

East Leake Neighbourhood Development Plan

Exercise 2: Starting a neighbourhood plan



CABE is now part of the Design Council

The purpose of the exercise:

In the previous exercises we have looked at what makes 'good places', the issues facing the shopping centre in East Leake, and the qualities of well designed housing. In this exercise we will bring all these topics together and look at the process for producing a spatial plan. Obviously it is impossible to produce a final plan in a couple of hours, and the aim therefore is identify some of the key issues for the village, identify policies that will address them and then articulate these on a plan of the East Leake. This can then inform later sessions that will develop the actual neighbourhood plan.

Details of the exercise

This exercise will start with a presentation outlining the basic stages in producing a neighbourhood plan. It is focused on the third stage, drafting proposals:

1. Getting organized
2. Preparing the evidence base
3. Drafting proposals
4. Finalising the plan

Working in groups, this exercise will bring together the ideas from the previous sessions on improving the town centre and the discussions on housing design, as well as the information from the consultation day in February, and starts the process of creating an integrated spatial plan. The exercise is divided into three parts:

1. **Think about a vision for East Leake.** *This stage uses information derived from the Consultation Day earlier in March, and any other available information, such as Rushcliffe Borough Council's 'Fresh Approach' campaign. From this, identify some key issues and priorities that the Neighbourhood Plan should address.*

Try not to get bogged down in detail, and try to identify no more than six key objectives that the plan should try to achieve. (A future session will look at the vision statement in more detail, and will produce a clear and concise document that can be consulted upon and confirmed by the whole community). Do not spend more than 30 minutes on this part of the exercise.

2. **Produce an issues/constraints plan for the village.** *The aim of this stage is to record all the keys issues you think need to be addressed in East Leake on a physical plan of the whole village. This will help you understand how the different issues relate to each other, and how they impact on physical character of East Leake. Don't just record negative issues; include positive features that you think should be retained or enhanced.*

Include any issues that you identified in the village centre exercise in the last workshop – problems that need to be resolved, not your ideas for solving them. Also, include anything that emerged from the exercise on what makes a good place in the last workshop and any issues that emerged from the Building for Life housing evaluation today.

Again, try to complete this part of the exercise in 30 minutes.

3. **Develop proposals that address these issues.** *The final stage of the exercise involves the first steps in creating proposals for East Leake. Again, your ideas should be presented on a plan of the village so you can see how they all link together physically. However, feel free to supplement your proposals with written statements/ ideas on flip chart sheets.*

Think about how all these ideas can be joined together to create a coherent plan for the whole of the village. Where can new housing be located and how can good design be achieved? Think about the wider context – how East Leake relates to surrounding villages and towns

The following are some of the urban design points you should think about when you produce your spatial plan:

- *What is important about the village and its surroundings ie what it is like and why:*
 - *Context – the situation and environment*
 - *Character – features, materials, distinctive qualities that you notice*
 - *Patterns of development*
 - *Patterns of movement*

- *Permeability & Connectivity – potential to link to the immediate surroundings, as well as the wider road/rail connections*
 - *where are the important pedestrian routes?*
 - *where are the links between the various housing areas and neighbourhoods?*
 - *how will people move through this area?*
 - *are access and connections to open space within and outside the village important?*

- *Finding your way around*
 - *making the most of views to and from the village – are there views, including views of local landmarks, that should be recognized?*
 - *where are the key destinations and local facilities and will it be easy to get to them*

- *How can environmental sustainability be supported?*
 - *Is there the potential to support biodiversity?*
 - *Can surface water be managed in a sustainable way?*
 - *Is there potential for creating local renewable energy supplies?*

Remember that this is only an exercise, and its purpose is for you to experience how plans are produced. Don't feel constrained by existing plans or finance. Be creative and see if you can come up with some really innovative and interesting ideas. Thinking outside the box often leads to really useful ideas that can be translated into realistic proposals at a later stage.

Appoint a spokesperson to feed back your ideas very briefly to the other groups. It is important that you explain all three parts of the exercise, as the process you have followed is just as important as the actual plan you have produced.

You will be provided with plans of the village, tracing paper, flip chart sheets and pens. Try to make your presentation as visual as possible!