment, education and civic uses within that hierarchy.

### Key Facts

- Doncaster town Centre contains approximately 1 million square feet of shopping floor space. The proposed extension to the Frenchgate Shopping Centre will add 300,000 sq ft of shopping space
- All the sites identified for out-of-town food and non-food retail within the existing UDP have been developed.
- Doncaster's 2001 retail capacity study shows that there will be no capacity for significant additional food or convenience goods floor space in the Borough up to 2011 except possibly a very small number of small or medium sized supermarkets to meet specific needs.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- Sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres.
- Maintain a competitive and innovative retail sector with a wide range of shops, employment and other facilities that are easily accessible by a choice of means of transport.
- Adopt a sequential approach to new retail, leisure and other key town centre uses so as to direct them to town centre locations.
- Out of centre locations are only acceptable if they can demonstrate need and be reached by a choice of means of transport.
- Establish a hierarchy of centres and a

### Current UDP Policy

- Recognises the existing hierarchy from Doncaster town centre, through Thorne and Mexborough to the smaller town and district centres in the colliery and market towns.
- Provides sufficient capacity for out-of-town food and non-food shopping facilities up to 2011 but includes no sequential policy
- Protects the retail function of prime and secondary shopping streets in Doncaster Town Centre
- Identifies and promotes the redevelopment of a number of development opportunity sites in Town Centres

### Should new significant shopping developments be exclusively directed to existing Town and District Centres?

The review of the UDP needs to look at shopping provision in the Borough and assess whether there will be a need for additional retail development and if so how and where it should be accommodated. The retail capacity study shows that Doncaster is well served by out of town facilities for both food and non-food, that there is no existing capacity and that therefore any additional out of centre retail development

would result in the closure of existing town centre stores. Key development opportunities such as the proposed Frenchgate Centre extension would almost certainly be undermined.

### **Should new small shops outside town and district centres and existing shopping parades be confined to genuinely small shops (no more than 100sq metres) designed to serve locally identified needs only?**

The existing UDP recognises the important role that these facilities fulfil and contains policies to encourage new small shops in areas where there is a local need and particularly in areas of substantial population and housing growth or where there are no shops within a reasonable walking distance. The existing UDP definition of a small shop (up to 1200 sqm floor area) is now considered too big; certainly it exceeds the size of the traditional small shop whilst some established retailers have standard store formats below this size. These stores normally have generous car parking, serve more than local need and will impact on town and district centres and on local residential amenity.

### **Is there a case for restricting the number of pubs in Doncaster Town Centre or are they a valuable contribution to the vitality and viability of the town?**

Properties in the secondary shopping areas of Doncaster Town Centre have in recent years

attracted a significant number of planning applications for food and drink uses and in particular pubs. Whilst it is important that the primary retail areas are protected, in some secondary areas of the town new pubs can contribute to the vitality and viability of the town by investing in the building fabric; providing an active use for buildings for which there may be little or no retail demand; generating pedestrian flows comparable to or greater than retail alternatives; and providing café and restaurant facilities at different times of the day. Issues of noise and anti-social behaviour could be addressed through policing, environmental health, licensing and town centre management. One planning policy contribution could be to require new pubs and take-aways to contribute to litter collection/street cleaning.

### **What opportunities are there in Doncaster Town Centre for new developments to reinforce its role as the focus of the Borough and as a sub-regional shopping centre?**

There have been few new retail developments in Doncaster town centre over recent years for durable goods and there is now a strong need for a major new town centre development to safeguard the town's long term future. The proposed extension to the Frenchgate Centre will if successful help re-establish some of Doncaster's former role as a sub-regional shopping destination but there is capacity for further non-food development within the town centre beyond even this. Improvements to Doncaster Market are planned and exciting developments lined up for Waterdale and the Waterfront.

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## 6. Built Environment and Design

Other Shopping Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include the role of Doncaster Town Centres primary and secondary shopping frontages and the use of “mixed-use” designations in peripheral secondary shopping frontage areas

### Key Facts

- Doncaster Borough includes a very diverse settlement pattern with urban and suburban areas, mining and market towns, agricultural and dormitory villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Within this framework is a huge variety of building types representing a succession of styles from medieval to modern
- There are 41 Conservation Areas, approximately 800 Listed Buildings and 48 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- UDPs should include policies to bring about an urban renaissance based on having a ‘vision’ for the built environment.
- UDPs should include policies for the protection of the existing built heritage and to promote quality design in new buildings
- The development sector must demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good design in their proposals

### Current UDP Policy

- Promotes environmental quality as a major precondition to economic regeneration and promotes good design in a general rather than in a specific or detailed manner
- Includes policies to conserve and enhance conservation areas and to protect listed buildings and archaeological interests.

### What should Doncaster’s urban design vision be and should it be Borough-wide or localised?

High quality design as a contributor to an urban renaissance is not just about buildings but also the spaces in between them and all of the paraphernalia which goes to make up our towns and villages. The Borough has some very high quality and attractive places and landscapes but there are also some quite run-down parts of the Borough which deserve improvement. The council has initiated many improvement schemes and there are many examples of good design from the private sector. ‘The Doncaster Renaissance Town Charter 2002’, sets out a 25 year vision for the town centre to be developed and regenerated to create a truly great place that people can be proud of. This type of approach can be applied to other communities in the Borough.

### Should the ‘By Design’ objectives form the basis of UDP urban design

### **policy and, if not, what should the objectives be?**

Government advice set out in 'By Design' suggests that successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common and can be expressed as principles or objectives of good urban design

- **Character** - a place with its own identity
- **Continuity and Enclosure** - a place where public and private places are clearly distinguished
- **Quality of the Public Realm** - a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
- **Ease of Movement** - a place that is easy to get to and move through
- **Legibility** - a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- **Adaptability** - a place that can change easily
- **Diversity** - a place with variety and choice

### **Should Doncaster have its own distinctive residential development guide?**

National/regional policy is promoting higher residential densities. Some people associate higher densities with poorer living conditions but modern designs and layouts are tending to show that this need not be the case. At the moment there are few modern examples of new high density housing in the Borough although they exist in many other places in the

UK. The UDP needs to promote higher density housing whilst at the same time ensuring that new developments offer residents the highest possible living standards.

New residential developments should also put the needs of the pedestrian over those of the motorist. National policy proposes reducing off-street residential parking spaces to an average of no more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling. There is much current advice on well-designed residential environments with mixtures of densities which are pedestrian friendly with quality landscaping and open space, easy to move about in, with access to services and which are locally distinctive rather than reflecting patterns common throughout the UK.

Other Built Environment and Design Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include:

- Should the UDP contain more detailed policies to promote sustainable devel-

opment and design including renewable energy, sustainable design and materials, energy efficiency and insulation, layout, drainage and recycling techniques?

- Is there a need for detailed design guidance for employment developments such as at motorway related distribution warehouse sites?

### Key Facts

- In 1850 the Borough was characterised by a predominantly mixed use environment. 19th Century urbanisation saw much development segregated. Post Industrial society will give opportunities to re-introduce mixed uses.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- A range of government policy and planning guidance now promotes the desirability of mixed-use development.

### Current UDP Policy

- Current policy recognises the value of mixed uses and includes some large scale mixed use regeneration projects such as Lakeside and Woodfield Plantation. However it does not give detailed guidance or policies for securing mixed use developments generally or on a smaller scale.

### Should there be a policy promoting mixed use in new residential devel-

### opments and existing residential areas, and should the UDP give detailed guidance on how to achieve mixed use development?

Government policy sees mixed use development as a means to achieving vitality and diversity, reducing the need to travel, and creating more sustainable communities. Much historic development had traditionally been mixed in character, however later development has tended to segregate uses. To reverse this trend the UDP should identify appropriate sites for mixed use development and provide guidance on an appropriate mix of uses.

### Should mixed use development be encouraged in town centres in particular to encourage vitality and regeneration. Should the UDP include detailed guidance in how to achieve this in town centres?

Town Centres are traditionally mixed use in character however some traditional uses such as residential use are being increasingly lost from town centres with a loss of vitality in the evening. Government advice suggests that a mix of uses including shops, small businesses and houses / flats can improve activity and personal safety. A flexible approach is needed in

## 8. Countryside and Rural Communities

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the design of such development. There is currently limited residential accommodation in the Town Centre but more opportunities could be created through clearer policy and design guidance.

- Provide for sustainable development which meets the economic and social needs of people who live and work in rural areas whilst maintaining and enhancing the character of the countryside.
- Direct development sequentially to urban areas including coalfield and market towns; rural development elsewhere should be to meet local needs and/or support local services.

### Key Facts

- Doncaster Borough covers 225 square miles and is the largest metropolitan borough in the country by area. 67% of the land is in agricultural use. The countryside in the western “half” of the Borough is Green Belt.
- There are 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and approximately 300 sites of local nature conservation importance. Thorne and Hatfield Moors are of International Importance. 300 Tree Preservation Orders cover a large number of individual trees and woodlands and there are 2290 kilometres of hedgerows including many ancient hedgerows.
- Many smaller villages in Doncaster have no local facilities whilst many others are down to their last pub or shop.

### Current UDP Policy

- Establishes and defines the green belt in the western “half” of Doncaster and the “Countryside Policy Area” in the eastern “half” of the Borough together with the necessary policies to control development
- Defines and protects sites of international, national and regional/local importance for nature conservation; areas of special landscape value; parks and gardens of historic interest
- Includes policies to protect trees, hedgerows and other elements of the natural heritage as well as policies to allow for rural diversification consistent with conservation of the countryside
- Defines development envelopes around urban areas and all but the smallest villages and hamlets

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- Retain the existing green belt and protect the countryside here and elsewhere in the Borough for the sake of its landscape, wildlife, agriculture, amenity and natural resources

### Should new employment sites be provided on green belt land if economic growth would otherwise be constrained?

There may be an argument for limited new employment allocations on current Green Belt sites to fully realise economic growth opportu-

nities provided by Doncaster's motorway connections or in order to provide certain settlements with local job opportunities. Exceptional circumstances would have to be demonstrated however particularly as there are existing undeveloped motorway employment sites within and just outside the Borough and there are potential new sites in the east of the Borough outside the Green Belt.

### **How much development should be directed to Doncaster's rural areas?**

Urban renaissance objectives will focus most new development on the urban core but market and coalfield towns will be the main focus for local housing needs and developing local services and employment in the rural/coalfield areas; some modest and sensitive expansion may be justified where it would support these. Some larger (service) villages also provide schools and other services to nearby villages. Residential expansion of smaller villages which lack services tends to do little to support existing, or generate new, services but does tend to lead to more commuting and longer journeys for services and can have a disproportionately adverse impact on the character of a village.

**Should development in the Countryside Policy Area (i.e. outside the development limits and any new allocations) be confined to that which seeks to allow modest rural diversification whilst maintaining and enhancing the character of the**

### **countryside and its villages?**

Current UDP policies allow for modest extensions to existing employment sites, very limited infill housing development, conversions of existing buildings to appropriate uses, other farm diversification activity which is compatible with policies to protect and enhance the countryside, and development which is traditionally appropriate in the countryside such as agriculture, forestry, nature conservation and outdoor recreation etc. Whilst the UDP alone cannot solve all the socio-economic issues affecting rural areas there is a need to determine whether the existing balance of its policies between conservation and rural diversification is appropriate.

Other Countryside and Rural Community Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include

## 9. Recreation and Greenspace

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- Should the UDP continue to have a policy protecting Doncaster's best and most versatile agricultural land?
- Should the policy on conversion of buildings in the countryside be tightened-up so as to allow fewer residential and more employment, leisure, tourism and community use conversions?
- Should there be a new policy to restrict residential redevelopment or conversion of key rural facilities such as shops and pubs?
- Promotes sport and leisure as an essential element in more sustainable patterns of development, social inclusion, health and well being, rural renewal, and an urban renaissance.
- Requires UDPs to protect existing facilities and make provision for new facilities based on a robust assessment of need
- Requires more intensive leisure facilities to be located in or adjacent to Town Centres or District Centres

### Key Facts

- A recent **Greenspace Audit** assessed Doncaster's greenspaces in terms of quantity, quality, accessibility and condition, local needs, demand and opinion. Doncaster has 21 parks covering 200 hectares (attracting an average 21 million visits a year) and approximately 1000 other green spaces including amenity areas, allotments and play areas.
- Generally there is an undersupply of greenspace when assessed against national standards with marked variations in different parts of the Borough and a lack of quality facilities
- The Council has also recently prepared a draft **Active Sport and Recreation Strategy** that will be the framework for future provision of indoor and outdoor active sports and recreation.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

### The Current UDP

- Contains policies to protect existing Greenspace and to provide new Greenspace as part of new developments
- Contains site-specific proposals for new Greenspace and other recreation facilities to meet identified deficiencies.
- Was prepared without the benefit of a formal Recreation or Greenspace Strategy and contains no sequential policy

### Should development be allowed on surplus urban Greenspace provided this would help in minimising loss of countryside to development and in funding Greenspace improvements elsewhere?

The UDP Review will roll forward existing strong policies for the protection of Greenspace. However the Greenspace Audit has identified a

few urban Greenspace sites as surplus to requirements because they exceed national or local standards of provision. These sites could be kept open with low maintenance for wildlife/amenity purposes or they could be redeveloped for housing or other development to help minimise the loss of countryside to new development and to generate funds to provide or enhance Greenspace elsewhere. The scale of such surpluses is not expected to be large.

### **Should all new housing developments contribute to the provision or improvement of Greenspace and recreation facilities?**

Current UDP policy requires new housing developments of ten or more houses to make some provision for Greenspace and recreation facilities either in the form of on-site provision or as a commuted sum which can then be spent on enhancing existing Greenspace/facilities in the vicinity. Significant additional resources for Greenspace and recreation facilities could be generated if all new housing developments were required to make a contribution; all housing developments contribute to demand for, and pressure on, Greenspace and there is therefore a strong case for subjecting all housing applications to such a policy.

### **Where should different types of leisure uses be located?**

The UDP will need to include a sequential policy directing key town centre uses including

indoor leisure facilities to Doncaster, Mexborough and Thorne town centre sites wherever possible. This could list the types of indoor leisure uses which are to be treated as key town centre uses or set out more general criteria. Small-scale facilities designed to serve local areas could be directed in the first instance to smaller town and district centres rather than the three main town centres. The Lakeside could be identified as the most favourable out of centre location for certain types of leisure uses.

Other Recreation and Greenspace Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include

## 10. Transport

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consideration of how the key land use findings of the Draft Active Sport and Recreation Strategy might impact on the UDP e.g. the possible need to rationalise some of the older DMBC sport and recreation facilities whilst realising the potential wider community benefits from enhanced use of miners welfare grounds and school facilities and the pressing need for certain sports specific facility development including athletics, multi-use games areas, basketball and skateparks.

### Key facts

- Major transport proposals include a new international airport at Finningley and a road–rail interchange in Doncaster town centre. M18 link roads to serve Rossington, Hatfield and Finningley Airport are also under consideration.
- There is evidence that the proposed airport will bring economic benefits both to Doncaster and the wider region; by 2014 the airport could be expected to provide around 2000 jobs and create over 5000 other jobs.
- There are currently 4,500 off-street car parking spaces in Doncaster Town Centre. Average occupancy throughout the year is 61% rising to 86% over the Xmas period.

### National and Regional Planning

### Policy

- Promote more sustainable transport choices, reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and contribute to sustainable economic growth
- In appropriate locations promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all, especially those without a car
- Promote integration of all forms of transport and land use planning, leading to a better, more efficient transport system.

### The Current UDP

- Includes proposals for improving the strategic highways and public transport networks within the Borough and links to the regional and national networks
- Includes policies requiring transportation proposals to contribute to environmental improvements e.g. highway improvements, traffic management, traffic calming and pedestrianisation.
- Promotes maintenance and improvement of public transport facilities
- Allocates land for development on accessible sites and with proximity to the public transport network.

### Should the majority of new development be located where there is good access to the strategic highway network?

Locating different uses close together can

increase opportunities for walking and cycling and it is generally more cost effective to provide public transport in more built up areas. However other factors can limit this approach; in the western half of Doncaster Greenbelt and relative inaccessibility from the trunk road network reduce the scope for new development whilst the M18 Strategic Economic Zone perhaps offers the best potential for attracting inward investment but this may conflict with urban renaissance principles and have adverse traffic impacts on the motorway.

### **Is the level and type of car parking in Doncaster Town Centre appropriate?**

Reducing the level of parking in new development is essential in promoting sustainable travel choices and reducing congestion. Care needs to be taken not to create perverse incentives for development to locate away from town centres although reducing congestion in and to town centres will increase their attractiveness. The UDP will need to set maximum parking standards.

Town Centres offer the greatest opportunity for providing a wide choice of transport options and new facilities such as the Interchange, quality bus corridors, and park and ride sites should further reduce the level of car trips to Doncaster town centre. However substantial provision for car parking will still be required to meet the needs of a variety of users and loca-

tions.

### **Which major transport infrastructure schemes should be supported?**

There are a number of proposed major infrastructure projects originating from various sources, some of which are already in an advanced state of development and some of which may no longer be considered sufficiently sustainable. In addition to the schemes listed above other proposed road schemes include the M18/B6094 Conisbrough Link Road, A1/A19 Carcroft Link Road, Dualling of White Rose Way, Hickleton & Marr By-pass, and the A60/A6182 Woodfield Link Road.

Additional local Railway Stations have been suggested in a number of settlements. A possible new station on the East Coast Main Line near Rossington has been proposed by GNER. The first Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) proposal is along the A638 from Adwick-le-Street to Rossington and the first Park & Ride proposals are near Rossington and at Adwick-le-Street.

### **How should deprived communities access the job opportunities proposed to be created by the Finningley Airport development?**

The Finningley Airbase is potentially very accessible and a link road from the M18 to the proposed airport is being investigated. If approved, the airport operator will develop a rail station alongside the airport and provide

## 10. Transport

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shuttle buses to the Doncaster Interchange. The airport proposals include a terminal transport interchange. In the longer term there are opportunities, dependant on the airport's success for links to the East Coast Mainline.

The UDP review will need to bring forward proposals to integrate the airport with the public and private strategic transport structure, to maximise opportunities for aviation clustering, to protect the environment and amenity of communities, and to enable job opportunities to be accessed from deprived communities and the benefits of the airport to be widespread.

Other Transport Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include:

- The provision of better infrastructure and facilities for cycling and walking in, and funded by, new developments
- The importance of public transport access to new development and the role of green travel plans
- The possible need to safeguard land for new train stations and/or interchanges/mini interchanges at key locations throughout the Borough.

## Key facts

- Doncaster has very substantial deposits of aggregate minerals (limestone/crushed rock, sand and gravel), coal and peat, all of which have been worked for many years. Natural gas and, recently, coalmine methane is also exploited. Doncaster has, however, only two remaining operational deep coalmines, and peat extraction on Thorne and Hatfield Moors is to cease in recognition of their international importance for nature conservation.
- Production of aggregates averages some 5 million tonnes per annum.
- Doncaster has a landbank (a stock of planning permissions) for crushed rock in excess of thirty years and a landbank for (undifferentiated) sand and gravel in excess of twenty years.

## National and Regional Planning Policy

- Conserve minerals as far as possible, whilst ensuring an adequate supply to meet needs
- Ensure that the environmental and traffic impacts of mineral operations are kept, as far as possible, to an acceptable minimum
- Minimise production of waste and encourage efficient use of materials, including appropriate use of high quality materials, and waste recycling
- Encourage sensitive working, restoration and aftercare practices so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment
- Protect areas of designated landscape or nature conservation value from development, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it has been demonstrated that development is in the public interest
- Prevent the unnecessary sterilization of mineral resources.

## Current UDP Policy

- Includes policies for the extraction of a wide variety of minerals including coal, limestone, sand and gravel, peat, natural gas and oil.
- Designates preferred areas for the extraction of limestone
- Designates Preferred Areas and Areas of Search for sand and gravel

### **Should additional land should be designated for limestone extraction?**

Two of Doncaster's three Preferred Areas for limestone extraction have planning consent whilst applications have been submitted for the third area. Given Doncaster's landbank for crushed rock of 32 years there seems little need to designate additional land for limestone extraction. There may however be economic arguments for particular specifications of limestone, for example specialised industrial limestone.

### **Should additional land be designated for either soft sand or sand and gravel extraction and should those areas which have been designated in the current UDP and which remain un-worked be deleted?**

By their nature, sand and gravel deposits are variable and there is uncertainty over the quality and quantity of resources. Current UDP policy requires the designated Preferred Areas, (where there is sufficient geological knowledge) to be worked before Areas of Search (where geological knowledge was less certain); some

of the Preferred Areas have remained un-worked and there are significant designated areas without planning permission. However the situation is complicated by distinct variations in the nature and demand for different types of sand and gravel and the building industry argues that there is insufficient soft (or building) sand (as found in the east of the Borough).

Other Minerals Issues examined in the Key Issues Report include the implications of old peat extraction permissions on Thorne and Hatfield Moors

### Key Facts

- In 1999/2000 some 800,000 tonnes of “controlled” waste was deposited in landfill sites in Doncaster; this excludes waste streams from mining, quarrying and agriculture
- Household waste accounted for approx. 40% of this 800,000 tonnes; nationally the rate is 15%
- The Borough Council can produce a waste strategy to deal with household waste because it has some control through contractual arrangements but commercial and industrial waste is largely outside the control of the Council.

### National and Regional Planning Policy

- Provide an overall planning strategy for waste management throughout the plan period within the regional context and

ensure that an adequate planning framework is in place for the provision of facilities by the waste management industry

- Appraise policy options in terms of their social, environmental and economic effects to demonstrate that all practicable options have been assessed against the principles of sustainable development.
- Have regard to the national waste strategy and the need to maximise, so far as is practicable, regional self-sufficiency.
- Identify sites for waste management and disposal facilities over the plan period, including facilities for the management of waste with specific requirements, such as special waste. Account should also be taken of local municipal waste management strategies.
- Have regard to Waste Strategy 2000 which contains targets for the reduction of the percentage of waste going to landfill and increased recycling.

### Current UDP Policy

- Recognises many of the new principles but adopted before recent significant changes to waste management regimes
- Accepts that landfill will remain the main method of disposal for domestic and commercial waste, as well as for colliery spoil, during the plan period
- Seeks to encourage recycling and other alternatives to landfill.

### Should landfill continue as the main method of disposal of waste within the Borough or should alternative

**methods such as composting and incineration be encouraged? Should specific sites for future waste management facilities be identified?**

If Doncaster is to achieve the Government's targets for the reduction of the percentage of waste going to landfill, increased recycling and

the pre-treatment of waste going to landfill, then it is likely that additional waste facilities throughout the Borough will be required. Such facilities would include sites where waste transfer, recycling and treatment operations can be carried out, as well as sites for alternatives to landfill such as heat treatment (i.e. combustion/incineration), composting etc. The UDP review will need to identify existing sites with capacity for the future and assess whether new or replacement waste management facilities are needed. Sites, preferred locations or areas of search should be identified.

Other Issues examined in the Key Issues

Report include:

- The relationship between development and areas liable to flood and the role of the sequential approach and strategic flood risk assessment. The Borough of Doncaster has a large proportion of its area, predominantly on the Eastern side, shown as being at risk of flooding.
- The possible need for more specific site guidance for telecommunications development and a requirement for developers to demonstrate that they have tried to find sites on more acceptable sites before less acceptable ones?
- The redevelopment of future of surplus education and other community buildings and developer contributions to local com-

## WHAT IS THE UDP REVIEW PROCESS AND HOW CAN I REGISTER MY VIEWS?

The process for preparing the UDP Review through its various stages up to its Adoption is very much an open one with a number of opportunities for everyone to have their say. The first opportunity for comment on the Review is NOW. This Key Issues stage is an opportunity to influence the content of the UDP Review before the Council produces the first draft plan.

To assist people to make comments the Council has produced a **Key Issues Report**, a **Response Form** and this **Summary Report**. A **Promotional Leaflet** is also being widely distributed.

All comments received will be reported to the Council's Cabinet and taken into account in preparing the **Initial Deposit Plan**. This Plan will set out the Council's draft planning policies and proposals and include Proposals Maps which will show in detail how these affect the different parts of the Borough. Formal objections to this plan will be taken into account in the preparation of a **Revised Deposit Plan**; any objections to this will be considered at a **Public Local Inquiry** presided over by an independent Inspector. The Council is generally obliged to amend the final **Adopted Plan** in line with the Inspector's recommendations. It is widely acknowledged that this is usually an overly long and complex process and the Government is likely to amend planning legislation in the near future to change this process. The Council will publish regular news bulletins detailing each successive stage in the process. **The Consultation Strategy** is set out in more detail in the main Key Issues Report.

Please use the Response form to set down your comments on the UDP Review Issues and either post them to us Freepost, or take them to you local library or Council office. Alternatively you can e-mail comments to us at [udp@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:udp@doncaster.gov.uk)

## IS THERE ANYONE I CAN TALK TO?

It is anticipated that as part of the consultation strategy there will be many meetings with interested parties and presentations to community forums and so on. If you wish to talk directly to a planning officer working on the UDP Review the telephone contacts are as follows:

**Bob Wallens:** Overview, Strategy and Procedures, Economy (01302) 734934

**Richard Mckone:** Housing, Countryside, Recreation (01302) 734893

**Jane Stimpson:** Town Centres & Retail, Urban Potential (01302) 734886

**Jeff Prior:** Built Heritage & Design, Mixed Use (01302) 734887

**Nick Ward:** Transport, Other Issues (01302) 734888

**Nicola Jones:** Sustainability Appraisal, Consultation Strategy (01302) 734939

**Arthur Doyle:** Minerals & Waste (01302) 734460

**UDP Hotline:** (24 hours) (01302) 735199

Please send your response to:  
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council  
FREEPOST NEA 196  
Doncaster  
DN1 1BR

or phone the UDP Hotline: 01302 735199  
or email us: [udp@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:udp@doncaster.gov.uk)

This information is also available on  
[www.doncaster.gov.uk](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk)

