

## News release from The Co-operative Group

### THE CO-OPERATIVE GROUP WELCOMES PPS AS ECO-TOWN PROPOSALS MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE

The Co-operative Group welcomes today's publication of the draft Eco-towns Planning Policy Statement (PPS) and the start of the Government's next round of public consultation.

Establishing a new benchmark for sustainable living in the UK is at the heart of today's announcement and the draft policy statement underlines the need for new solutions which will deliver inclusive, sustainable communities.

The existing Regional Spatial Strategy has identified the need for at least 90,000 new homes in and around Leicester and a review currently underway is expected to revise this figure significantly upwards.

The draft PPS confirms that the Group's landholding to the south east of Leicester is a viable location for an eco-town and its proximity to the city means that it could deliver important benefits for existing communities. The sustainability appraisal confirms that the site has many strengths. The proposals build on these strengths and address the limited number of concerns raised.

The statement also highlights the Government's preference for proposals to be assessed through the normal planning process - a route to which the Co-operative Group has been committed from the start.

Graham Ramsbottom, Head of Land Development and Ventures for the Co-operative Estates, said: "All communities will have to make choices about where and how best to meet this demand for new homes if economic growth is to continue in the Leicester city region. The draft PPS highlights the benefits of our site and confirms we made the right decision in bringing it forward. We are confident our proposals can be a catalyst for the transformation of the city region."

**end**

#### Notes to editors:

1. Further background on the Co-operative Group is available at [www.co-operative.coop](http://www.co-operative.coop).
2. Other useful websites with information about sustainable communities include:  
The Town and Country Planning Association  
<http://www.tcpa.org.uk/>  
The Academy for Sustainable Communities  
<http://www.ascskills.org.uk/pages/home>

The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment

<http://www.princes-foundation.org/>

3. The Group is an acknowledged leader in sustainable development. Voted Britain's most ethical brand in 2006, we have also received the Queen's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development, the Renewable Energy Association's Pioneer Award and Business Commitment to the Environment's Peter Parker Award for Environmental Leadership.
4. English Partnerships is the national regeneration agency, supporting high quality sustainable growth in England. A non-departmental public body, it is sponsored by the Communities and Local Government department (CLG). English Partnerships owns around 80 hectares of land to the south of Great Glen which is included in the proposals.
5. Midlands Co-operative Society, which operates stores in the Leicester area, is an independent Co-operative business, which is not involved in the eco-town proposal.

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