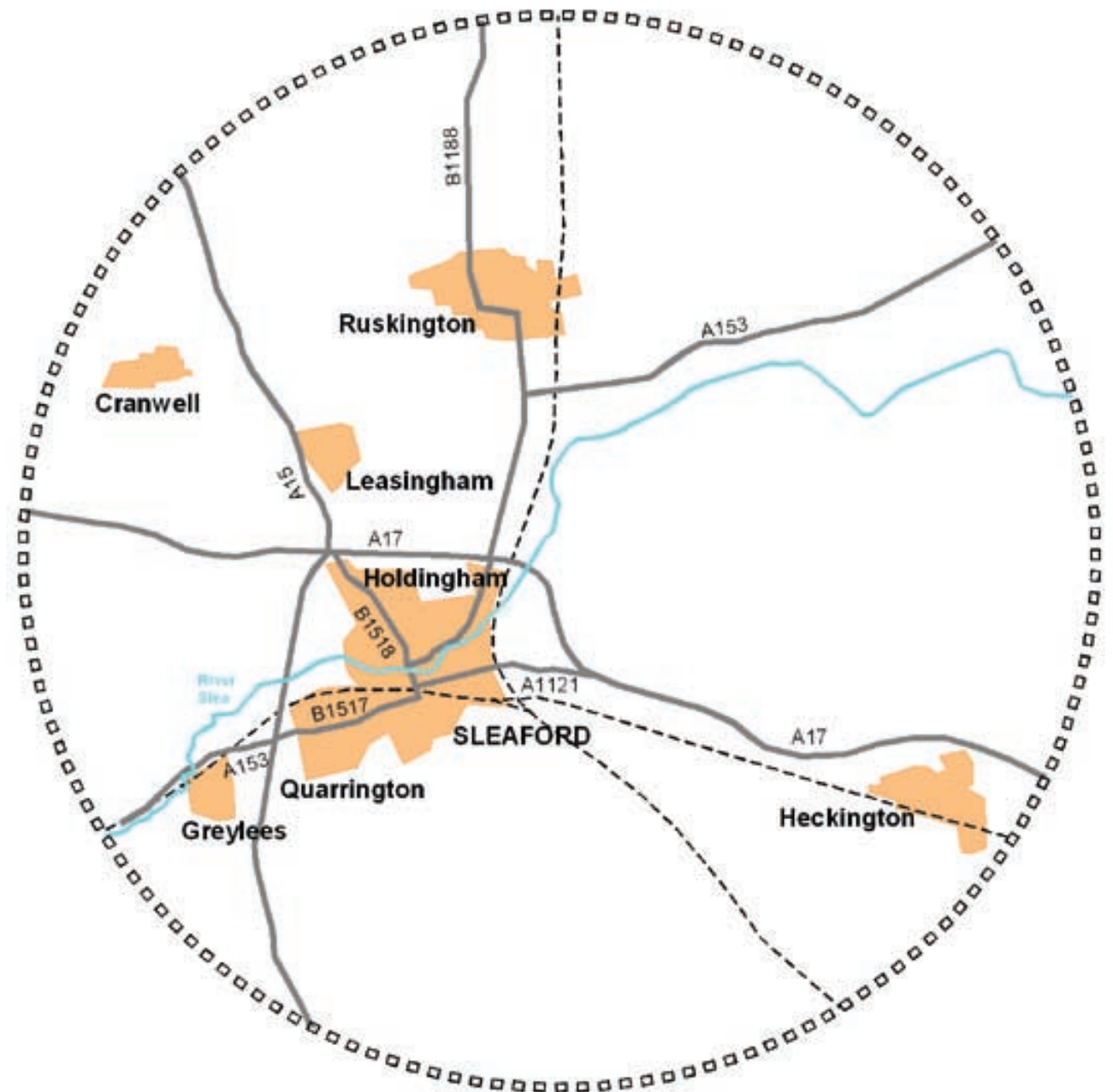


8 THE SLEAFORD AREA

Sleaford is a historic market town situated on the River Slea in the heart of Lincolnshire, and is the local retail hub and service centre for people living in its hinterland. Sleaford is characterised by its heritage assets mainly centred around its historic core.

Sleaford has experienced rapid population growth over the past 20 years and now has approximately 18,000 people with a further 30,000 people living within 10 miles of the town. This growth has largely been the result of people moving to the area attracted by the quality of life, low crime rates, relatively low house prices and good-quality education.

Through the regeneration of a former seed warehouse, Sleaford hosts the National Centre for Craft and Design (The Hub). The public sector is the main employment sector alongside agriculture and manufacturing. The town has lower unemployment rates than the national average but is an area of relatively low wages, largely due to significant levels of employment in the agriculture and food processing sectors.



SLEAFORD TODAY – A PROFILE

Sleaford:

- > serves a population of roughly 50,000, including those that live in the smaller villages within a ten mile radius of the town
- > offers significant services (daily and weekly shopping, specialist shops, financial and office services and medical services) but faces competition from nearby towns and cities
- > is home to the former Bass Maltings, a key regeneration site for Sleaford and site of cultural heritage importance
- > has well performing primary and secondary schools including St George's Academy (which also has schools at Ruskington and Billingborough), Kesteven and Sleaford High School, and Carre's Grammar School
- > offers its residents and visitors a variety of leisure and attractions including Navigation House, Cogglesford Mill, Sleaford Playhouse and Sleaford Leisure Centre
- > has one of the lowest recorded crime rates in the country and has relatively low levels of deprivation
- > Offers public transport links to London (via Grantham and Peterborough), Lincoln, Newark, Doncaster, Nottingham and Skegness

DRAFT VISION FOR THE SLEAFORD AREA:

By 2026/2031, the Sleaford area will be an attractive, lively and distinctive place providing good quality services including education, retail, leisure, arts and culture to meet the diverse needs of local and visiting people.

The Sleaford area will be a welcoming and accessible network of interdependent, sustainable communities which are well connected to each other and their surrounding areas, appealing to people who use public as well as private transport.

Key regeneration projects will have attracted new businesses, residents and visitors to the area creating diverse employment opportunities and desirable places to live, visit and socialise.

DRAFT OBJECTIVES FOR THE SLEAFORD AREA

1. Accommodate growth in a sustainable way that both complements and integrates with the existing business and residential communities
2. Ensure that the Town Centre can develop to become a more desirable place to access key services, shop and socialise
3. Enhance and diversify the economy to provide people with greater potential to live and work within the Sleaford Area



▲ *The Hub (National Centre for Craft & Design)*

▼ *Sleaford town centre*



PLANNING FOR GROWTH IN THE SLEAFORD AREA

A Masterplan for Sleaford is being prepared alongside the Core Strategy. Its findings will feed into the Core Strategy. However, it is clear that as Central Lincolnshire grows, the Sleaford area will also need to grow in terms of new homes, the economy and associated infrastructure. How much growth should go in the Sleaford area is considered under Theme 3 of this document. The SHLAA suggests that there are insufficient brownfield sites within the existing urban areas to accommodate the likely level of growth required, so new locations for growth will need to be found.

QUESTION 8.1 - How should we grow the Sleaford area?

Option 1 - Continue to plan for a limited amount of development adjoining the existing built-up areas of Sleaford and the larger surrounding settlements

Option 2 - Plan for a moderate amount of development adjoining the existing built up areas of Sleaford and surrounding settlements through new housing and and/or economic development allocations

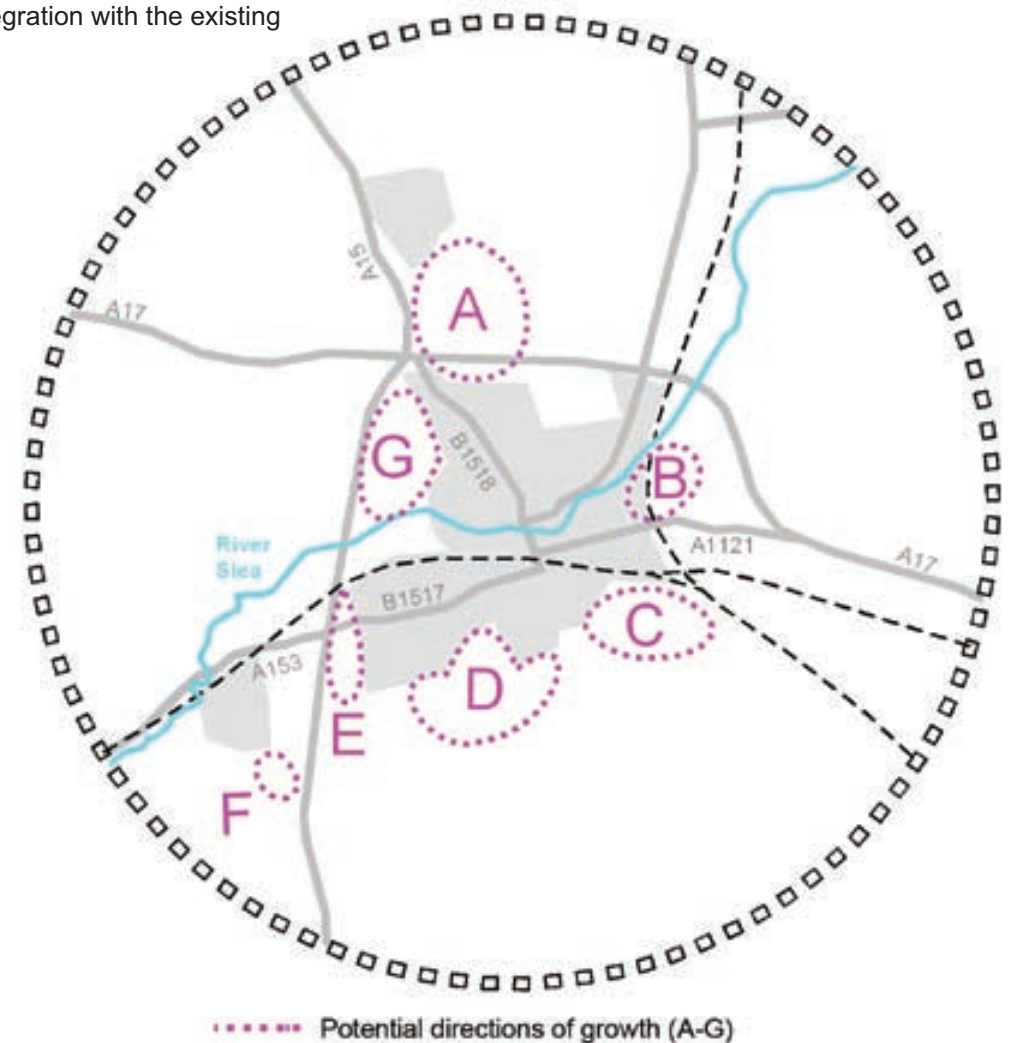
Option 3 - Plan for a significant amount of development adjoining the built up areas of Sleaford through large scale mixed use extensions and major extensions to key surrounding settlements

Option 4 - Focus less growth on Sleaford and more towards the surrounding settlements

Where are the potential locations for growth?

If it is considered appropriate for the expansion of Sleaford into the countryside, implications will be different for alternative locations. For example sewerage capacity, transport, and visual impacts are all locationally specific as are the opportunities presented for area enhancements through the right type of development and integration with the existing settlement.

QUESTION 8.2 – Using the map and table opposite, which directions for growth do you think would be best for the Sleaford area and why?



OPTION	Main Potential Sites and Current Status	Keys Constraints and Issues	Benefits and Opportunities	Deliverability
Option A - North of Sleaford	> Land between Sleaford and Leasingham promoted through SHLAA	> Mainly agricultural land > Could impact upon integrity of Leasingham > A17 acts as physical barrier to expansion of Sleaford into countryside	> Access onto A17 may be attractive for commercial enterprises	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option B - East of Sleaford	> Hoplands Depot and neighbouring land promoted through SHLAA	> Flood risk issues on part of site	> Part brownfield > Could take advantage of River Lea as green corridor linking to town centre	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option C - South East of Sleaford	> Land off Mareham Lane promoted through SHLAA	> Mainly agricultural land > Risk of severance from town centre subject to future of level crossing > Future may be dependent upon redevelopment of former Bass Maltings	> Potential to integrate with former Bass Maltings	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option D - South of Sleaford	> Land east of London Road promoted through SHLAA	> Mainly agricultural land > Risk of severance from town centre subject to future of level crossing > Could be sewerage infrastructure capacity issues	> Developing part of area could act as infill to existing built-up area, having limited impact on open countryside	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option E - South West of Sleaford	> A number of adjoining sites promoted through SHLAA	> Mainly agricultural land > Risk of severance from town centre subject to future of level crossing	> Could take advantage of River Lea as a green corridor linking to town centre > Well connected to A15 > Could be sewerage infrastructure capacity issues	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option F - South East of Greylees	> Land at Willoughby Road adjoining Rauceby Hospital Development promoted through SHLAA	> Agricultural land > Detached from Sleaford. Could prejudice integrity of Silk Willoughby	> Rauceby Hospital Development has a railway station. > Growth could potentially address issues surrounding access to services	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan
Option G - West of Sleaford	> A number of adjoining sites promoted through SHLAA	> Mainly agricultural land	> Opportunities for good connectivity with town centre, the A15 and A17 > Could take advantage of River Lea as green corridor linking to town centre	> Deliverability to be tested through Sleaford Masterplan

SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE SLEAFORD AREA

You have told us that substantial housing led growth in the Sleaford area over the last 15-20 years has not gone hand in hand with equivalent investment in local infrastructure.

Well planned growth could enhance existing local services and the employment and housing offer. However it is important to recognise that there is a fine balance between the scale of the growth required and the economic viability of strategic infrastructure required to facilitate substantive growth. We know that sewerage, energy and the road network are under significant strain and without investment in these specific pieces of infrastructure, they will act as barriers to substantial growth within the Sleaford area. The JPU therefore sees investment in these areas as top priorities which will need to be taken forward through Infrastructure Delivery and Investment Plans.

QUESTION 8.3 – What key local services and facilities and infrastructure do you feel the Sleaford area needs to support the development of sustainable local communities?

ENHANCING THE SLEAFORD TOWN CENTRE EXPERIENCE

Our evidence and consultations have told us that the town centre is underperforming. The retail offer is limited, for a settlement of its size, residents are choosing to shop in neighbouring centres and people are not using the centre as much as they could for leisure and recreational activities.

Proposals are advanced for the redevelopment of a number of key sites south east of the town centre, including the former Bass Maltings.



▲ *Bass Maltings, Sleaford*

A planning application has been approved for a Tesco Superstore and new link road providing access to the developments and designed to ease congestion in the town. These developments have already been the subject of extensive consultation and will remain key priorities as they will make a key difference in addressing some of the town centre issues.

The availability of parking within or adjoining the town centre generates congestion but is also popular with businesses. On the other hand, parking takes up large volumes of valuable, centrally located land which may be made better use of.

QUESTION 8.4 – How can we promote Sleaford Town Centre as a desirable destination for tourists and a place which meets the lifestyle needs of current and future residents?

You may want to consider the role and identity of the Town Centre, how we use our key assets and how we can make the best use of key development sites.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND BUSINESS GROWTH

Sleaford's main employment area is located to the north east of the town, taking advantage of the A17. In addition to North Kesteven District Council Offices, the predominant types of employment opportunities and businesses operating in the Sleaford area are low skilled manufacturing or distribution based (agriculture food processing), although some small office developments have been successful such as The Point.

Our evidence tells us that there is a need for serviced offices and workshop accommodation for small business start ups. However, the national economy indicates growth in industries that are higher skilled and require offices or premises equipped to meet high technological needs.

We know that there are a number of barriers to economic growth in higher skilled industries in the Sleaford area, including the availability of high speed broadband and suitable sites.

QUESTION 8.5 – How should the economy grow in the Sleaford area and are there any particular barriers to attracting industries to the area?

Option 1 - Continue to plan for job growth in existing traditional industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and distribution

Option 2 - Plan to try and attract national growth sectors to the area

Option 3 - Encourage locally grown high skilled jobs

Option 4 - A combination of the above or other options

YOUR VIEWS MATTER

The Joint Planning Committee is committed to making as many local people aware of the Core Strategy as possible and involving them in the development of policies for Central Lincolnshire. Over the summer, stakeholders and community groups were involved in the preparation of this document and there now follows a six week consultation period on the Issues and Options raised.

The consultation period runs from the **25th October to 6th December 2010**.

HOW TO RESPOND

You can fill in the questionnaire:

- > on the pull out form in the centre of this document and post it to "FREEPOST NKDC" (no address or postage necessary)
- > online on the following web sites -
www.lincoln.gov.uk/ldf www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/ldf www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ldf or www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/ldf
- > you can also write or e-mail your comments using the contact details below

If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact us.

✉ Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit, c/o North Kesteven District Council, Kesteven Street, Sleaford NG34 7EF

☎ 01529 308233

✉ talkplanning@n-kesteven.gov.uk

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The Committee will consider the comments received and use them in the preparation of the Draft Core Strategy, which is timetabled for further public consultation in Spring 2011. The provisional timetable for further consultation stages in the preparation of the Central Lincolnshire Core Strategy is detailed below.





Central Lincolnshire
Joint Strategic Planning Committee

**This document is available in:
Large print, Braille, Audio tape, Electronic formats such as CD, Different languages**

**For a copy please contact the
Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit**

**Using the following options:
Phone: 01529 308233**

Mini com number 01529 308088

e-mail: talkplanning@n-kesteven.gov.uk

**Address: Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit
c/o North Kesteven District Council
Kesteven Street
Sleaford
NG34 7EF**