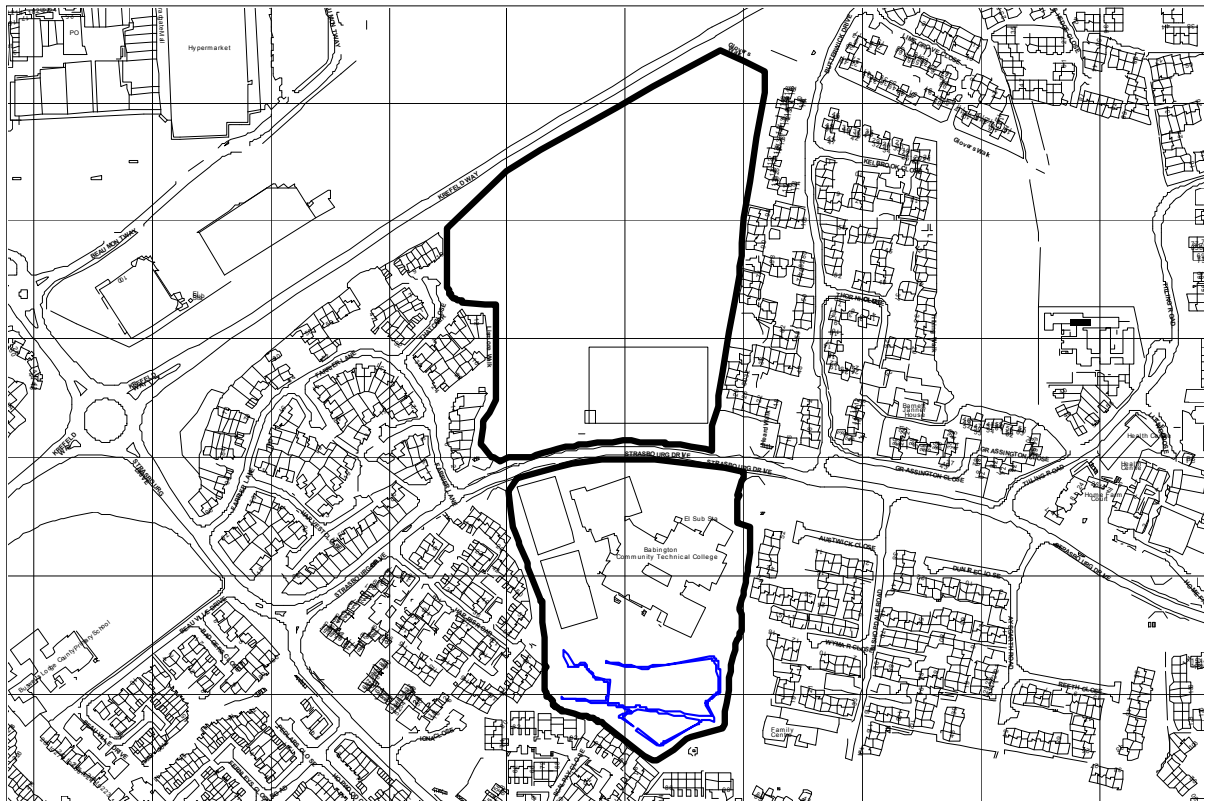


Recommendation: Conditional approval	
20121308	150 STRASBOURG DRIVE, BABINGTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Proposal:	REPLACEMENT THREE AND TWO STOREY SCHOOL BUILDING (CLASS D1) TO NORTH SIDE OF STRASBOURG DRIVE, SPORTS PITCHES, ASSOCIATED PARKING AND LANDSCAPING ,DEMOLITION OF PART OF SCHOOL
Applicant:	LEICESTER MILLER EDUCATION COMPANY (LMEC)
App type:	Operational development - full application
Status:	Smallscale Major Development
Expiry Date:	13 December 2012
KER	WARD: Beaumont Leys



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Summary

- Demolition of all of the existing Babington Community College buildings apart from the sports hall on the southern side of Strasbourg Drive. Relocation of the College onto the northern side of Strasbourg Drive along with playing field and external; sports facilities.
- Site allocated for community, education and leisure use. Part of existing playing fields to the north allocated as green space.
- The main issues are policy, design, the amenity of neighbouring residents, parking and highway safety.
- Recommended for approval.

Introduction

The application relates to Babington Community College which currently has all of its main school buildings to the south side of Strasbourg Drive. Grass pitches associated with the school are located opposite the main school building to the north. The site is divided by Strasbourg Drive which runs east to west through the site. The main school buildings are allocated as community, education and leisure on the local plan proposals map. There is existing open space to the rear of the main school building which is allocated as green space. The area to the north is divided into two allocations. The eastern corner (containing hard courts) falls within a community, education and leisure use and the remainder of the site is classed as open space.

Background

'Building Schools for the Future' (BSF) is a strategic approach to capital investment in school buildings that will create the environment for the Government's secondary educational transformation. It is proposed that around 180 schools across England are to benefit from over £2 billion of investment.

Under the scheme, the intention is that every secondary aged child will be educated in a '21st Century environment' within 15 years. Schools will be rebuilt, remodelled or upgraded to provide flexible, inclusive, attractive learning environments in which teachers want to teach and pupils want to learn.

In Leicester, it is proposed that building works will take place over four phases. The first phase affecting four schools has been completed. The proposed completion of the last phase is expected in 2014. Your Committee has already considered nine planning applications relating to the remaining phases.

Babington Community College provides secondary education for 1050 children aged 11 – 16.

The Proposal

The majority of the existing school buildings are on the southern part of the site. The existing sports hall would be retained with new changing facilities, and a three and two storey building constructed on the northern part of the site.

The site would be developed as follows:

Northern site

The new building to the northern side of Strasbourg Drive would be rectangular in shape with a central feature projecting towards Strasbourg Drive. There would be four grass sports pitches to the rear of the new school building. There would be two courts to the west of the projecting central feature. There is an existing integrated services building to the east of the front elevation which will be retained. There will be plant equipment in this part of the site and landscaping features. There would be 6 disabled parking spaces to the front of the main entrance and 11 parking spaces including 7 for which would be visitor to the west of the main entrance.

Southern site

The majority of the existing school buildings within this part of the site would be demolished. The only part of the existing building to be retained is the sports hall,

which would have a small extension to the rear to accommodate new changing facilities. This part of the site would contain the majority of the 152 parking spaces occupying most of the frontage facing Strasbourg Drive. There would be some landscaping to the front boundary. There would be sports pitches and hard courts to the rear.

Policy Considerations

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

Vehicle Parking Standards SPG

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy SPD

Residential Amenity SPD

Central Government

National Planning Policy Framework

Consultations

Severn Trent

Have no objection subject to a drainage condition.

Environment Agency

Object to the proposal on the grounds of an inadequate flood risk assessment, and the further details that have been submitted, as they do not provide sufficient detail on the drainage strategy for the site.

A further Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted, which is currently under consideration.

Pollution Control – Land

The geo – environmental report is considered acceptable. However, an independent report on the installation of the gas membrane is required prior to a decision being issued.

Sport England

Has confirmed that, whilst the proposal does result in the loss of a small area of playing field, it does not wish to raise an objection to this application, subject to conditions being attached to secure improved sports facilities and community access to the existing and proposed sports facilities, including the school playing field area.

Representations

None

Consideration

Principle of Development

The Local Development Framework: Core Strategy policy 8 Existing Neighbourhoods, states that: 'The City Council wants to create neighbourhood groups of schools and will ensure that the Local Development Framework supports School Organisation and Implementation Plans, the Building Schools for the Future programme and the Integrated Services Hubs model, which will help support the drive for school improvement and attainment. Due to the densely populated urban

nature of the City, with the exception of schools serving new housing development, new schools will be rebuilt on existing sites.' A key objective of the Core strategy is "to raise the standards of educational attainment, skills and training in Leicester. The redevelopment proposal at Babington Community College is on an existing site and meets the objective of this policy. The inadequacies of some of the existing accommodation and the benefits of the new facilities are recognised.

The location of the new building would be on part of an area allocated as green space in the local plan. Whilst this represents a departure from the local plan, Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy notes that the Council will address the imbalances in greenspace provision by making green space, sport and recreation facilities more accessible and improving links and connections between spaces.

New development proposals should also meet the need for provision arising from development, taking account of local qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in green space, sport and recreation provision.

Sport England does not object to the proposal and considers that the sports facilities will be a significant improvement upon existing. There would only be a small reduction in the current provision which is considered acceptable as the benefits of the scheme outweigh the loss. The proposal would also be a valuable community facility.

Design and impact

I consider that the building proposals are appropriate in terms of sustainable design having regard to existing landscape characteristics, scale, and context. The external materials will be a combination of rain screen cladding, facing brickwork which is currently shown as dark, and glazing. The retained integrated service hub building would be visible from the front; however, it is off set from the main building. There would also be some ancillary facilities fronting Strasbourg Drive such as bins and sprinkler tank features, which would be behind a fence. There would also be fencing along the remainder of the frontages. Whilst it is regrettable that much of the main elevation will be enclosed, further consideration can be given to the treatment of this elevation as part of the discharge of the landscaping condition.

Both of the sites are surrounded by dense blocks of terraced and semi-detached properties. The removal of most of the existing buildings from the current southern site will be an improvement for the surrounding neighbouring properties. Whilst the sports hall will remain, this is towards the centre of the site and away from neighbouring properties. The parking activity will remain the same as existing and therefore will not have any increased impact.

In terms of the northern part of the site this will be significantly different to the existing situation as apart from the integrated services building, this area does not contain any buildings. The nearest houses are on Farrier Lane and the nearest residential property is 47 metres away from the side elevation of the new building. These bungalows have principal room windows facing the site; however, they are set at an angle facing mainly towards the new sports pitches. There is dense natural screening approximately 10 metres in width along the boundary with properties to the west, and whilst some of them are deciduous, they will provide a significant buffer.

To the east of the new building are properties on Heard Walk. They are approximately 50 metres away from the side elevation of the new building. I

consider there is adequate separation between the new building and the neighbouring properties. Along the remainder of the boundary will be the sports pitches. This will not be significantly different to the current situation. I consider the impact upon neighbouring properties will be minimal.

Sports Facilities and Community Use

I agree with Sport England that despite the loss of a small area of playing field and a gravelled pitch area (which is underused and will be replaced with a grass pitch), there are potentially significant benefits to the development of sport as a result of the proposed redevelopment which enhances community access to the existing and proposed sports facilities.

Ecology/Landscaping

The submitted ecology report identifies that the site is of high ecological value, there are large numbers of mature and semi-mature trees in addition to an area of mature woodland. The only protected species that is likely to be present is bats. I am awaiting further comments in respect of ecology and will report this to your committee.

The location of the new college building on the northern side of Strasbourg Drive will result in the removal of some groups of trees fronting Strasbourg Drive. There will be some replacement planting to compensate for this. A landscaping condition will be attached to secure the replacement planting.

Renewable energy

An Energy and Sustainability Strategy has been submitted which sets out the sustainable construction and renewable energy proposals for the BSF project with particular details relating to this school. These details demonstrate that measures can be put in place to satisfactorily address renewable energy requirements. The preferred solution is a biodiesel CHP unit providing electrical power, space heating and hot water.

Pollution

The reports submitted with the application are considered to be acceptable. However, an independent monitoring report of the gas membrane is required. This information has been submitted and is currently being reviewed, I will report the findings to your committee.

Highway Issues and parking provision

The proposal will result in 10 additional staff and there would be an equivalent increase in the number of car parking spaces. The existing accesses to the southern side of Strasbourg Drive will be retained. Changes may be required to some of the entrances to make them in or out only. Further details of this will be reported to your committee. There is an existing vehicular entrance to the northern side of Strasbourg Drive which currently serves the integrated services hub building and sports pitches. There is a service and delivery area fronting Strasbourg Drive.

I am satisfied with the justification for parking as presented in the Transport Assessment as well as the Travel Plan measures proposed to help reduce the vehicle trips generated at the site. The Travel Plan Officer will liaise with the applicant on the issues contained within the Travel Plan including the influence of any community use. The school buildings will be operational for community use with

some buildings being open to public use outside of school core hours at weekends and during holidays. The Travel Plan and Traffic Management Plan reflect the traffic management of trips generated by the community use.

With the majority of staff parking being on the opposite site of the road, a safe crossing point across to the other side is essential. There is an existing zebra crossing which is mainly used to access the existing sports pitches and integrated service hub, however, its use will be intensified with the moving of the location of the main college building. Further comments will be reported to your committee regarding the zebra crossing and existing speed reduction features along Strasbourg Drive which may need to be altered.

Conclusion

I consider that the proposed new college building and extension to the sports hall will be an improvement to physical and learning environments for children and young people. There will also be an improvement to vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses and a positive contribution to the local environment without adversely affecting the amenities of the residents.

There are on-going discussions with the Environment Agency in respect of the Flood Risk Assessment and further consideration is being taken in respect of gas membrane results, additional highway comments and further protected species information. **SUBJECT TO A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME OF THESE DISCUSSIONS, I RECOMMEND APPROVAL** subject to the following conditions.

Should those issues not be resolved at the time of the committee I recommend that members approve the proposal in principle and delegate the decision to the Director.

CONDITIONS

1. START WITHIN THREE YEARS
2. MATERIALS (WALLS AND ROOF) TO BE APPROVED
3. Before the development is occupied, a detailed landscaping scheme showing the treatment of all parts of the site which will remain unbuilt upon shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the City Council as local planning authority. The scheme shall offer the positive treatment of grounds both to enrich education, play and amenity but also to provide opportunities and space for sustainable drainage. This scheme shall include details of: (i) the position and spread of all existing trees, shrubs and hedges to be retained or removed; (ii) new tree and shrub planting, including plant type, size, quantities and locations; (iii) means of planting, staking, and tying of trees, including tree guards; (iv) other surface treatments; (v) fencing and boundary treatments; (vi) any changes in levels; (vii) the position and depth of service and/or drainage runs (which may affect tree roots). The approved landscaping scheme shall be carried out within one year of completion of the development. For a period of not less than five years from the date of planting, the applicant or owners of the land shall maintain all planted material. This material shall be replaced if it dies, is removed or becomes seriously diseased. The replacement planting shall be completed in the next planting season in accordance with the approved landscaping scheme. (In the interests of

amenity, and in accordance with policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)

4. Before the development is begun, all existing trees, shrubs or hedges to be retained on the site shall be protected by fences, in accordance with a BS5837 (2012) report identifying the above and below ground constraints imposed by the proposal, including a tree constraints plan. No materials whatsoever shall be stored, rubbish dumped, fires lit or buildings erected within these fences; no changes in ground level shall be made within the spread of any tree, shrub or hedge without the previous written approval of the local planning authority. No trees shall be used as anchorages, nor shall any items whatsoever be affixed to any retained tree. (In the interests of amenity, and in accordance with policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
5. The sight lines on each side of each vehicular access shall be provided at the time of development and shall be retained. (In the interests of the safety of pedestrians and other road users, and in accordance with policy AM01 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
6. At the same time as the remainder of the development, all parking areas, including at least 8 car parking spaces for the use of disabled people, shall be surfaced and marked out in accordance with details which shall first have been submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority, and shall be retained and not used for any other purpose. The parking areas to be surfaced shall be of a permeable material unless otherwise agreed. (To ensure that parking can take place in a satisfactory manner, and in accordance with policy AM11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
7. LOADING AND UNLOADING WITHIN SITE
8. TURNING SPACE WITHIN SITE
9. Before the development is brought into use a minimum of parking spaces for powered seven wheeler (PTW) vehicles and a minimum of 202 secure and sheltered cycle parking spaces shall be provided within the curtilage of the site. The PTW/cycle parking should be, suitably positioned, well lit, secure and covered, the details of which shall be agreed in writing with the City Council as local planning authority. A site shall also be reserved for the provision of additional cycle parking spaces should additional need be identified on any updated travel plan. (In the interests of satisfactory parking provision and in accordance with policy AM02 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
10. Before the development is begun, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority indicating details of temporary site entrances, temporary storage areas for soil and other materials, the placing of plant and site huts to be adopted during building operations, and the provision for the accommodation of all site operatives,

visitors and construction vehicles loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period. and shall be implemented. (To ensure the satisfactory development of the site, and in accordance with policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)

11. The submitted Travel Plan shall be implemented on occupation of the development. (In the interests of the safety of pedestrians and other road users and residential amenity, and in accordance with policies AM01 and PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
12. Before the development is begun full design details of a scheme to provide 16% of the development's total predicted annual energy demand from renewable energy sources, unless otherwise agreed, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before the development is occupied satisfactory evidence will be required demonstrating satisfactory operation of the agreed scheme, including on-site installation, in accordance with the agreed details. (To ensure sustainable energy efficiency in accordance with Policy BE16 of the Leicester local plan)
13. The development shall not be commenced until drainage plans for the disposal of surface water and foul sewage has been submitted to and approved in writing by of the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the City Council as local planning authority. (To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory disposal of surface water from the site and to minimise the risk of pollution and in accordance with Policies PS11 and BE20 of the City of Leicester local plan).
14. Should the development not commence within 12 months of the date of the last protected species survey (insert date of last survey), then a further protected species survey shall be carried out of all buildings, trees and other features by a suitably qualified ecologist. The survey results shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the local planning authority and any identified mitigation measures carried out before the development is begun. Thereafter the survey should be repeated annually until the development begins. (To comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRow Act 2000), the Habitat & Species Regulations 2010 and CS 17 of the Core Strategy)
15. No construction or demolition work, other than unforeseen emergency work, shall be undertaken outside of the hours of 0730 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0730 to 1300 Saturday or at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless the methodology has been submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority. (In the interests of residential amenity and in accordance with Policy PS10 of the City of Leicester Local Plan)
16. No part of the development shall be occupied until footway crossing(s) have been provided at each vehicular access in accordance with guidance in the

Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council document '6Cs Design Guide'. (To ensure a satisfactory means of access to the highway, and in accordance with policy AM01 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)

17. No part of the development shall be occupied until any redundant footway crossings and/or damaged or altered areas of footway or other highway have been reinstated in accordance with guidance in the Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council document '6Cs Design Guide'. (For the safety and convenience of pedestrians and other road users, and in accordance with policy AM01 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
18. Before the development is begun a detailed design plan of external lighting to be used shall be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The lighting should be designed to cause minimum disturbance to neighbouring residents and protected species that may inhabit the site. The approved scheme shall be implemented and retained thereafter. (In the interests of protecting residential amenity and wildlife habitats and in accordance with policies PS10 and BE22 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and policy CS17 Biodiversity of the Core Strategy)
19. This consent shall relate to the submitted plans received by the City Council as local planning authority on 07/09/2012, unless otherwise submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. (For the avoidance of doubt.)

NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL. Although the City Council considers that the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan in that the proposal involves the development on land identified as green space, it considers that the benefits associated with the development, that is the improvement of education and community facilities, outweigh the harm to the loss of green space. It considers that the following matters are overriding material considerations that justify permitting the proposal: The improvement of education and community facilities at this school supports the Government's proposals for secondary educational transformation with the intention that every secondary aged child will be educated in a '21st Century environment' within 15 years. The City Council considers that any harm to visual and residential amenity can be overcome by the attached conditions.
2. Development at site may impact on protected species of wildlife. It is a criminal offence to kill, injure or disturb protected species and their habitat in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended and The Habitat & Species Regulations (2010). If, during the development a protected species is found, work must cease immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist or Natural England be contacted. Contact details for Natural England are: 0845 600 3078 8.30am - 4.15pm (Monday - Friday)

3. Development on the site shall avoid the bird nesting season (March to September), but if necessary a re-check for nests should be made by an ecologist (or an appointed competent person) not more than 24 hours prior to the commencement of works. If any nests or birds in the process of building a nest are found, these areas will be retained (left undisturbed) until the nest is no longer in use and all the young have fledged. An appropriate standoff zone will also be marked out to avoid disturbance to the nest whilst it is in use. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended making it an offence to kill, injure or disturb a wild bird during the nesting season or to damage or destroy an active nest or eggs during that time.

4. The above proposal involves works on the public highway on land outside your control. You are therefore required to submit technical details for approval under a Section 278 process (including an appropriate safety audit) to the Highway Authority before development commences. For further information regarding this process including technical approval please contact Mr Ravi Mohankumar telephone (0116) 2526600.

5. Any work within the public highway will require the approval of the Highway Authority in addition to the planning permission hereby granted. The developer should also, at least six weeks before works on site commence, consult with the Highways Management Section (Telephone 0116 223 2010) to determine whether construction traffic necessitates the provision of any temporary footway crossings. This is to ensure that apparatus within the footway will be protected from damage caused by the heavier loadings of construction plant and deliveries and that the surface of the footway will remain safe for footway users during the works.

Policies relating to this recommendation

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| 2006_AM01 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of pedestrians and people with disabilities are incorporated into the design and routes are as direct as possible to key destinations. |
| 2006_AM02 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of cyclists have been incorporated into the design and new or improved cycling routes should link directly and safely to key destinations. |
| 2006_AM11 | Proposals for parking provision for non-residential development should not exceed the maximum standards specified in Appendix 01. |
| 2006_BE16 | Planning permission will be granted for the development of renewable energy installations where local impacts are not outweighed by wider benefits. Major developments must realise their potential for incorporating renewable energy technologies. |
| 2006_BE20 | Developments that are likely to create flood risk onsite or elsewhere will only be permitted if adequate mitigation measures can be implemented. |
| 2006_GE06 | Sets out the criteria for assessing proposed development within, and adjacent to, green wedges. |
| 2006_PS10 | Criteria will be used to assess planning applications which concern the amenity of existing or proposed residents. |
| 2006_PS11 | Control over proposals which have the potential to pollute, and over proposals which are sensitive to pollution near existing polluting uses; support for alternative fuels etc. |

- 2006_UD06 New development should not impinge upon landscape features that have amenity value whether they are within or outside the site unless it can meet criteria.
- 2010_CS01 The overall objective of the Core Strategy is to ensure that Leicester develops as a sustainable city, with an improved quality of life for all its citizens. The policy includes guidelines for the location of housing and other development.
- 2010_CS02 Development must mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy sets out principles which provide the climate change policy context for the City.
- 2010_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.
- 2010_CS08 Neighbourhoods should be sustainable places that people choose to live and work in and where everyday facilities are available to local people. The policy sets out requirements for various neighbourhood areas in the City.
- 2010_CS13 The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the quality of the green network so that residents and visitors have easy access to good quality green space, sport and recreation provision that meets the needs of local people.
- 2010_CS14 The Council will seek to ensure that new development is easily accessible to all future users including by alternative means of travel to the car; and will aim to develop and maintain a Transport Network that will maximise accessibility, manage congestion and air quality, and accommodate the impacts of new development.
- 2010_CS15 To meet the key aim of reducing Leicester's contribution to climate change, the policy sets out measures to help manage congestion on the City roads.