

- 2.43 The principles of accessibility to public transport facilities have also been considered in relation to sites in the West Nottinghamshire Sub-Area. While no Public Transport Corridor is identified, parts of the area are served by the Robin Hood Line, particularly in Kirkby, and therefore sites can be considered in the same way as South Nottinghamshire sites. Considerations of accessibility also include the need to identify sites within walking distance of existing bus routes and with good cycle access.

#### Urban Capacity

- 2.44 In meeting the aims of the plan in relation to concentration of development within urban areas, and in support of the objectives of sustainability, an exercise has therefore been undertaken within all urban areas of the District to identify potential development sites. This has involved a detailed investigation of all undeveloped sites and open areas including allotments, open space, derelict sites and vacant sites and buildings. The details of the exercise are contained in Technical Paper No.1: 'Urban Capacity'. Some of the sites identified in the Local Plan Review have arisen from this Urban Capacity exercise and others, mainly smaller sites under 0.4 hectares may come forward for development during the plan period.
- 2.45 While indicating that some development land clearly exists within the existing urban area, the study also shows that overall needs for both housing and employment land will need to encroach into open countryside, which in the southern part of the District will involve loss of Green Belt. Accordingly sites which have been identified for development adjoining the urban area have been carefully selected in accordance with the "sequential" approach referred to in paragraph 2.35 and 2.36 to ensure the minimum of impact on the open countryside and to ensure the purposes of Green Belt are not undermined.

### MAIN URBAN AREAS

#### **POLICY ST2 DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONCENTRATED WITHIN THE MAIN URBAN AREAS OF HUCKNALL, KIRKBY-IN-ASHFIELD AND SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.**

- 2.46 Most of the specific land use allocations in subsequent chapters are concentrated in these three Main Urban Areas. In addition, it is proposed that, in general, other proposals which emerge during the Plan period and do not conflict with specific land use designations or with development control criteria will be encouraged in these areas where services are concentrated and access to facilities is best.
- 2.47 As indicated in para. 2.26, it is anticipated that the general role of Hucknall, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Sutton-in-Ashfield as the main employment, housing and service centres in the District will remain largely unchanged in coming years, as will the positive attitude of the District Council to development in these areas. As a result, policy ST2 does not distinguish between the three towns in terms of the overall strategic attitude to development, but looks to concentrate new development in each of them during the Plan period.
- 2.48 The Structure Plan Review proposes the concentration of new development within and adjoining existing urban areas, and in the case of Hucknall along identified 'Public Transport Corridors'. The scale of additional development needs to 2011 has meant that capacity of the Main Urban Areas identified within the adopted Ashfield Local Plan is insufficient to provide for all new requirements.
- 2.49 The precise boundaries of the Main Urban Areas have therefore been redrawn to reflect both existing and proposed development, and are shown on the Proposals Map. Wherever possible, previously established boundaries have been retained. Where encroachment onto land previously identified as Green Belt or other Countryside is proposed, boundaries have been drawn to minimise further loss of countryside using identifiable strong boundaries wherever possible. Hence the policy wording makes no further provision for developments 'adjoining' these urban areas. Other developments on the edge of the identified Main Urban Areas will be unacceptable unless they conform with Green Belt or Countryside policies (EV1 and EV2).