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Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Narborough on **TUESDAY, 30 JUNE 2026** at **5.30 p.m.**. Please find attached a supplemental item that is required for the meeting and is in addition to the agenda and report pack that has already been circulated.

Yours faithfully



**Gemma Dennis**  
**Corporate Services Group Manager**



## **SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**

### **SECTION 6 - REPORTS FOR DECISIONS**

To consider any reports submitted for consideration by Council.

9. Blaby District Local Plan (Proposed Submission Version): Regulation 19 Publication (Pages 3 - 358)

To consider the report of the Planning Policy and Strategy Service Manager (enclosed).

Appendix C - Sustainability Appraisal

# Blaby Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal (SA)



**SA Report  
Non Technical  
Summary**  
June 2026







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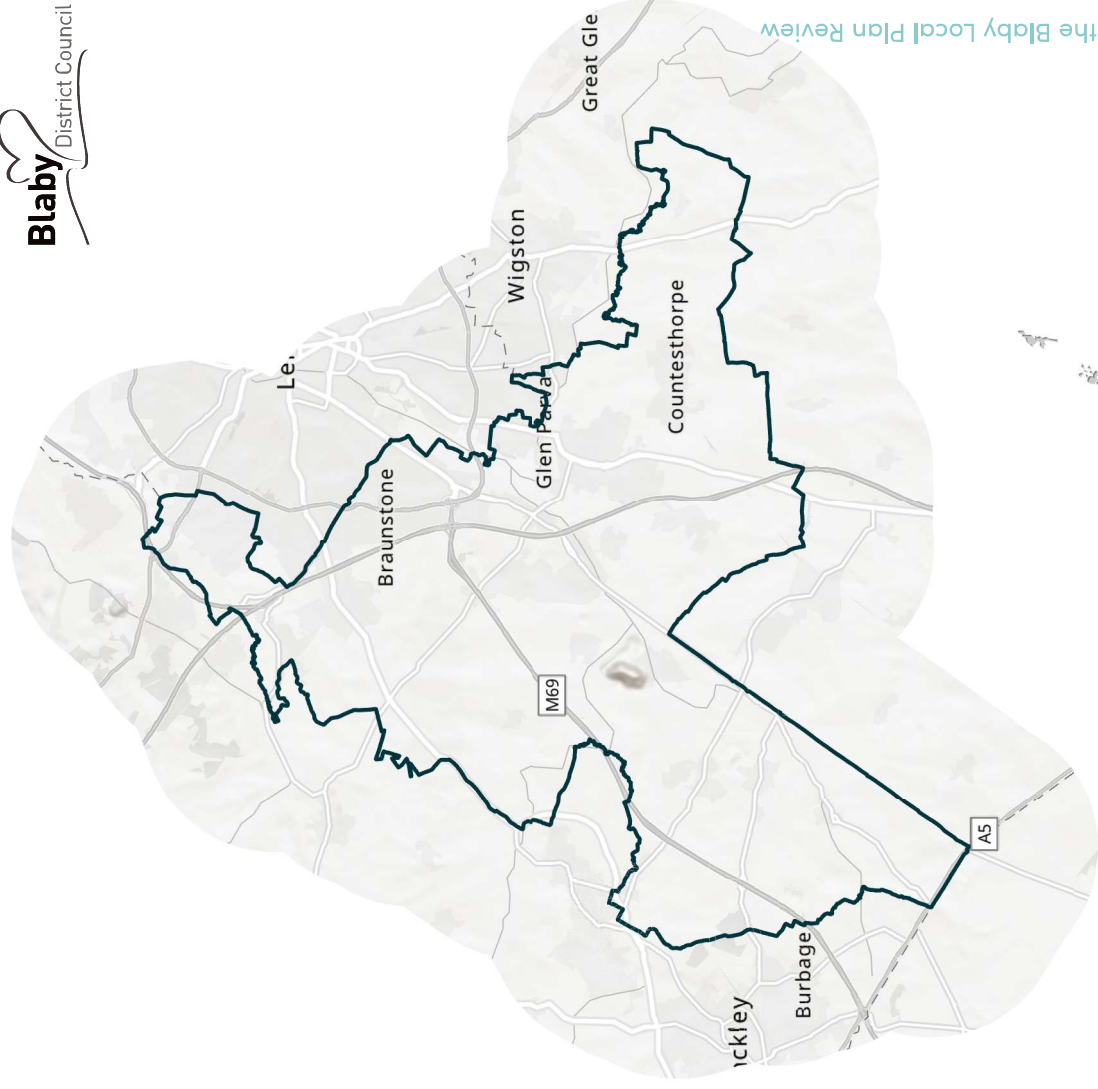


# Introduction

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Blaby Local Plan Review is intended to provide a clear and structured assessment of how the Plan performs across environmental, economic and social objectives. It has been prepared to inform decision-making at each stage of plan development, testing the Plan and reasonable alternatives to ensure that growth is both sustainable and deliverable.

The need to review the Plan reflects a combination of factors, including updated evidence on housing need, changes in national policy, and the requirement to respond to wider strategic priorities across Leicester and Leicestershire.

A full SA report brings together the findings of this process, covering the appraisal of the overall strategy, growth options and site allocations, alongside a consideration of mitigation measures to address potential impacts and strengthen outcomes. This is a non technical summary of the main report.



# Scoping

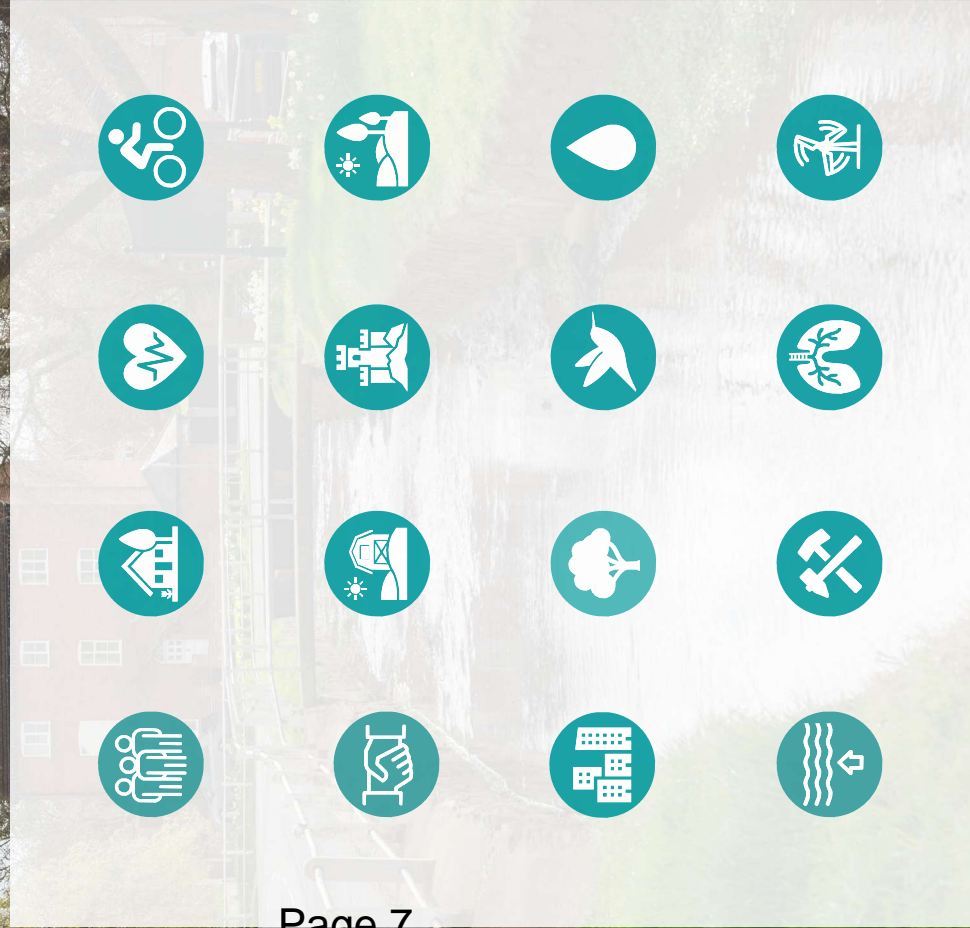
The scoping stage is an early step in the Sustainability Appraisal process. Its purpose is to decide what issues the appraisal should focus on and how the assessment will be carried out. This helps ensure that the appraisal concentrates on the most important social, environmental and economic topics that are relevant to the Local Plan.

Informed by data collection and review of the evidence, the scoping stage involves establishing a set of sustainability objectives. These objectives act as a framework for assessing the Local Plan.

Legislation requires that key organisations with environmental responsibilities are asked for their views on the scope and level of detail of the appraisal. For this Local Plan, these organisations include the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report was shared with them, as well as being made available to the wider public through the Council's website.

Feedback received during consultation was carefully reviewed and used to refine and update the scope of the appraisal. This helped ensure that the Sustainability Appraisal is focused, relevant and based on up to date evidence before progressing to assess the draft Local Plan.

An initial scoping report was published and shared with consultees in July 2021. Focused updates were undertaken in January 2025 to ensure that the scope remained appropriate in light of significant changes to national policy and to reflect new evidence and data. The framework was consolidated at this stage to allow for a more proportionate assessment process.



## The Sustainability Objectives

-  1. Provide a suitable level of housing to meet overall need within the district; and a range of housing types to meet the needs of different groups.
-  2. Ensure that all groups within the community have good access to high quality local services (including schools, GP practices and open space).
-  3. Support good health and wellbeing for all residents and focus on reducing inequalities.
-  4. Direct growth away from the most sensitive wildlife habitats, whilst ensuring that ecological networks are strengthened and there is a net gain in biodiversity.
-  5. Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment; whilst making it more accessible for public enjoyment.
-  6. Protect mineral resources and associated infrastructure from sterilisation; whilst ensuring the efficient extraction and use of mineral resources.
-  7. Minimise waste generation whilst supporting an increase in reuse, recycling and composting.

-  8. Protect landscape and townscape character and distinctiveness throughout the district.
-  9. To conserve the District's soils and make efficient and effective use of land.
-  10. Improve the water quality status of the watercourses running through the district; seeking to achieve 'good' overall status for WFD classification.
-  11. Reduce emissions of pollutants that contribute to poor air quality (particularly from traffic); whilst ensuring that new and existing communities (and environmental assets) are protected from the harmful effects that poor air quality causes.
-  12. Ensure that existing and new development is resilient to the effects of climate change, particularly flood risk and other extreme weather events.
-  13. Support the move to a zero carbon economy.
-  14. Support the sustainable growth of Blaby's economy to ensure that a suitable range of employment opportunities are available to all and financial resilience is strengthened.
-  15. Provide infrastructure to support economic growth, whilst prioritising sustainable modes of transport and reducing the need to travel.

# Options Consultation Stage

At options consultation stage, the Council gathered evidence to explore how many new homes the district may need and where those homes could potentially be located.

## Housing Need Being Tested



The Government's standard method indicated a minimum of 6,441 homes over the plan period at this stage. However, for testing purposes only, the Council also examined:

- **9,000 homes** – to help take some of Leicester's unmet need
- **12,000 homes** – an upper, more ambitious option

Nothing below 6,441 was considered realistic, and 12,000 was seen as the maximum amount of growth likely to be required at that point. These were options under exploration, not chosen levels.

## Possible Ways Growth Could Be Distributed

To understand the implications, five spatial approaches were tested:

- Leicester Urban Fringe** – focus new homes next to Leicester
- Extended Urban Area** – include larger villages near Leicester
- More Dispersed Growth** – spread across medium/smaller villages
- Large Strategic Sites / Garden Villages** – big new planned communities
- Single New Settlement** – one major new village/town

These were combined with different housing numbers to create 11 scenarios for comparison.



# Exploring Options

## What the Appraisal Examined

Each scenario was assessed for its potential impacts against the SA Framework:

Type of effect	Likely	Uncertain / potential
Significant positive effects	++	++?
Minor positive effects	+	?
Neutral effects	0	0?
Minor negative effects	-	?
Significant negative effects	---	---?

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This is technical analysis only, not a judgement on what would eventually be chosen.

## Summary of appraisal findings

### Scenario 1: 6,441 homes

- Mostly neutral effects due to modest growth
- Slight positives for housing, economy, and wellbeing

### Scenario 2: 9,000 homes

- Strong housing outcomes across all options
- Options near Leicester (2a, 2b) perform better due to existing transport and services
- More dispersed option (2c) performs worse (more car travel, landscape pressure)
- Strategic sites (2d, 2e) have mixed/uncertain effects depending on infrastructure delivery

### Scenario 3: 12,000 homes

- High positives for housing, economic potential, and infrastructure viability
- But also higher risks to:
  - Landscape
  - Wildlife
  - Traffic and air quality
  - Water and soils

# Pre-Submission Stage

At this stage, the Council needed to update and refine its strategy before preparing the Pre Submission Local Plan. This required revisiting earlier assumptions from the Issues & Options stage, because both national requirements and local evidence had changed significantly since the original work was undertaken.

## Why the strategy had to be revisited

National planning guidance and the Standard Method for calculating housing need changed substantially, which meant earlier figures were no longer appropriate. Alongside this, a large amount of new technical evidence became available – including work on housing need (HENA), updated transport assessments, the SA, and revised Statements of Common Ground.

Moreover, Leicester’s unmet housing need was recalculated several times (2021, 2022, 2025). Each update changed how much housing Blaby was expected to take, and at times increased the amount significantly. Because of all this, the Council could no longer depend entirely on the original Options Consultation: the evidence base and housing numbers had moved on.

## New Growth Scenarios Identified

Three new housing growth options were developed:

- **10,500 homes:** minimum requirement (Standard Method only)
- **12,000 homes:** meets Blaby’s own need plus a proportion of Leicester’s unmet need
- **13,500 homes:** includes potential unmet needs from other nearby districts, and adds flexibility

These offered realistic choices based on the latest evidence available at this point in time.

# Appraisal Findings

## Distribution Strategy Refined

The overall distribution approach from the Options Consultation largely remains sound. Updated analysis confirmed:

- Around **5,100** homes are already committed
  - Strategic sites remain essential for delivery
- P** Growth should still focus on the PUA, larger villages and medium villages  
**age 42** Higher growth options would require a wider spread of sites

This confirmed much of the emerging spatial strategy was still valid, and mainly the scale of growth needed updating.

Two strategic sites underpin the strategy across all options. Their delivery assumptions have been updated to reflect realistic lead in times. This provides continuity and certainty in the emerging plan.

## Appraisal Findings

	Housing Option 1	Housing Option 2	Housing Option 3
Health: Facilities	++ <sup>?</sup>	++	++
Health: Amenity and leisure	+	+	+
Population and housing	++	++	++
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	-	-	-
Cultural Heritage	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>
Waste	0 <sup>?</sup>	0 <sup>?</sup>	0 <sup>?</sup>
Minerals	?	?	- <sup>?</sup>
Landscape	-- <sup>?</sup>	-- <sup>?</sup>	--
Soil	--	--	--
Water quality	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>	-- <sup>?</sup>
Air quality	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>	-
Climate Change Mitigation	+ <sup>?</sup>	+ <sup>?</sup>	+ <sup>?</sup>
Flooding	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>
Economy	+++ <sup>?</sup>	++	++
Congestion	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>	- <sup>?</sup>
Sustainable travel	++	++	++

# Appraisal Findings

The effects for each option have been determined through assessment against the SA Framework. All three options show broadly similar outcomes (in terms of significant effects) across most sustainability topics, with consistent positive effects on population and housing and sustainable travel, and negative impacts on biodiversity, soil, and landscape and 'congestion'. Areas such as cultural heritage, water quality, flooding, and climate change mitigation are marked by uncertainty across all options.

## Key differences emerge in three areas:

- Economy and housing:** Options 2 and 3 offer clearer economic and housing related benefits, while Option 1 is more uncertain.
- Water:** Option 3 is more likely to have a significant negative effect compared to options 1 and 2, but there is a degree of uncertainty.
- Air Quality:** Option 3 shows a more definite negative impact in this respect, making Options 1 and 2 slightly more favourable.
- Minerals:** Option 3 may have a slightly more negative effect compared to the others.
- Landscapes:** Whilst all three options are predicted to have significant effects on landscape, this is more certain / likely for Option 3 compared to options 1 and 2.

From a decision-making perspective, Options 2 and 3 may be stronger if economic certainty and housing delivery is prioritised, while Option 1 or 2 could be preferable where environmental sensitivity is a greater concern. It should be noted however, that the differences are marginal in respect of most sustainability topics.

Broadly speaking, the positive effects associated with greater housing delivery can be achieved without having a significantly different effect on environmental factors compared to a lower amount of growth.

## Council rationale for the preferred approach

The Council's preferred approach is to plan for enough housing to meet both local needs and a share of Leicester's unmet demand, while allowing a buffer to provide flexibility if some sites are delayed. Although different growth options would have similar environmental effects, the Council considers it important to include this flexibility to ensure a steady housing supply can be maintained over time.

In deciding where development should go, the Council has balanced a range of practical constraints. While the most sustainable areas are within the Principal Urban Area (PUA), there is limited land available there and past plans have not delivered as expected. Large strategic sites are important for long-term growth but are complex and slow to deliver, so they cannot meet all needs in the short term. As a result, growth is spread more widely, with a significant share directed to larger and medium villages where development is more achievable, while avoiding smaller settlements that lack services and accessibility. Overall, the final distribution reflects a mix of planning ambition and the realities of what land is available and likely to come forward.

# Strategic Employment Options

## Strategic Employment Options

The Council has tested three broad approaches to employment growth, based on available evidence and the need to balance economic ambition with environmental and infrastructure considerations. These range from a more limited, baseline option focused on existing commitments and urban-edge sites, through to a more ambitious strategy that incorporates a wider range of locations and, at the upper end, significant new large-scale logistics development. Each option reflects a different interpretation of future demand and the role Blaby should play within the wider functional economic area, particularly in relation to strategic warehousing and regional growth.

## Appraisal Findings

	Option 1: Lower growth	Option 2: Mid growth	Option 3: Higher growth
Health: Facilities / accessibility	+	++?	++
Health: Amenity / safety	0	?	-
Population and housing	0	0	0
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	?	-	-
Cultural Heritage	?	-	--?
Waste	0	0	-
Minerals	0	?	?
Landscape	-	-	--?
Soil	-	-	--
Water quality	0	?	?
Air quality	?	-	-
Climate change: Mitigation	0	?	-
Flooding	0	0	0
Economy	+	++?	++
Congestion	0	?	-
Sustainable Travel	+	+	+

# Appraisal Findings

## Individual site appraisals

A structured, evidence-led approach has been taken to identifying sites for housing and employment, combining technical assessment with wider strategic considerations. All promoted sites have been reviewed against a consistent set of sustainability criteria, alongside other factors such as deliverability, infrastructure requirements and how well they align with the overall growth strategy. Importantly, site selection is not simply about choosing the least constrained options, but about identifying locations that can realistically deliver development, support infrastructure provision and contribute to coherent, long-term patterns of growth across the District.

In practice, this has led to a clear spatial approach. Growth is focused first on the Principal Urban Area, where larger, well-connected sites can support infrastructure and sustainable travel, rather than smaller, piecemeal development. In larger villages, decisions are shaped by existing commitments and the need to avoid over-concentration, with preference given to sites that reinforce a logical direction of growth. A more cautious approach is taken in medium villages, where development is largely consolidated rather than expanded, reflecting more limited capacity to support sustainable growth. Smaller villages are treated more restrictively, with only modest, locally appropriate development supported. Overall, the selected sites reflect a balance between deliverability, infrastructure provision and sustainable development, recognising that the effectiveness of the Plan depends on how sites work together to shape growth, rather than their individual characteristics in isolation.

## Whole plan appraisal

The SA reviews the Pre Submission Plan as a whole, looking at how the overall strategy, site choices, and policies work together to guide future development. Each sustainability topic is assessed by first considering the combined impacts of the planned growth and where it is located, and then looking at how the Plan's policies might reduce or influence these effects. This "whole plan" approach recognises that policies interact and should not be viewed in isolation.

The assessment was carried out by qualified specialists using well established methods. This included using baseline data from earlier scoping work, GIS mapping to identify sensitive areas, reviewing previous appraisal stages, and drawing on evidence such as landscape and transport studies. Although predicting future impacts is complex, the significance of effects was judged by considering factors like scale, duration, likelihood, permanence, and whether impacts might combine with those from other plans.



# Appraisal Discussion

The Blaby Local Plan is expected to bring mainly positive benefits. It will help deliver more homes, improve health and wellbeing, strengthen the local economy, make it easier to travel sustainably, and respond better to climate change. It also includes stronger planning policies to manage environmental risks.

The Plan takes a long-term and strategic approach to growth. It plans for more housing than the minimum required, including helping to meet unmet needs from Leicester. It focuses on creating two large new communities designed to last beyond the plan period. A key change is that infrastructure like schools, health facilities, and services will be built into these new communities from the start, rather than added later. The Plan also better connects policies on housing, health, climate change, green spaces, and transport.

Some negative effects come from the scale and speed of development. These include permanent changes to landscapes and farmland, and short-term pressure on services and transport while new development is being built. Construction may temporarily affect local residents, wildlife, and some heritage settings. However, the Plan includes strong measures to reduce these impacts—for example, careful landscape design, green buffers, early delivery of infrastructure, better sustainable transport, biodiversity protection, and heritage-sensitive planning.

Overall, while some impacts cannot be completely avoided, most are limited, temporary, or reduced through these measures. The main lasting concern is the loss of soil, but steps have been taken to lessen this as much as possible.

SA Topics	Overall effects
Health: Long term health outcomes	Significant positive
Health: Short term impacts	Minor negative
Population and housing	Significant positive
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Minor positive
Cultural Heritage	Neutral
Waste	Neutral
Minerals	Neutral
Landscape	Minor negative
Soil	Significant negative
Water quality	Neutral
Air quality	Minor negative ?
Climate Change Mitigation	Minor positive
Climate Change resilience	Minor positive
Economy	Significant positive
Congestion	Minor negative
Sustainable travel	Significant positive ?



# Mitigation and Monitoring

The Sustainability Appraisal has helped shape the Local Plan by identifying mitigation and enhancement measures throughout its preparation. Early recommendations focused on strengthening overall objectives—particularly biodiversity and environmental net gain—while later stages introduced more detailed, policy-led responses. The Council has largely addressed these through stronger and more integrated policies on green infrastructure, climate change, health, transport and design, embedding sustainability at the core of the Plan.

Key improvements include enhanced biodiversity policies, a strategic green and blue infrastructure framework, and clearer requirements for open space, active travel and healthy communities. The Plan also supports natural drainage, better alignment of homes and jobs, and improved accessibility through sustainable transport. At a detailed level, policies on construction management, air quality, landscape and heritage have reduced most negative effects to minor or manageable levels.

Some residual impacts remain, most notably the loss of soil resources, which is largely unavoidable due to the scale of growth and limited brownfield land being available in the district. This has been partly addressed through stronger policy requirements, including soil management plans, but remains a significant effect.

Short-term impacts on health, infrastructure and local amenity are also expected during early development phases, though these are being managed through phasing and infrastructure provision. Overall, remaining effects reflect necessary trade-offs in delivering growth rather than gaps in the Plan, and are generally limited, localised or temporary.



# Monitoring

## Monitoring and next steps

The Plan includes a set of monitoring measures to track whether it is delivering the expected outcomes, particularly where significant positive or negative effects have been identified. These indicators are intended to provide a practical way of checking progress over time, highlighting where the Plan is performing well and where further action may be needed. The measures are still draft at this stage and will be refined once the Plan is adopted, but they are aligned with the Council's existing monitoring framework to keep things consistent and manageable.

## Key monitoring indicators



- Use of Building for Healthy Life standards
- Delivery of specialist and accessible housing
- Loss of open space and recreation facilities



- **Housing**
- Number of new homes delivered (net and gross)
- Five-year housing land supply
- Delivery of affordable housing
- Self-build plots provided
- Rural exception sites
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson provision



### Biodiversity

- Number and condition of wildlife and conservation sites
- Number of Local Nature Reserves and management plans



### Heritage

- Number of listed buildings, conservation areas and heritage assets



### Waste and Minerals

- Use of Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP)
- Objections on mineral safeguarding grounds



### Landscape

- Tree canopy cover
- Amount of green/blue infrastructure delivered



### Soil

- Area of soil lost to development
- Efficient use of land (density compliance)



### Water

- Permissions granted against flood or environmental advice

# Monitoring

## Air Quality



- Number of Air Quality Management Areas

## Climate Change (Mitigation and Resilience)



- Carbon emissions per person
- Surface water runoff rates
- Water efficiency standards
- Tree canopy cover

## Economy



- Amount of new employment floorspace
- Gains and losses of employment land

## Transport and Movement



- Contributions to highway improvements
- Delivery of walking and cycling routes
- Access to public transport (e.g. proximity to bus services)

## Next Steps

The SA report brings together the Sustainability Appraisal work completed so far to support the Regulation 19 version of the Blaby Local Plan. At this stage, consultation will focus on whether the Plan is sound, rather than revisiting its overall direction. Following consultation, the Plan will be submitted for independent examination, where a Planning Inspector will review it alongside any representations received and determine whether it meets the required standards.

As the Plan progresses through examination, further Sustainability Appraisal work may be needed to reflect any changes or modifications. This ensures that any updates to the Plan continue to be properly assessed in terms of their environmental, social and economic effects.



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# **Blaby Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal**

## **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report**

**Blaby District Council**

**June, 2026**

## Quality information

<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Checked by</b>	<b>Verified by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
Ian McCluskey	Ian McCluskey	Nick Chisholm Batten	Ian McCluskey
Laurie Marriott	Associate Director	Technical Director	Associate Director
Ishaq Khan			

## Revision History

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Revision date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Authorized</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>

### Prepared for:

Blaby District Council

### Prepared by:

AECOM Limited  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (161) 907 3500  
aecom.com

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned by Blaby District Council to undertake a sustainability appraisal (SA) in support of the Local Plan Review (the 'Plan'), which will cover the period 2025 – 2042.

1.1.2 Sustainability Appraisal is a tool for exploring the effects of a plan in terms of the environment, economy and community wellbeing.

1.1.3 This is the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Blaby Local Plan Review. At this stage, the focus is on understanding the effects of the draft Plan (and any reasonable alternatives). The report also documents the findings from earlier stages in the SA process.

1.1.4 Blaby has determined it necessary to undertake a Plan Review primarily for the following reasons:

- To ensure that the Local Plan is up to date and looks ahead at least 15 years.
- To take account of new circumstances, such as updated population and household projections.
- The need to take account of and plan for the wider issues across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.
- To take account of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (and associated Statements of Common Ground).
- To take account of revised national planning policy.

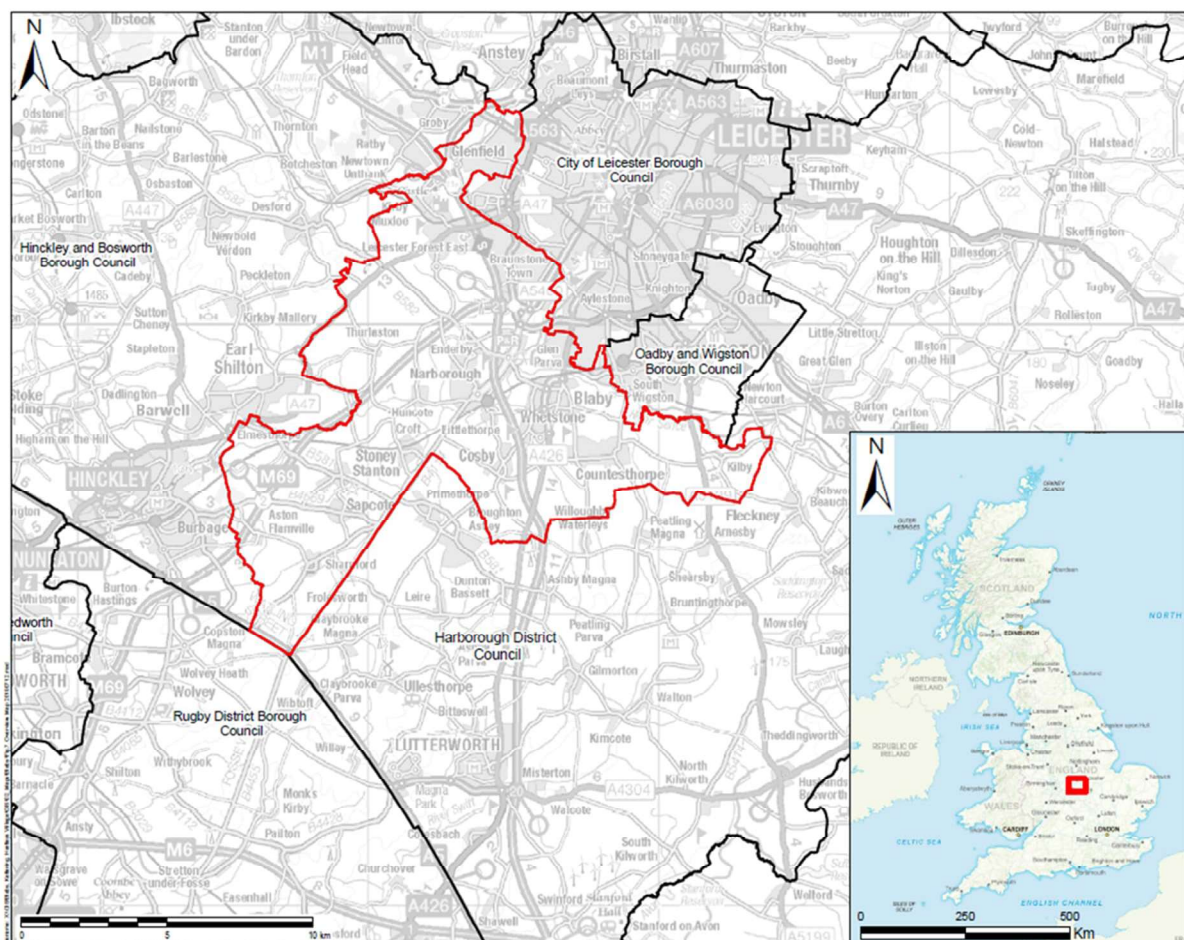
1.1.5 The Sustainability Appraisal Report contains the findings associated with the SA work that has been undertaken so far, specifically;

- A summary of the SA scope and methodologies.
- Appraisal of strategic objectives
- Consideration and appraisal of alternative approaches to the key issues of housing and employment growth and distribution.
- Appraisal of site-specific options.
- Appraisal of the draft Plan considered 'as a whole'.
- Consideration of mitigation and enhancement measures.

## 1.2 Location plan

1.2.1 The area covered by the new Local Plan is illustrated on Figure 1.1. The map highlights Blaby District's close proximity to the built up south western boundary of the City of Leicester.

**Figure 1.1: The new Local Plan area**



## 2. Scoping Summary

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The Scoping stage of the SA process is used to establish the key issues that should be the focus of the appraisal, as well as the assessment methodologies.
- 2.1.2 A Scoping Report was prepared and published for consultation with the Statutory Bodies in November 2019. These are; Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency.
- 2.1.3 Following consideration of the comments received, the scope of the SA was established and has provided the baseline position against which appraisals have been undertaken.
- 2.1.4 It should be noted that the scope of the SA is fluid and has been updated throughout the plan making process in light of new evidence. Given the lengthy plan-making process, it was considered helpful to prepare a scoping report update before undertaking the final Sustainability Assessment. The report focused on any new evidence and policy context and explored whether this would have any implications for the key issues and SA framework. The focused update report was sent to the statutory consultees for a five-week period to invite further comment.

### 2.2 Key issues and objectives

- 2.2.1 The key issues identified through the scoping process are summarised in table 2.1 below. This reflects any changes to the key issues that were made as a result of the scoping update.
- 2.2.2 The key issues were used to determine appropriate objectives which have been used to assess the plan (i.e. by establishing the key issues that need to be addressed through the SA process).
- 2.2.3 The SA Framework forms a basis for the appraisal of all elements of the Plan, and any reasonable alternatives. Essentially, the SA seeks to determine how the Plan performs in relation to each of the SA Objectives and whether the proposals would lead to a significant effect on the baseline position associated with each SA Objective.

**Table 2.1: Key sustainability issues identified through scoping and associated sustainability appraisal objectives**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>SA Objectives</b>	<b>Prompts</b>
<p><b>Population and housing</b></p>	<p>The population is increasing and ageing; which requires specific housing solutions.</p> <p>The number of households is increasing and is projected to continue to increase.</p> <p>The percentage of households owning their own home is decreasing.</p> <p>Average house prices are increasing and the ratio of house price to earnings is increasing.</p> <p>The number of dwellings classed as long-term empty homes is increasing. The Blaby Local Plan should aim to reduce the number of empty homes by ensuring housing is affordable and accessible for everyone.</p> <p>The provision of housing delivery, especially affordable housing, has fallen in recent years. The Local Plan should address this by promoting the construction of affordable housing units and ensure a diverse mix of housing types that cater to the needs of the growing and ageing population.</p>	<p>1. Provide a suitable level of housing to meet overall need within the district; and a range of housing types to meet the needs of different groups.</p>	<p>Will the needs of specific groups be catered for including the elderly, young, low income, gypsies and travellers?</p> <p>Will the right mix of homes be delivered?</p> <p>Will homes be high quality, adaptable and accessible?</p> <p>Will there be a sufficient amount of affordable homes that are unrecognisable from market homes?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Health and well-being</b></p> <p><i>Health and physical activity</i></p> <p><i>Crime</i></p> <p><i>Pollution / amenity</i></p>	<p>The local plan should provide the opportunity to coordinate growth with the delivery of social infrastructure, such as health services to support an aging population. Development should be located so that health, education and community facilities are easily accessible. This includes green space, public open space, primary and secondary schools, general health practitioners and community facilities that promote health and well-being.</p> <p>The ageing population profile within Blaby may also generate changing demands for additional sports and recreation facilities. Ensuring adequate healthcare facilities exist in accessible locations is clearly a key sustainability issue.</p> <p>There is also increasing interest in the role of the planning system in promoting other aspects of health, for example, through the location and distribution of hot food takeaways, and ensuring that new neighbourhoods are conducive to cycling and walking (whether it be through the provision of infrastructure or the nature of the development).</p> <p>The local plan should focus on reducing health inequalities by ensuring that new developments incorporate health-promoting features and are situated in areas that can bridge the health gap between more and less deprived areas.</p>	<p>2. Ensure that all groups within the community have good access to high quality local services (including schools, GP practices and open space).</p> <p>3. Support good health and wellbeing for all residents and focus on reducing inequalities.</p>	<p>Will new development be located in areas that have capacity (or can be expanded) in schools and health care to accommodate growth?</p> <p>Will people have good access to natural green space, play spaces, leisure and other forms of recreational space?</p> <p>Will there be good access to services for all members of the community?</p> <p>Will places be made safe and encourage social interaction?</p> <p>How will the wellbeing of communities be affected by amenity issues such as noise, light, pollution and loss of recreational land?</p> <p>Will health inequalities be reduced?</p> <p>Will development be located and designed to encourage active travel?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
	<p>With Blaby residents reporting better health outcomes compared to regional and national levels, the local plan should prioritise maintaining and improving these outcomes. This includes enhancing the availability and quality of local health services and facilities and promoting environments conducive to physical activity and healthy lifestyles.</p> <p><u>Community safety</u></p> <p>Given the lower crime rates in Blaby compared to other areas in the Leicestershire force area, the local plan should continue to promote safe and cohesive communities. This includes designing out crime in new developments and maintaining effective community safety measures.</p> <p><u>Amenity issues</u></p> <p>The impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation needs to be limited and reduced.</p> <p>The trunk road network and railway line are a source of noise pollution.</p> <p>Noise within tranquil areas within the region should be monitored and reduced where possible, to avoid the effects of noise pollution.</p> <p>The major hazards at Calor Gas and High Pressure Gas Pipeline are constraints.</p>		

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b></p>	<p>The concept of net-biodiversity gain is very important and will need to be ensured in future development.</p> <p>Development ought to be located in areas that cause the least harm and provide opportunities to strengthen strategic ecological networks.</p> <p>It is important to identify, protect and improve the wider ecological network</p> <p>Green infrastructure can contribute to biodiversity and geodiversity aims and should be supported within the Local Plan.</p> <p>The District has a number of important geological sites some of which have the potential for recreational activity.</p> <p>A key focus for Blaby is to protect and enhance priority habitats, semi-natural habitats and green space.</p> <p>There is only a small number/area of nationally important biodiversity sites (SSSIs) within Blaby. Approximately half of these are in favourable condition. It is important to protect these and improve their condition, where needed. There is also a decline in the condition of Croft Pasture and Narborough Bog SSSIs highlights the need for immediate and effective land management strategies to address scrub encroachment and water level changes.</p>	<p>4. Direct growth away from the most sensitive wildlife habitats, whilst ensuring that ecological networks are strengthened and there is a net gain in biodiversity.</p>	<p>How likely is it that net gain can be achieved on or nearby to development locations?</p> <p>Will effects upon sensitive biodiversity be avoided and mitigated before considering compensation?</p> <p>Will ecological networks be protected and enhanced (in terms of quality and extent)?</p> <p>Is development likely to put recreational pressure upon biodiversity and geodiversity? If so, how can this be managed?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Cultural heritage</b></p>	<p>Protect and enhance the District's designated and non-designated heritage assets and the wider historic built and natural environment features.</p> <p>Maintain the current status of there being no heritage assets 'at risk'.</p> <p>Maintain the local character and distinctiveness of the District's towns and villages, taking account of historic and cultural assets and their setting.</p> <p>Heritage assets are irreplaceable and should be conserved and where possible enhanced.</p> <p>Development should strive to make a positive contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place.</p> <p>Heritage assets should be promoted as tourism opportunities and made accessible for the enjoyment of the public.</p>	<p>5. Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment; whilst making it more accessible for public enjoyment.</p>	<p>How will heritage assets and their settings be affected?</p> <p>How will locally important buildings and other features be affected?</p> <p>Will local people be able to interact with historic and cultural features more easily?</p> <p>Will archaeological features be recorded and where possible retained?</p> <p>Will development ensure that no harm or loss of significant designated heritage assets are made unless can be proven to achieve substantial public benefits?</p>
<p><b>Minerals</b></p>	<p>It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that are needed.</p> <p>Minerals are a finite natural resource and can only be worked where they are found. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for viable mineral working.</p>	<p>6. Protect mineral resources and associated infrastructure from sterilisation; whilst ensuring the efficient extraction and use of mineral resources.</p>	<p>Will development occur in areas identified as potentially containing mineral resources? If so, is it likely that resources would be sterilised? (could they be extracted prior to use, or would resource extraction be unviable anyway?)</p> <p>Will a sufficient supply of historic building materials be available?</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>SA Objectives</b>	<b>Prompts</b>
	<p>There are important mineral resources in the District that should be protected and utilised efficiently. An important issue is the long term future of Croft Quarry.</p>		
<b>Waste</b>	<p>The amount of waste sent to landfill has increased slightly and this trend needs to be reversed. Therefore, the plan should aim to encourage measures to prevent, reuse, recycle and reduce waste to landfill in line with the waste hierarchy.</p> <p>Impacts of pollution should be considered on health and quality of life when planning for development. There needs to be consideration for the need for waste management facilities alongside other spatial planning concerns.</p> <p>Waste minimisation measures should be continued in terms of design and construction of new development.</p>	<p>7. Minimise waste generation whilst supporting an increase in reuse, recycling and composting.</p>	<p>How will it affect the ability to secure adequate waste management facilities (and supporting infrastructure).</p> <p>Will it support the effective storage and collection of waste and recycling materials?</p>
<b>Landscape and soil</b>	<p>No national landscape designations but need to protect local landscape and settlement characteristics including Croft Hill.</p> <p>Potential for loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>There are a limited brownfield options for development. Pressure for development will mean loss of countryside and impact on landscape and settlement character.</p> <p>Potential for land contamination on sites but opportunity to remediate such land.</p>	<p>8. Protect landscape and townscape character and distinctiveness throughout the district</p> <p>9. To conserve the District's soils and make efficient and effective use of land.</p>	<p>Will development occur in locations that are more sensitive to landscape change?</p> <p>Is there potential to mitigate effects on landscape and incorporate green infrastructure enhancements?</p> <p>Will there be a loss of Grade 3a land? If so, are there suitable alternative sites / locations that are Grade 3b or preferably non-agricultural / brownfield land?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Environmental Protection</b></p>	<p><b>Water quality</b></p> <p>Protecting and enhancing the quality of watercourses is key environmental objective that the Planning system plays an important role in.</p> <p>The overall classification of watercourses in the District is either poor or moderate.</p> <p>The main threats to water quality are agricultural practices, rural land management, water treatment and discharge and urban run-off from transport.</p> <p>As there are increases in population, there may be requirements to ensure expansions / upgrading of current sewerage are in place.</p> <p>Water resources are not freely available, so there will be a need to understand and manage demand from new development.</p>	<p>10. Improve the water quality status of the watercourses running through the district; seeking to achieve 'good' overall status for WFD classification.</p>	<p>What are the risks of pollution and sedimentation?</p> <p>Is there sufficient headroom at waste water treatment plants to accommodate new development?</p> <p>Will land use changes lead to an increase or decrease in pollutant run off? (For example, agricultural land practices and urban run-off from transportation).</p> <p>Will recreational pressures have an effect upon watercourses?</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection</b></p>	<p><b>Air quality</b></p> <p>The status of AQMAs in the District has changed, with the revocation of 3 AQMAs due to improved air quality over the past five years. However, a new AQMA has been designated in Braunstone Town due to exceedance of NO2 levels. There is a need to maintain the improvements in the revoked AQMAs and implement targeted measures in the new AQMA.</p>	<p>11. Reduce emissions of pollutants that contribute to poor air quality (particularly from traffic); whilst ensuring that new and existing</p>	<p>Will there be an increase in car trips and congestion that could exacerbate poor air quality within the district (particularly within AQMAs)?</p> <p>Will new communities be created in areas that are susceptible to poor air quality?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
	<p>Concentrations of pollutants are generally decreasing with the exception of Mill Hill, Enderby (the most recently declared AQMA).</p> <p>Identification of opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts can include energy, heat, industry, energy efficiency and sustainable transport. Clean Air Zones should be considered when planning for better air quality within the region.</p> <p>Croft Quarry is a source of PM2.5 pollutants due to dust.</p>	<p>communities (and environmental assets) are protected from the harmful effects that poor air quality causes.</p>	<p>What measures will be taken to ensure that communities are less exposed to poor air quality?</p>
<p><b>Climate change (flooding)</b></p>	<p>A number of the District's main settlements are at high risk of surface water flooding and fluvial flooding.</p> <p>Development should take place away from flood risk zones.</p>	<p>12. Ensure that existing and new development is resilient to the effects of climate change, particularly flood risk and other extreme weather events.</p>	<p>Will new development be located in areas of lower flood risk? (<i>Especially when there are suitable alternatives</i>).</p> <p>How will surface water run-off and drainage be affected?</p> <p>How will wider resilience to climate change impacts be affected?</p> <p>Will green and blue infrastructure networks be strengthened to help address overheating, flooding and pressures on biodiversity?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Climate change (mitigation)</b></p>	<p>The NPPF and other important policy documents promote a radical move towards a low carbon future by reducing the level of greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>While the overall CO2 emissions for the Blaby district are lower than both regional and national levels – these have been decreasing at a lower rate. The District has an above average reading of CO2 emissions per capita, in particular road transport CO2 and carbon energy.</p> <p>The local plan should prioritize initiatives that align with national strategies such as the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 and the Net Zero Strategy, focusing on enhancing energy efficiency, promoting sustainable transport options, and integrating climate resilience measures into planning and development frameworks to mitigate climate risks effectively.</p>	<p>13. Support the move to a zero carbon economy.</p>	<p>Will opportunities to achieve higher standards of resource efficiency in new development be taken?</p> <p>Would it support a reduction in greenhouse gases?</p> <p>Will it support carbon sequestration?</p>
<p><b>Economy and employment</b> <i>Economy</i> <i>Deprivation</i></p>	<p>Currently in Blaby, the local economy is relatively healthy, and people are economically active. However, there is a need to ensure that the right types of land are provided to support emerging employment sectors.</p> <p>The retail landscape is changing, and the industry is experiencing changes in trends particularly changes that are influenced by technology. This is having significant impacts upon the role of town centres.</p> <p>Promoting Blaby District as a visitor destination is a local aspiration.</p> <p>The Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange is a potential major source of employment. Similarly, there</p>	<p>14. Support the sustainable growth of Blaby's economy to ensure that a suitable range of employment opportunities are available to all and financial resilience is strengthened.</p>	<p>Will residents be able to benefit from increased access to jobs (including higher quality jobs)?</p> <p>Will a range of employment spaces be created to support different sectors and scales of business?</p> <p>Will large scale distribution units be accessible by public transport and adopt exemplary design?</p> <p>How will Blaby's attractiveness as a place to visit and do work be affected?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
	<p>is likely to be Growth at Fosse Park/Motorways Retail Area.</p> <p>The population of Blaby District overall is in good health, and almost all areas in Blaby fall within areas of low deprivation. Nevertheless, there are some areas such as parts of Narborough and Countesthorpe, Thorpe Astley and Kirkby Muxloe that are less deprived than others, and the policy context suggests that Council's should continue to 'close the gap' between different areas.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are high levels of deprivation in the City of Leicester, and development within Blaby could potentially have effects on these areas in terms of housing provision and employment. Nearby communities may also benefit from access to services within Blaby, so improvements (or a decline) in services could have wider consequences.</p> <p>Key objectives for Blaby District are to maintain a strong and sustainable local economy, provide access to employment and training opportunities, improve digital inclusivity and take advantage of opportunities in growth sectors such as the low carbon economy.</p>		<p>How will town and district centres be affected?</p> <p>How will communities that suffer from greater levels of deprivation be affected (for example in adjacent neighbourhoods within Leicester)?</p> <p>Will digital infrastructure be enhanced and inclusive?</p> <p>Will low carbon and environmental sectors be supported?</p>

Topic	Key Issues	SA Objectives	Prompts
<p><b>Accessibility</b></p>	<p>Many junctions on the main radial routes into Leicester are at capacity. Growth is resulting in annual increases in vehicles using the transport network and this trend is likely to continue with an increase in car ownership.</p> <p>There is a need to ensure that new development is supported by adequate road infrastructure to reduce pressure on the existing network. However, at the same time, there is a national and local policy imperative to support modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport. This will be difficult to achieve given that strategic locations for growth are broadly served from a congested network.</p> <p>With regards to long term growth, new strategic road infrastructure will be a critical, but it is important to ensure that this helps to reduce pressure on junctions and supports increased public transport usage.</p> <p>Timely delivery of transport infrastructure is essential to support growth, to make development acceptable and the cost of transport infrastructure needs to be considered to ensure viability.</p> <p>There is a need to promote and enable the uptake of technologies and economic practices that reduce the need to travel and make personal travel easier.</p> <p>There is a need to support improved access to local services by walking and wheeling.</p>	<p>15. . Provide infrastructure to support economic growth, whilst prioritising sustainable modes of transport and reducing the need to travel.</p>	<p>Will technological enhancements be supported that reduce the need to travel such as super-fast broadband?</p> <p>Will ways of working be supported that reduce the need to travel such as live/work units?</p> <p>Will new employment and housing be closely matched to ensure that the need to travel is reduced and that sustainable modes of transport are a realistic option?</p> <p>Will public transport networks be strengthened?</p> <p>Will infrastructure improvements be secured that allow for cleaner vehicles?</p> <p>Will an enhanced network of walking and cycling routes be created?</p> <p>Will freight movement be diversified?</p> <p>Will congestion be reduced?</p>

## 3. Plan Vision and Objectives

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section of the SA Report sets out a comparison of the draft Local Plan Objectives and the SA Objectives. The purpose of this task is to ensure that SA Objectives and the Plan are broadly compatible and that the Plan will achieve sustainable development.
- 3.1.2 Where objectives are found to be potentially incompatible, it is possible to make suggestions as to the measures that could be taken to ensure that the Plan achieves an appropriate balance between economic, social and environmental factors. A comparison of objectives was undertaken at an early stage of plan-making to provide feedback prior to the Plan objectives being finalised. The finalised Plan Objectives (alongside an updated compatibility exercise) are presented in section 3.6.

### 3.2 The Plan Objectives

- 3.2.1 The draft Plan objectives (as articulated at Issues and Options stage in 2019 and the 'Options' stage in 2021) are set out below, followed by a discussion of how these related to the SA Objectives.

#### Social

- SO1: To direct new growth to the most sustainable locations. New homes and businesses will be well located, of high-quality design and co-located with a compact mix of uses accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- SO2: To create and sustain strong, active, healthy and inclusive communities where there is easy access by walking and cycling to shops, schools, health care services, open space, sports, leisure and community facilities and employment opportunities.
- SO3: To provide a suitable level of housing to meet overall need within the district and the wider Housing Market Area. To provide a range of housing types, size and tenures to meet the needs of different groups including those with affordable housing needs, older persons and specialist housing needs and sufficient pitches and plots to meet the identified needs for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

#### Environment

- SO4: To support the move to a low carbon future and contribute to cutting carbon emissions by embedding consideration of climate change into the local plan.

- SO5: To increase the District's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing climate and the associated risks of flooding and other extreme weather events.
- SO6: To protect new and existing communities from the harmful effects that poor air quality causes, particularly in designated 'Air Quality Management Areas', by seeking to reduce emissions of pollutants that contribute to poor air quality (mainly from traffic).
- SO7: To make efficient use of land, water, minerals, soils, waste and other resources including maximising the use of previously developed land and ensuring that any loss of the best and most versatile land is balanced against development needs.
- SO8: To ensure that the District's most valued natural assets are protected and that biodiversity can thrive within enhanced habitats and natural landscapes.
- SO9: To ensure that our towns, villages and countryside benefit from high quality design for all new developments which result in high quality and safe places to live, work and visit. The local character and distinctiveness of Blaby's towns and villages will be protected and enhanced including townscape, streetscape, architecture, places and spaces.
- SO10: To conserve and enhance the District's many heritage assets and their settings including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.

## **Economy**

- SO11: To provide an appropriate quantity, quality and mix of land for employment uses to support a diverse range of business needs and to provide training and job opportunities for current and future populations.
- SO12: To support rural communities through helping to retain existing, and where possible provide new, services and facilities. Where necessary provide new homes and help to create and sustain a vibrant rural economy.
- SO13: To promote and develop tourism and leisure opportunities across the District and in particular promote existing tourist facilities and supporting infrastructure in the District where there is no conflict with environmental and economic objectives.
- SO14: To prioritise the use of sustainable modes of transport to travel to work, services, facilities and leisure. To promote an efficient transport network and mitigate the adverse impacts of growth on congestion, road safety and air quality. To plan strategically for transport and seek improvements to local, regional and national transport networks.

- SO15: To plan for the continued vitality and viability of Blaby town centre and the other District and Local Centres recognising the need to adapt to changing retail patterns and the evolving functions of town centres. To maximise the opportunities offered by Fosse Park without undermining the ability of other centres to function effectively.

### 3.3 Discussion of compatibility

- 3.3.1 Given the broad nature of high-level Plan objectives, it is difficult to accurately predict ‘significant effects’, through a comparison of objectives. Therefore, the appraisal at this stage identified whether objectives share a degree of compatibility or not.
- 3.3.2 It is also important to acknowledge that there are inherent synergies and conflicts between certain objectives. The aim is to ensure that measures can be taken to minimise incompatibilities and make the most of synergies.
- 3.3.3 Table 3.1 below sets out a visual summary of the compatibility assessment.

**Table 3.1:** draft Plan Strategic Objectives (SO) Vs Sustainability Appraisal Objectives (SA)

	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8	SO9	SO10	SO11	SO12	SO13	SO14	SO15
<b>Population/Housing</b>			+												
<b>Health and Well-being</b>	+	+													
<b>Biodiversity Geodiversity</b>								+							
<b>Cultural heritage</b>									+	+					
<b>Minerals</b>															
<b>Waste</b>															
<b>Landscape and Soil</b>							+								
<b>Environment Protection</b>						+									
<b>Climate Change (flooding)</b>					+										
<b>Climate Change (mitigation)</b>				+											
<b>Economy</b>	+										+				+
<b>Accessibility</b>	+	+												+	

	Very compatible		Incompatible
	Compatible		Very incompatible
	Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine		Neutral / No clear link

- 3.3.4 The comparison of the initial objectives revealed that most of the proposed Local Plan objectives would be compatible with the SA Objectives, with some being very compatible. The reasons for this are discussed further below.
- 3.3.5 At this stage, no objectives were found to be incompatible, but there were some uncertainties about the compatibility of draft Plan objectives and SA Objectives.

- 3.3.6 In the main, this related to the Plan and SA objectives potentially being incompatible with one another, and the potential to generate negative effects. However, there is not sufficient evidence to suggest that both objectives could not be achieved in a compatible way.
- 3.3.7 Likewise, some objectives could potentially be compatible, but this depends upon how the objectives are achieved through the Plan strategy.

### **Objective Compatibility Assessment**

- 3.3.8 The 'Social' Plan Objectives that promote housing growth and allocation in sustainable locations (SO1 – SO3) are compatible with a number of SA objectives. This includes the Population and Housing SA Objective, which focusses on providing suitable housing to meet the overall need of housing types within the district. For example, housing types, sizes, tenures, affordable housing and meeting the needs of different groups. The Health and Wellbeing SA Objective is also considered to be very compatible with Plan Objectives (SO1 and SO2) as it promotes active lifestyles including active travel connections to other land uses and facilities. There are very strong links between the Accessibility SA objective and the social objectives too, as there is a clear focus on placing growth in well serviced, walkable or cyclable locations.
- 3.3.9 Though the Housing Objective promotes the growth of housing (which can lead to negative effects on environmental objectives), it is not considered to be incompatible with the SA objectives. Housing can be delivered in a sustainable way, and these issues would be explored through the appraisal of the Plan and any reasonable alternatives. Housing growth is not inherently incompatible with environmental protection and social objectives though.
- 3.3.10 The Plan Objective SO4 to promote a low carbon future is compatible and a reoccurring theme amongst SA Objectives. Several SA Objectives discuss waste management, environmental protection of air quality and water resources, climate change mitigation and low carbon initiatives. This includes minimising waste generation, making efficient use of land and reducing emissions harmful to air quality.
- 3.3.11 Other compatibilities are recorded with regards to air quality, traffic and travel. SO6 is compatible with the accessibility SA Objective as the encouragement of sustainable modes of travel and reduction in the need to travel should be explored. Likewise, increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport also contributes to a low carbon future.
- 3.3.12 The efficient use of land, water, minerals and soils has compatibilities with a number of SA Objectives. Prioritising the use of previously developed land will have impacts in areas regarding agriculture, environmental significance and managing natural resources.

- 3.3.13 The Plan Objectives also set a requirement for sustainable growth. This approach is broadly compatible with most SA Objectives including those that seek to conserve and enhance the built environment (Cultural Heritage and Landscape objectives), promote the transition to a low carbon District, (Climate Change mitigation, Waste, Accessibility and Air Quality objectives) and promote healthy lifestyles (Health and Wellbeing objectives).
- 3.3.14 The Plan Objectives to ensure developments are of a high-quality design standard to result in high quality and safe places to live, work and visit is compatible with SA Objective 'Cultural Heritage' to make public places accessible and enjoyable.
- 3.3.15 A number of Plan Objectives deal with specific issues such as; improving the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure and accessibility (SO15), support the provision of shops and community services and facilities (SO1, SO2, SO11 – 14), and ensuring development is resilient to the associated risks of flooding and other extreme weather (SO5). As would be expected, these are very compatible with SA Objectives that seek to achieve the same outcomes. For example, SA Objective 'Climate Change (Flooding)' has direct links to flood resilience and avoiding development in areas of high flood risk and is therefore very compatible with SO5.
- 3.3.16 Similarly, by directing inappropriate development away from areas of flood risk, Plan Objective SO5 indirectly avoids water contamination, maintaining water quality. Land in proximity to water bodies is of ecological importance, either for biodiversity value or for its contribution to a wider ecological network supported by the water corridor. Therefore, a risk-based approach that directs development away from waterbodies could reduce potential adverse effects on biodiversity too; making these objectives compatible. Better water quality overall is good for the population's health and wellbeing in which this Plan Objective SO5 is compatible with the SA Objective relating to health and wellbeing.
- 3.3.17 These objectives indirectly address other sustainability issues and thus share some degree of compatibility. For example, Plan Objective SO14 promotes sustainable modes of transport and thus is compatible with the Air Quality and Accessibility SA Objectives which seeks to encourage sustainable modes of transport and reducing the need to travel.
- 3.3.18 The aim of Plan Objective SO15 is to improve the existing District and other Local Centres as well as retain vitality of Blaby town centre. This is compatible with Economy and Employment SA Objective.
- 3.3.19 Plan objective SO3 states that new dwellings will be provided for to meet a range of housing needs including housing types, size, tenure and affordability. The objective also includes accommodating housing for different groups, affordable housing, housing for older persons and specialist housing which creates inclusivity. It would be most beneficial to be delivered in areas with greatest need for physical, social, economic and environment improvement.

- 3.3.20 As expected, this is very compatible with the SA objective for 'Population and Housing', and also compatible with social objectives that are influenced by housing provision (For example SA Objectives concerning health, community and population/

### **3.4 Identified Uncertainties**

- 3.4.1 The greatest uncertainties related to Plan Objective SO12. There were also uncertainties recorded for SO7, SO11 and SO15. These uncertainties are discussed below, along with recommendations (if appropriate) as to how the Plan could move forward in a way that ensures that sustainable growth can be achieved.

#### SO7

- 3.4.2 Maximising previously developed land and avoidance of best and most versatile agricultural land, could be a constraint to housing delivery. There is a degree of uncertainty as to the extent to which this objective can be achieved without affecting housing delivery. However, the objective makes an important reference to a need to 'balancing the objective against needs'. This provides flexibility, but a degree of uncertainty exists as to the extent to which agricultural land and greenfield land will be protected.

#### SO11

- 3.4.3 Some uncertainty is recorded in terms of accessibility, as employment uses can be located in areas that promote car use. Certain sectors also promote the use of freight. Other Plan objectives which seek to ensure sustainable locations for growth should help to ensure that such issues are considered.

#### SO12

- 3.4.4 There are identified uncertainties with SO12 as it states rural communities outside existing urban areas could involve new services, facilities and homes. Growing the rural economy and expanding could possibly conflict with other SA objectives and Plan Objective SO1, which states that new growth will be directed to the most sustainable locations. This may or may not be within rural areas. Some issues associated with rural areas include accessibility, sensitive landscapes and cultural heritage. When considered alongside other Plan objectives, it should be possible to achieve some growth in rural areas in an appropriate way, but a degree of uncertainty exists at this stage.

#### SO15

- 3.4.5 There are uncertainties regarding SO9, which is concerned with town, district and local centres. The approach to uses and design of developments in these locations could have implications for cultural heritage (especially given that many heritage assets are clustered in urban or village centres).

### 3.5 Summary and Recommendations

- 3.5.1 The draft Plan Objectives and the SA Objectives were found to be mostly compatible, with no major incompatibilities noted.
- 3.5.2 SO1 - SO3 set the context for reasonable alternatives relating to employment and housing growth (i.e. options that would not achieve the aims could be considered to be unreasonable approaches).
- 3.5.3 SO11 – 13 and SO15 set the context for growing the economy and ensuring existing centres remain vital and viable through evolving retail patterns and functions.
- 3.5.4 Though some potential incompatibilities were identified, it was considered likely that these ought to be addressed by other Plan Objectives that deal with the issues specifically. Therefore, specific recommendations were considered unnecessary.
- 3.5.5 Though SO8 was already compatible with the SA objectives in relation to biodiversity, it was considered beneficial to strengthen the references to biodiversity recovery. It was therefore recommended that the objective could be amended to explicitly embed the principle of ‘environmental net gain’.

#### **Box 1: A note on the evolution of draft Plan Objectives**

As the Plan has progressed through the different stages of plan making, the vision and objectives have evolved to reflect updated evidence, feedback from consultation and other factors. Therefore, the aims and objectives listed in the Publication version of the Plan are not identical to those discussed above.

Worth noting are the following developments in the objectives (some of which respond positively to the recommendations made above):

- The objectives have been shortened to make them more succinct.
- Biodiversity net gain is now referenced in updated Plan objectives.
- Two additional objectives have been added to reference the need to deliver sufficient infrastructure in a timely manner.

## 3.6 The finalised Plan Objectives

3.6.1 The finalised Plan Objectives (within the Regulation 19 version of the Plan) are listed below. These largely correspond with the objectives drafted at the outset of the plan-making process, but are re-ordered, tweaked and added to in places to reflect the evolution of evidence and consultation feedback. A updated objective compatibility exercise is undertaken and presented below. This is a proportionate way to capture the implications of any minor changes to objectives.

### Housing

- SO1: To provide new homes and businesses of high-quality design and co-located with a compact mix of uses accessible by Active Travel and public transport.
- SO2: To meet the overall housing need within the District and the wider Housing Market Area and deliver a range of housing types, size and tenures to address the needs of different groups.

### Environment and Climate Change

- SO3: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions and encourage renewable energy generation.
- SO4: To increase the District's resilience and ability to adapt to a changing climate and the associated risks of flooding, drought, overheating and other extreme weather events.
- SO5: To make efficient use of land, water, minerals, soil, waste, energy and other resources including maximising the reuse of previously developed land or contaminated land.
- SO6: To protect and enhance the District's valued natural assets and green and blue infrastructure corridors and deliver net gain in biodiversity.
- SO7: To sustain and enhance the local landscape character and distinctiveness of Blaby's towns and villages.
- SO 8: To respect and enhance the District's historic environment including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.

### Economy, Retail and Leisure

- SO9: To provide a mix of land and premises for employment uses to meet the needs of the District and wider Functional Economic Market Area and support jobs growth and the diversification of the local economy.

- SO10: To support the District's rural economy and the retention and improvement of existing and local services and facilities to meet the needs of local communities.
- SO11: To promote and develop tourism and leisure opportunities across the District.
- SO12: To support the continued vitality and viability of Blaby town centre and the other District and Local Centres in their roles as vibrant centres of services and facilities for local and surrounding communities and support Fosse Park as an out-of-town centre.

### **Infrastructure**

- SO13: To help facilitate the delivery of strategic infrastructure to support the long-term housing and economic growth of the District and wider South Leicestershire area as articulated in the Strategic Growth Plan.
- SO14: To support the provision of new transport infrastructure and services, reduce the need to travel by car, the distance travelled, and increase the use of active travel and public transport to access jobs, key services and facilities
- SA15: To work with partners to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure needed to support existing and new communities.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- SO16: To protect new and existing communities from the harmful effects of pollution, including air, noise, contaminated land and light, and improve air quality within the District's designated 'Air Quality Management Areas'.
- SO17: To promote good design which supports the creation of resilient, active, safe, healthy and inclusive communities where people want to live, work and visit.

## **3.7 Compatibility with the IIA Objectives**

3.7.1 The final set of Local Plan objectives represents a refinement of the earlier draft framework, rather than any substantive shift in strategic direction. The overarching themes of housing delivery, economic growth, environmental protection and sustainable transport are retained; however, the objectives have been restructured and streamlined to improve clarity, strengthen alignment with national policy, and provide a more coherent and internally consistent framework.

3.7.2 A notable change is the introduction of a more explicit and structured approach to climate change. The final objectives distinguish clearly between mitigation and adaptation, with discrete objectives addressing carbon reduction and renewable energy generation on the one hand, and climate resilience—including flooding, overheating and other risks—on the other.

- 3.7.3 This is complemented by a strengthened approach to the natural environment, with explicit reference to biodiversity net gain and a greater emphasis on the role of blue infrastructure.
- 3.7.4 The final objectives also introduce a more prominent focus on infrastructure delivery and coordination, including a dedicated objective linked to the Strategic Growth Plan and the role of partnership working. The transport objective has similarly been refined, moving beyond a general emphasis on sustainable modes to a clearer focus on reducing the need to travel and supporting modal shift, in line with wider decarbonisation objectives.
- 3.7.5 At the same time, the objectives adopt a more strategic and concise form, with some of the more detailed and prescriptive elements of the draft removed. This includes the omission of explicit references to specific groups or individual facilities. In practice, this has resulted in a degree of reorganisation, with themes that were previously combined—particularly in relation to health, accessibility and place-making—now distributed across a number of complementary objectives focused on design, transport and community outcomes.
- 3.7.6 In terms of compatibility, many of the initial conclusions remain valid. The exercise indicates that the Local Plan objectives are generally well aligned with the Sustainability Appraisal objectives, with a high level of overall compatibility.
- 3.7.7 Strong positive relationships are evident in relation to population and housing, health and wellbeing, the economy, and accessibility, particularly through objectives relating to place-making, infrastructure delivery and sustainable transport (SO1, SO13 and SO14), which contribute across multiple sustainability themes.
- 3.7.8 Compatibility with environmental objectives is more targeted, with specific objectives performing strongly in particular areas. This includes SO3 and SO4 for climate change, SO6 for biodiversity, and SO7, SO8 and SO16 for landscape, heritage and environmental protection.
- 3.7.9 Across the matrix, a number of neutral relationships are identified, reflecting the fact that many objectives are focused in scope and do not directly relate to all SA topics. Only limited areas of uncertainty arise, primarily where objectives supporting growth could have indirect environmental effects, although these are not considered significant at the strategic level.

**Table 3.2:** Final Plan Strategic Objectives (SO) Vs Sustainability Appraisal Objectives (SA)

	S01	S02	S03	S04	S05	S06	S07	S08	S09	S010	S011	S012	S013	S014	S015	S016	S017
<b>Population/Housing</b>	+	+											+				
<b>Health and Well-being</b>	+	+													+		
<b>Biodiversity Geodiversity</b>						+											
<b>Cultural heritage</b>							+	+									
<b>Minerals</b>																	
<b>Waste</b>																	
<b>Landscape and Soil</b>					+												
<b>Environment Protection</b>																+	
<b>Climate Change (flooding)</b>				+													
<b>Climate Change (mitigation)</b>			+														
<b>Economy</b>	+	+							+			+	+				
<b>Accessibility</b>	+													+			

## 4. Introduction to reasonable alternatives

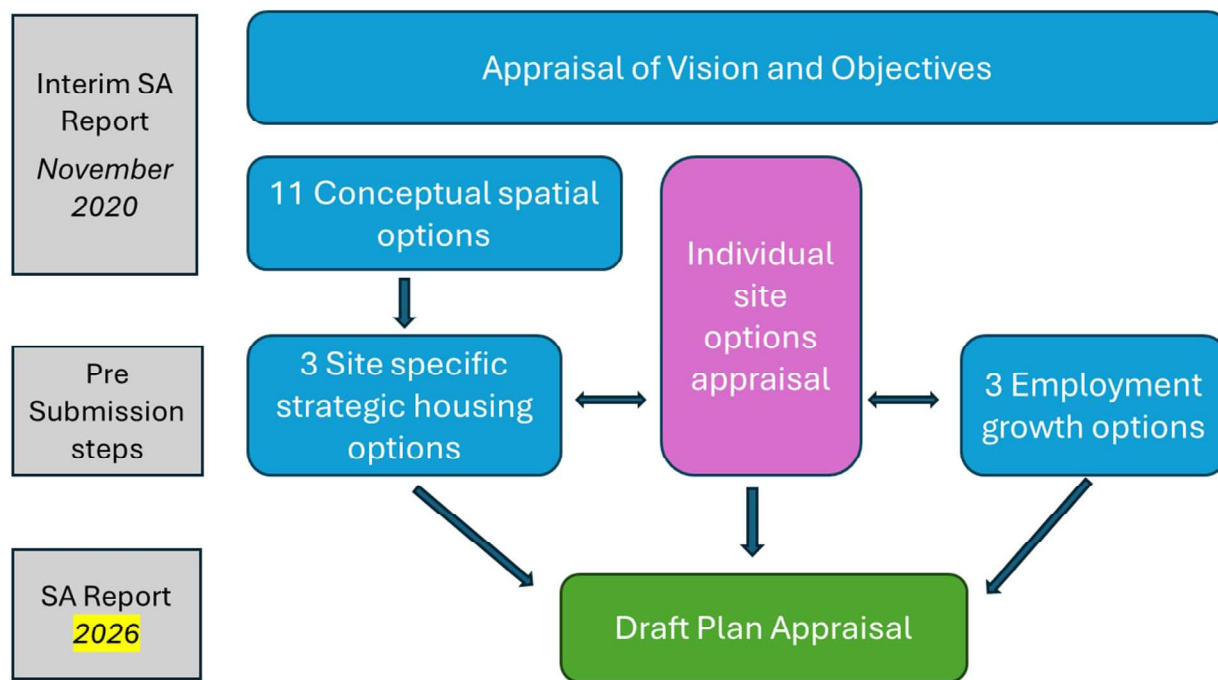
- 4.1.1 A key part of the SA process is testing different ways in which the objectives of the Plan can be delivered and the implications in terms of sustainability. The aim here is to identify an appropriate strategy, and to suggest ways in which the Plan can be improved so as to maximise benefits and minimise negative effects.
- 4.1.2 The SEA Regulations only require that 'reasonable alternatives' to the 'Plan' must be tested. However, given that Plans are multi-faceted, it is considered useful to look at the key components at the heart of the plan, and exploring how they could be addressed 'individually'.
- 4.1.3 In this instance, the key issues that the Plan Review deals with are those of spatial strategy. Therefore, the focus of options development and testing has been as follows:

### **Strategic options for the amount and distribution of new housing**

- 4.1.4 The Council explored different options for growth and the distribution of housing, before establishing eleven reasonable alternatives that have been tested through the SA (See Chapter 6)
- 4.1.5 Strategic alternatives were reconsidered prior to the Regulation 19 stage to reflect changes to evidence, and the more advanced position of Plan making. This process is discussed in detail within Chapter 7.

### **Individual site options for housing and employment**

- 4.1.6 The Council has explored the merits of sites on an individual basis to help understand constraints and opportunities associated with development locations. Understanding site specific issues has contributed to the appraisal process in two respects. Firstly, it has influenced the development of reasonable alternatives (i.e. packages of sites that form spatial strategies), second, it has allowed for a comparison between different site options where there are choices to be made about which sites might be more or less suitable in a particular location. This process is discussed in Chapter 8.
- 4.1.7 Each of these areas is discussed in detail in the following chapters of this report. First, the methods of appraisal are introduced in Chapter 5.



## 5. Appraisal Methods

### 5.1 Determining Significance

5.1.1 The options appraisals identify and evaluate 'likely significant effects' on the baseline / likely future baseline associated with each alternative; drawing on the sustainability topics and objectives as a methodological framework.

5.1.2 The task of forecasting effects can be challenging due to:

- The high level nature of the alternatives under consideration;
- Being limited by definition of the baseline and (in particular) the future baseline;
- The ability of developers to design out/mitigate effects during the planning application stage.

5.1.3 In light of this, when likely significant effects are predicted, this is done with an accompanying explanation of the assumptions made.<sup>1</sup>

5.1.4 It is important to note that effects are predicted based upon the criteria presented within the SEA Regulations<sup>2</sup>. So, for example, account is taken of the nature of effects (including magnitude, spatial coverage and duration), the sensitivity of receptors, and the likelihood of effects occurring, as far as is possible. The potential for 'cumulative' effects is also considered.

5.1.5 These effect 'characteristics' are described within the appraisal as appropriate under each sustainability topic. A matrix is then presented for each SA topic summarising the predicted effects visually through the use of coloured boxes (See table 5.1 below).

5.1.6 Where there is uncertainty, the nature of such effects has been identified. For example, an uncertain negative effect would be recorded if there is a chance that negative effects could occur but this is dependent upon unknown factors. Likewise, an uncertain significant positive effect would be predicted where it is clearly possible that notable benefits would arise, but this could be dependent on the quality of design, or the exact nature of developments.

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<sup>1</sup> As stated by Government Guidance (The Plan Making Manual, PAS)) "*Ultimately, the significance of an effect is a matter of judgment and should require no more than a clear and reasonable justification.*"

<sup>2</sup> Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

**Table 5.1:** Presenting the significance of effects

Type of effect	Likely	Uncertain / potential
Significant positive effects	++	++ <sup>?</sup>
Minor positive effects	+	?
Neutral effects	0	0 <sup>?</sup>
Minor negative effects	-	?
Significant negative effects	--	-- <sup>?</sup>

## 6. Options consultation stage - Housing growth and distribution

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 At this early stage of plan making, the starting point for determining an appropriate strategy was to explore the driving factors behind the need for development. Of critical importance was population and household projections and how this would translate into housing need. Also important was the need to take account of local aspirations, which should be reflected in the aims and objectives of the Plan. These factors also needed to be explored in the context of land supply, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity.
- 6.1.2 Also important was to explore how growth could be distributed, as the same amount of growth could be delivered in different locations.
- 6.1.3 There was important Duty to Co-operate issues to consider too, such as the contribution that Blaby might need to make to meet unmet housing needs in other authorities. At the Options Consultation stage, there were predicted unmet needs for Leicester City in particular. A separate exercise was undertaken jointly by the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities to test the ways in which unmet needs could be distributed. There are links to each local authorities Adopted or emerging Local Plans to consider, as well as the accompanying SA work.

### Exploring housing needs

- 6.1.4 Applying the Government Standard Methodology at this point in time provided an estimate of a minimum of 339 homes per year. The intended Plan period was 19 years, giving a total of 6,441 dwellings over the lifetime of the Plan. This target, which made allowance for affordable housing, was considered to be an appropriate 'starting point' in terms of reasonable growth strategies. For SA purposes, this was named Growth Scenario 1.
- 6.1.5 Two higher growth options were identified as reasonable alternatives for the purposes of SA. These were both established to take account of notional housing need figures in the Strategic Growth Plan, and in Leicester City's draft Local Plan (in relation to unmet needs at the time). The primary rationale was to test options that reflected:
- Blaby taking a share of unmet needs from the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (towards the end of the Plan period) to a greater or lesser extent.
  - The implications of higher growth options should changes to the standard methodology occur.

- 6.1.6 A lower target was tested of 9,000 dwellings (Growth Scenario 2), plus a higher target of 12,000 dwellings (Growth Scenario 3).
- 6.1.7 The Council did not consider that there were justified grounds to plan for a housing target below that suggested as the minimum when using the Standard Methodology.
- 6.1.8 Likewise, 12,000 dwellings was considered to be at the higher end of what Blaby might be expected to accommodate to account for a greater amount of unmet needs from Leicester City. Therefore, no reasonable alternatives were identified beyond this level of growth at the Options Consultation stage.

## Locational Strategy

- 6.1.9 The Options Consultation document identified five potential locational strategy options:

**A: Principal Urban Area focus:** This represented the existing policy approach of urban concentration and directs most development to the Leicester Principal Urban Area (the PUA).

**B: Extended PUA focus:** This built upon Option A by extending the principal Urban Area of Leicester to encapsulate higher order villages such as Enderby, Narborough, Blaby, Countesthorpe and Whetstone.

**C: Spread the distribution:** This option provided a wider spread of growth to the medium and smaller villages.

**D: Strategic sites / Garden Villages:** This approach was consistent with the Strategic Growth Plan and Blaby District Growth Plan. Infrastructure-led growth would help to lay the foundations for longer term growth aspirations and help reduce the impact of development in existing settlements.

**E: Single new settlement:** There were reasonable site options where a standalone settlement could be developed (though this would extend beyond the plan period). This was a variation of Option D, but a much more focused approach to strategic development sites in fewer locations.

## 6.2 Summary of the Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.2.1 Combining the growth and distribution options discussed above resulted in eleven reasonable alternatives being established for appraisal in the SA at the Options Consultation stage. These are set out in further detail below and each has a corresponding map to aid in the understanding of distribution (See Appendix B).
- 6.2.2 The tables below show approximately how much growth could have been involved at different levels of the settlement hierarchy. The baseline position, which consisted of existing completions and committed development is shown for context in terms of the additional growth that would be directed to each different location.

- 6.2.3 Appendix A gives an overview of the settlements that sit within each layer of the hierarchy, and further detail on the number of existing commitments and the potential supply at each settlement (at the time this appraisal was undertaken alongside the Options Consultation).
- 6.2.4 There was an assumption that dwellings would be shared equally amongst the different settlements that fall into each layer of the settlement hierarchy. However, where this was not possible due to a lack of land supply or critical constraints, then the growth was assumed to be split equally amongst the other settlements that did have capacity.
- 6.2.5 Where the amounts were lower than the baseline position in the PUA, this was to reflect a situation whereby delivery rates on existing commitments and site allocations could be slower than anticipated).

**Table 6.1(a):** Reasonable alternatives (scale of housing)

Growth Scenario	Overall Scale of Growth	Distribution Options
1 Standard Method	6441	1a
2 Standard Method plus unmet need (Low)	9000	2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e
3 Standard Method plus unmet need (High)	12000	3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e

**Table 6.1(b):** Breakdown of the reasonable alternatives (distribution of housing)

Option	Baseline	1	2a	2b	2c	2d	2e	3a	3b	3c	3d	3e
Principal Urban Area	5283	5153	5940	4950	4500	4500	4050	7920	6600	6000	5400	5400
Extended PUA	314	644	1800	3150	2700	900	0	2400	4200	3600	1200	0
Medium Villages	571	580	1170	900	1350	900	0	1560	1200	1800	1200	0
Smaller Villages	24	64	90	0	450	24	0	120	0	600	0	0
Strategic sites	0	0	0	0	0	3150	4950	0	0	0	4200	6600
<b>Total</b>	<b>6192</b>	<b>6441</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>12000</b>

## **6.3 Summary of the Appraisal Findings: Spatial Options**

### **Introduction**

- 6.3.1 The effects for each spatial option were determined through assessment against the SA Framework. The detailed discussion of effects is set out in Appendix C, where the effects are described and explained, followed by a determination of the significance of effects for each option (against the SA Objectives).
- 6.3.2 A colouring and symbol approach (set out in table 5.1) is used to visually represent the sustainability performance of each option against the SA Objectives. These are then brought together in a summary matrix to illustrate the performance of each option across the full range of SA objectives (see table 6.2 below).

**Table 6.2:** Visual summary of the options appraisal process

Sustainability Appraisal Objective	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Housing	+	++	++	++	++	++?	++	++	++	++	++?
Health: Facilities and services	+	++	++	++	++?	++	++	++	++	++	++
Health: Amenity and accessibility	0	?	?	-	0	0	-	-	--	0	0
Biodiversity Geodiversity	0	?	?	?	?	0?	-	-	-	-	0?
Cultural Heritage	0	?	?	-	?	-	--	--?	--?	-	--?
Waste	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Minerals	0	?	?	?	?	0	?	-	-	-	0
Landscape	0	-	-	--?	-	--?	--?	--?	--	--?	--?
Soil	0	-	-	-	-	-	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?
Air	0	?	-	-	-	--?	--	--	--	--	--?
Water: Nitrates	0	0	0	0	?	?	0	0	0	?	?
Water: Networks	0	0	0	0	?	?	-	-	-	?	?
Climate change: Flooding	0	0	0	?	0?	?	?	?	-	?	?
Climate change: Mitigation	0	+	+	-	-	-	0	0	--?	--?	--?
Economy: Growth potential	+	++	++	++	++?	++?	++	++	++	++?	++?
Economy: Pressures	0	0	0	0	?	-	?	?	?	-	-
Accessibility: Sustainability	0	+	+	+	+	++?	++?	++?	++?	++?	++?
Accessibility: Congestion	0	-	-	-	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?

## Summary of Effects

### Scenario 1

- 6.3.3 Given that the level of additional growth is relatively small, the effects for most of the sustainability objectives are neutral. The exception is for housing, economy and health and wellbeing, as additional planned growth will bring some minor positive effects in terms of bringing investment into existing settlements.

### Scenario 2

- 6.3.4 Each of the options involved under Scenario 2 are likely to have a wider range of effects across the sustainability objectives.
- 6.3.5 Given that the options involve growth in similar locations (with exception of the strategic sites), there are similarities in terms of the effects that are predicted. This is the case for housing, with each option giving rise to significant positive effects. The exception is Option 2e, where placing all growth in one location brings some uncertainty about delivery.
- 6.3.6 Other topic areas where the effects are similar are waste, biodiversity and soil.
- 6.3.7 Options 2a and 2b perform relatively similarly in terms of most of the sustainability objectives, which reflects their location close to the edge of Leicester. The main difference is that Option 2a performs marginally better with regards to air quality.
- 6.3.8 Option 2c performs less well compared to Options 2a and 2b in terms of landscape, cultural heritage, climate change mitigation, flooding, and health and wellbeing. This is mainly due to increased dispersal to settlements where environmental effects on settlement character could be higher. More development in the Medium and Smaller Villages would also mean that some communities have poorer access to facilities and could be more likely to increase emissions from car travel.
- 6.3.9 Options 2d and 2e involve strategic sites, which brings more uncertainty about whether positive or negative effects would occur. This is because there are choices about which strategic sites would be involved and the nature of development.
- 6.3.10 It also increases the likelihood that significant effects could arise given that large amounts of growth are focused in certain locations (which can increase economies of scale and / or the magnitude of effects. This is highly dependent upon the supporting local services and infrastructure provided and the layout and design of development.

### **Scenario 3**

- 6.3.11 At the higher level of growth, the significant positive effects with regards to housing are likely to be major for each option, and growth will also bring more opportunities to enhance community facilities and new transport infrastructure. However, this scale of growth brings greater potential for negative effects with regards to environmental factors such as landscape, soil, air quality and cultural heritage.
- 6.3.12 Though negative effects are more likely to arise at this scale of growth (regardless of distribution), it should be noted that mitigation and enhancement could play an important role in altering these effects and perhaps achieving positive effects. This would be highly dependent on development being supported by infrastructure and through securing high quality design. A focus on environmental net gain would help to ensure that negative effects were avoided and opportunities for enhancement secured. There will need to be strong plan policies and supporting mechanisms in place to ensure that this occurs.

## 7. Pre-Submission Stage

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 In the period since the Local Plan Options document was published (January 2021) several factors have combined to require the Council to re-establish its housing and employment land requirements (and to review the emerging spatial strategy); these include:

- Changes to the NPPF and the Governments review of the Standard Housing Methodology (with implications for Local Needs for Blaby as well as wider needs in Leicestershire).
- Responses to the Local Plan Options Consultation.

7.1.2 In response, the Council has revisited strategic options for housing and employment growth and distribution. The following section will outline key changes to housing needs at the HMA and District Level as a result of changes to national guidance and the Standard Method published by government and joint working with other surrounding Councils.

#### **Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (February 2021)**

7.1.3 The 2021 SoCG committed the Leicester and Leicestershire Council's to cooperate on strategic cross boundary matters, including agreeing the redistribution of any unmet housing and employment need with a view to agreeing an apportionment of the unmet need from Leicester City to the surrounding Districts and Boroughs. However, the authorities also agreed the change in Leicester's housing need on 16 December 2020 resulting from Government changes to the Standard Method for calculating housing need, (which applied a 35% uplift to the largest 20 cities), was so significant additional evidence to inform the distribution of unmet need should be collected. This included the preparation of a new Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), Strategic Growth Options Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal.

#### **Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (July 2022)**

7.1.4 An updated SoCG was published in July 2022. This considered housing and employment needs for Leicester and Leicestershire to 2036; the identified unmet need to 2036; and the apportionment of unmet need across the Leicestershire to 2036.

7.1.5 The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment for Leicester and Leicestershire (HENA), published in June 2022, formed a major component of the evidence needed to identify how to distribute local housing needs.

- 7.1.6 In the case of Blaby, the starting point of the annual Local Housing Need (Standard Method) identified in the HENA was 341 homes.
- 7.1.7 It had already been established as early as 2017 that Leicester City would have significant unmet housing need because of its inability to find sites within the City boundary. The government publication of a revised standard method for calculating housing need in December 2020 coupled with the release of new affordability data significantly increased the City's housing need to 39,421 homes between 2020 and 2036. When compared to the City's supply of 20,720 homes, this left an unmet need of 18,700 homes to be accommodated elsewhere.
- 7.1.8 Blaby District Council was apportioned a significant amount of this unmet need as a result of its proximity of Leicester City; a need to ensure an appropriate employment distribution; the need to balance the delivery of jobs and homes at a local level; a need to limit the need to travel and a need to ensure housing stock growth in some other authorities areas was not excessive. This resulted in Blaby being apportioned an unmet need from Leicester of 346 homes per year or 5,536 homes over Leicester City's Plan period of 2020-36. This was equivalent to 29.6% of the City's unmet need. Blaby District Council approved the signing of the 2022 Statement of Common Ground in July 2022.

#### **Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (December 2025)**

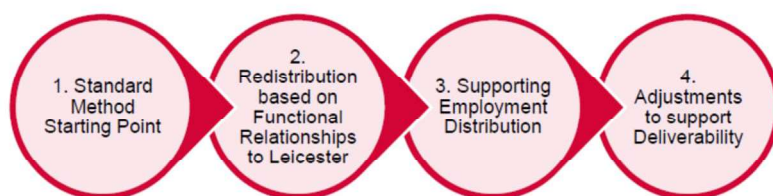
- 7.1.9 The Government revised the Standard Method, through changes to national planning policy and guidance in December 2024. To reflect these changes, it was considered necessary to update the Housing Distribution element of the HENA to inform the Local Plans which are yet to be submitted for examination within the Leicestershire Housing Market Area.
- 7.1.10 The revised (2024) Standard Method is fundamentally different to that used prior to 2024 as it uses the current dwelling stock as a baseline (rather than household projections), to provide greater consistency across Council areas in England but applies a higher affordability ratchet to inflate figures towards the Government's housing delivery targets. This ensures that areas which are the least affordable have more challenging housing targets.<sup>3</sup>
- 7.1.11 Under the new Standard Method, the increase in the housing requirement across the whole Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area is relatively modest; 5,892 homes per annum versus a previous requirement of 5,713 homes per annum. This is an increase of 3.1%. However local housing need in Blaby is significantly higher with the local housing need increasing from 329 homes<sup>4</sup> to 539 homes per annum (an increase of around 64%).

<sup>3</sup> A baseline figure is calculated as 0.8% of existing housing stock, using the latest stock estimates data published by Government. An affordability uplift is then applied with a 0.95% adjustment applied for every 1% which the median house price to workplace-based earnings ratio was above 5. The affordability ratio is taken as the average over the 5 most recent years of data

<sup>4</sup> This was the District's SM need immediately before changes to the NPPF and SM in December 2024. It was slightly lower than the need captured in the HENA (341 homes p.a.) due to an improvement in housing affordability

- 7.1.12 Whilst most of the Districts and Boroughs in Leicestershire have seen a significant increase in Local Housing Need both Leicester City and Charnwood have seen reductions in need. Of particular note, is the reduction in need within the City which has reduced from 2,464 homes per annum to 1,588 homes per annum. In simple terms therefore housing requirements have shifted from the City to the shire authorities.
- 7.1.13 Having regard to housing land completions in Leicester City between 2020-24 (4,129) a residual housing requirement of 16,601 homes is identified between 2024-2036. Given that the Leicester Local Plan’s total need for the remaining 12 years of its Plan is 19,056 homes (1588 homes per annum) a shortfall of 2,455 homes is identified for the City to 2036.
- 7.1.14 The apportionment of unmet need is based substantially on the functional relationship of the Districts with Leicester City although some adjustment is also made to take account of the need to align jobs and housing growth. The consideration of the functional relationship includes migration flows and commuting patterns. These flows are influenced by the spatial geography of Leicester. It also worth noting that the Leicester Urban Area boundary (as defined by ONS<sup>5</sup>) extends to include Braunstone, Thorpe Astley and Glenfield in Blaby District. This underlines the close link between some parts of Blaby and the Leicester City. As a result, Blaby is apportioned the second highest proportion of the City’s unmet need (31.5%) behind Charnwood Borough (31.7%), which geographically is double the size of Blaby and has a population around 75% larger.
- 7.1.15 In respect of unmet need to 2036 North West Leicestershire is assigned a significant apportionment to balance expected jobs growth in that District. The allocation of 73 homes per annum to North West Leicestershire reduces the residual need to be shared amongst the remaining districts that have the physical capacity to accommodate any unmet need. For Blaby this means our apportionment of unmet need to 2036 is 45 homes per annum.

**Figure 7.1:** The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment Approach to Redistributing Housing Growth



Source: HENA Updated Housing Distribution Paper, Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities, November 2025

<sup>5</sup> ONS Built Up Area boundaries

- 7.1.16 Post 2036 it remains the case that Leicester City is unlikely to be able to fully meet its own housing need. Given that Blaby's Plan will run to 2042 there is a need to try and understand the scale of likely unmet need after 2036 until the end of our proposed plan period, whilst accepting the challenges of looking this far into the future. Nonetheless it is appropriate provision should be made in Blaby's emerging Plan to accommodate likely unmet need from the City post 2036.
- 7.1.17 Whilst detailed work to identify the capacity in the City post 2036 has yet to be undertaken, the Leicester and Leicestershire Councils have jointly commissioned a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) update. This was completed in November 2025 and forecasts unmet need arising from the City post 2036 and sets out a methodology to distribute unmet need to the Leicestershire District's moving forward. A Statement of Common Ground which includes the housing distribution proposed within the report was agreed by Blaby District Council in January 2026<sup>6</sup>
- 7.1.18 Based on available evidence, a conservative assessment of the City's capacity post 2036 has been made and it estimated that annual housing supply could be in the range of 565-965 dwellings per annum<sup>7</sup>. A midpoint of 765 dwellings per annum has been agreed by Leicester City Council and the consultants preparing the housing distribution report and based on the City delivering 7,650 homes over the ten years from 2036-2046 an annual unmet need of 823 homes is identified for the City, (8,230 homes over a ten-year period to 2046). This will need to be apportioned to and met by the District's. Based on the percentage apportionment used to calculate pre 2036 housing numbers this would translate into an annual apportionment for Blaby of 256 homes per annum post 2036.

## 7.2 Reconsidering housing strategy options

### Scale of growth

- 7.2.1 Three scales of housing delivery were tested at Local Plan Options stage, as previously noted. Two of these options (6,441 homes and 9,000 homes over the plan period) are now below the new Standard Method requirement published by the Government and therefore are no longer considered to be reasonable. In terms of scale of growth, the third option (12,000 homes over the plan period) remains relevant, but the understanding of land supply is different (and therefore further appraisal is considered necessary).
- 7.2.2 At the current stage, the first reasonable alternative would be planning to meet the minimum housing need identified through the standard methodology (539 dwellings per annum). This equates to approximately 10,000 -10,500 homes over the 17-year plan period 2025-2042<sup>8</sup> allowing for the inclusion of an appropriate delivery buffer.

<sup>6</sup> [Agenda for Council on Tuesday, 27th January, 2026, 5.30 p.m. - Blaby District Council](#)

<sup>7</sup> An average of about 1,168 homes were delivered per year between 2012 and 2022.

<sup>8</sup> December 2024 represents the publication of updated standard method which increased the Districts SM housing requirement from 329 to 542 homes per annum. 2025 is therefore taken as the start date for the Plan. The standard method is periodically

- 7.2.3 Based on the Council's review of its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and having regard to the evidence collected to inform plan-making there are no convincing planning arguments that Blaby would be justified in planning to deliver housing at a level below the Standard Method minimum target.
- 7.2.4 An important issue for Blaby is the need to consider the contribution that it can make to meeting unmet needs arising in neighbouring authorities. The Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan anticipates that housing needs may need to be redistributed, particularly to account for unmet needs in Leicester City. The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities have a strong working relationship and are continuing to collaborate to distribute housing needs.
- 7.2.5 The Leicester Local Plan 2020-2036 was adopted in March 2026 and as noted above Blaby will need to accommodate 45 homes per annum to meet the City's unmet need to 2036 (11 years) and 256 homes per annum post 2036 to meet unmet need from the city (6 years). In total this means Blaby will need to accommodate 2,031 homes to meet the City's unmet need between 2025-42. When added to the District's own standard method need of 9,163 (539 homes per annum over 17 years). This gives a housing requirement of 11,195 homes or when annualised over the whole plan period 658.5 homes per year.
- 7.2.6 It is reasonable to suggest that Blaby's new Local Plan should plan for its own housing need and a proportion of the shortfall for Leicester reflecting the Council's stated position regarding the SoCG as highlighted above<sup>9</sup>. (i.e. there is justification to planning for a growth figure higher than the standard methodology minimum).
- 7.2.7 This second reasonable alternative we have tested, therefore, is 12,000 homes in total (again this number allowing for an appropriate buffer). Though this level of growth has been tested previously as noted above the context underpinning this requirement has changed.
- 7.2.8 In addition to unmet needs arising within Leicester City, there is potential that other districts may request that Blaby accommodate some of their housing needs. It is reasonable to expect that where unmet need arises from an adjoining or borough/district, or indeed from across the wider HMA Blaby could be asked to accommodate a proportion of this. There is no certainty regarding whether such a need exists. However, what is clear is that it would be prudent to test a higher growth option that anticipates Blaby having to accommodate further growth. A higher growth scenario could also be reflective of an approach that provides a higher degree of choice and flexibility to the housing market.

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updated and at the time of writing the SM for Blaby stood at 539. Assuming Plan adoption as set out in The Council's Local Development scheme is 2027, we have assumed a 15 year plan at the point of adoption as set out in paragraph 22 of the NPPF. This gives a Plan end date as 2042 and a 17-year plan period.

<sup>9</sup> [Agenda for Council on Tuesday, 27th January, 2026, 5.30 p.m. - Blaby District Council](#)

7.2.9 It is also worth noting that even if a higher housing requirement isn't required to meet our own need or unmet need from a surrounding district or borough the allocation of additional sites (i.e. a greater number of dwellings) could be an important factor in ensuring our plan remains up to date and robust. For example it could ensure there remains an adequate supply of new homes should affordability deteriorate during the course of preparing the plan (and so lead to increased housing requirements as a result of changes to the Standard Method in Blaby), or should any delay to plan preparation leading to the plan period being extended and therefore housing need within the plan period increasing. Therefore, testing a higher growth option would also allow us to understand how any further allocation of homes could affect the district even if a greater need for new homes does not arise. The higher growth option we have tested is 13,500 homes.

7.2.10 In summary, the following three growth scenarios are considered to be reasonable and are tested in this chapter:

- **10,500 homes** equivalent to 539 dpa together with an appropriate delivery buffer – *This reflects what the Council considers to be the minimum housing target that should be planned for to meet identified local housing need.*
- **12,000 homes** / 658 dpa – together with an appropriate delivery buffer - *This reflects the District's Minimum housing need and the apportionment of some unmet need from Leicester City at a level proposed by the Housing Distribution Paper (Nov 2025).*
- **13,500 homes** / 750 dpa together with an appropriate delivery buffer - *This provides a higher level of growth to assess the potential impacts of higher growth should this be required to address unmet need in other surrounding districts or boroughs, or if greater provision is required to provide a stronger buffer reflecting potential constraints or issues which could affect housing delivery in the District.*

### **Distribution of housing growth**

7.2.11 It is important to acknowledge that significant work has already been undertaken in developing an appropriate evidence-based spatial strategy. This includes testing a range of distribution options within the SA at the Options stage of plan-making. A site appraisal and selection process has also been undertaken in tandem with the SA and has formed the 'bottom-up' evidence to help establish an appropriate strategy that is deliverable.

7.2.12 It is not necessary to revisit distribution strategies at this stage of development that have already been tested and discounted. It is also important to identify elements of the strategy that are critical to meeting housing needs, and which accord with the emerging strategic approach to growth.

- 7.2.13 At this current stage of plan-making, the Council has a greater understanding of the supply position, and it should be noted that a significant amount of growth is already 'committed' by way of sites with planning permission (detailed and outline). At the time of writing there were over 5,100 homes committed within the District, together with a further 8 applications accounting for 1,064 homes which have a resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreements being made. This means around two thirds of the homes needed to meet Blaby's own need to 2042 (the lower growth option cited above) already have planning permission or benefit from a resolution to grant planning permission.
- 7.2.14 The spatial distribution of residual growth is based on maximising sustainable opportunities at each level of the settlement hierarchy (which was found to be an appropriate strategy at previous stages of appraisal). Given the scale of growth required to meet needs, growth is proposed at all levels of the hierarchy in a proportionate way.
- 7.2.15 The inclusion of two strategic sites is also considered to be important to the delivery of housing and helping to build a case for the delivery of strategic infrastructure in the longer-term. The allocation of strategic sites will allow the Council to work towards its own ambitions for strategic growth<sup>10</sup> as well as reflect the broad vision for growth outlined in the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, these sites feature for all three growth scenarios at this stage (although for the higher growth scenarios, housing delivery assumed on strategic sites in the plan period would be slightly greater).
- 7.2.16 However, the Council acknowledges that housing delivery on large strategic sites generally can be complex<sup>12,13</sup>, as reflected in lessons learned from the delivery of 'New Lubbethorpe' and other new settlements located elsewhere across the Country. These sites can take a longer length of time to 'get going'; which often means that such developments may have to extend outside of a single plan period. Therefore, the Council acknowledges that such strategic sites may only deliver a limited number of homes in the plan period compared to their overall capacity (and this is reflected in the three growth options). In this regard, distribution options D and E examined at the Options Consultation stage are considered to be unreasonable in the current context.
- 7.2.17 To accommodate a greater amount of growth under scenario 2 the additional sites identified still broadly follow the settlement hierarchy. Though additional sites are proposed in the PUA and larger villages as well as a notable proportion in the medium villages, together with slightly increased delivery at the two new settlements.

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<sup>10</sup> [Appendix - Blaby District Growth Plan.pdf](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Final-LL-SGP-December-2018-1.pdf](#)

<sup>12</sup> [start-to-finish-3-how-quickly-do-large-scale-housing-sites-deliver.pdf](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Plan-making - GOV.UK](#) Paragraph: 060 Reference ID: 61-060-20190315

Revision date: 15 03 2019

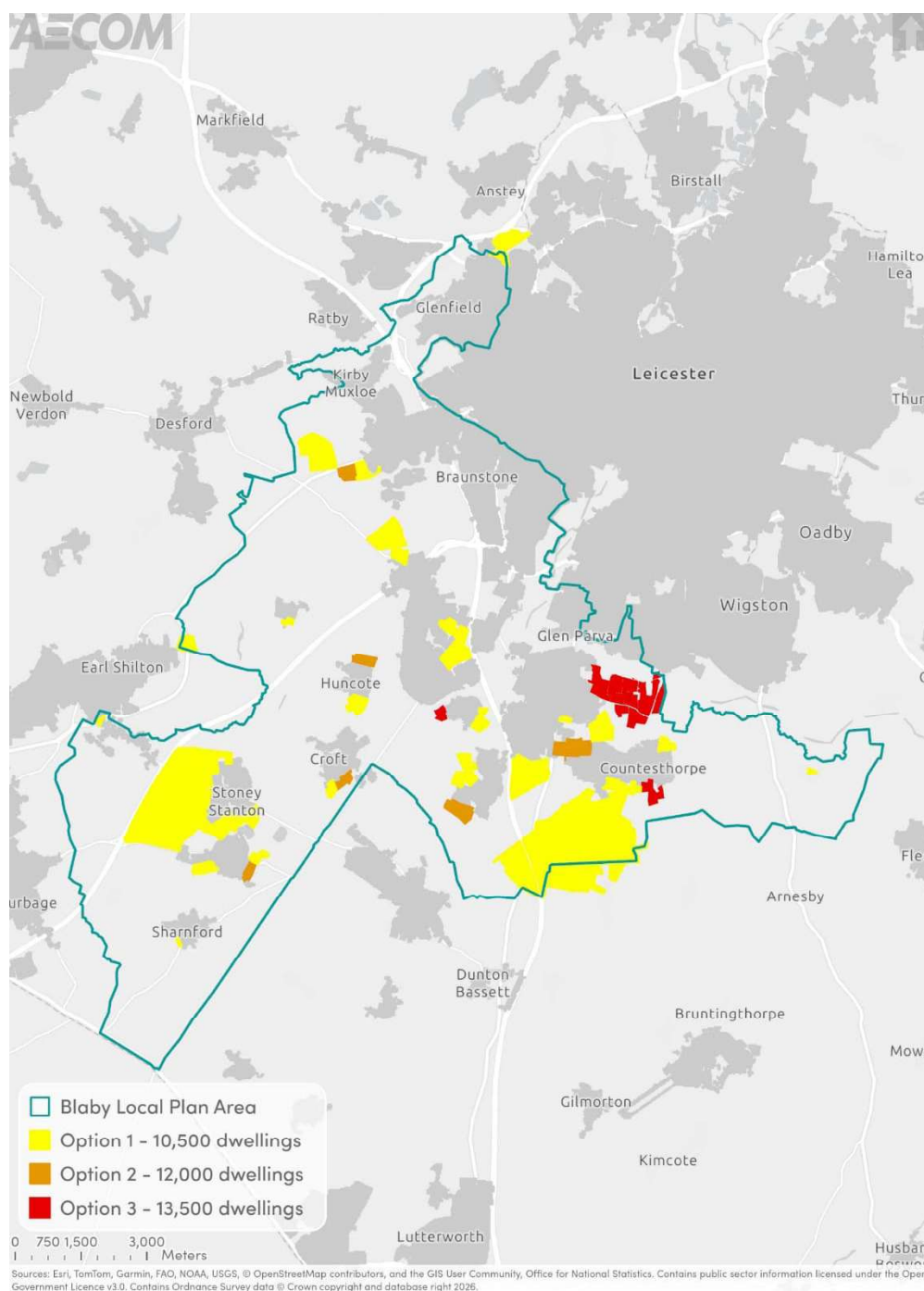
- 7.2.18 The inclusion of sites in the larger villages (including Blaby) are driven by sustainability considerations as these are well served by local services and facilities.
- 7.2.19 The inclusion of sites in the medium villages reflects the need to deliver growth throughout the settlement hierarchy but also takes account of the fact that there are well advanced planning applications, most of which have resolutions to grant permission which have been considered under the 'tilted balance' across this tier of the hierarchy. These sites will therefore represent developments with a high likelihood of being able to address short term housing needs to meet the Government's objective of boosting housing delivery in the near term and will help ensure the Council can demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply at the point the plan is adopted.
- 7.2.20 In essence, the only reasonable approach at this stage is to combine elements of the options explored at Options Consultation stage (rather than focusing too much on one specific level of the settlement hierarchy to meet residual needs).
- 7.2.21 For growth scenario 3, growth in Blaby is pushed further, which may be considered logical given that this village lies close to the urban area of the PUA. Further provision is also made within the other larger villages to boost delivery further - reflecting that further sites in the PUA are likely to be environmentally constrained, or not deliverable in the plan period owing to the scale of growth already proposed in some locations. There would also be further limited growth included in this option for medium villages as well as slightly higher levels of growth assumed for the strategic sites.
- 7.2.22 Pushing growth beyond 13,500 homes per annum is likely to result in the allocation of sites that are more environmentally constrained, at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy, or in locations where there are already significant levels of growth committed and so cumulatively could lead to notable cumulative impacts affecting villages and communities and so could lead to unsustainable patterns of growth. It is also unlikely that the housing market could sustain growth levels significantly beyond that level for which there is an identified need. The Council does not consider it necessary or realistic to appraise growth in excess of its existing higher growth option (option C) though this will need to be kept under review.

**Table 7.1** Trajectory for housing for each of the growth scenario options

	<b>Option 1</b> 10500 dwellings	<b>Option 2</b> 12000 dwellings	<b>Option 3</b> 13500 dwellings
<b>'Constants'</b>			
Committed	5100	5100	5100
Windfall allowance	480	480	480
Total	5580	5580	5580
Residual Need (housing need from new allocations)	<b>4920</b>	<b>6420</b>	<b>7920</b>
<b>Housing Distribution*</b>			
PUA	6127 (58%)	6377 (53%)	6377 (47%)
Larger Villages	2286 (22%)	2661 (22%)	3586 (27%)
Medium Villages	957 (9%)	1478 (12%)	1683 (12%)
Smaller Villages	114 (1%)	114 (1%)	114 (1%)
Strategic Sites	1005 (10%)	1405 (12%)	1765 (13%)
Total	10489 (100%)	12035 (100%)	13525 (100%)

\* Housing distribution (having regard to existing commitments)

**Figure 7.2** Site allocations under each strategic option



### 7.3 Appraisal findings for the housing strategy options

7.3.1 The effects for each option have been determined through assessment against the SA Framework. The detailed discussion of effects is set out in Appendix F, where the effects are described and explained, followed by a determination of the significance of effects for each option (against the SA Objectives).

7.3.2 A colouring and symbol approach is used to visually represent the sustainability performance of each option against the SA Objectives. These are then brought together in a summary matrix to illustrate the performance of each option across the full range of SA objectives (see table 7.2 below).

**Table 7.2** Visual summary of the options appraisal process (Pre Submission)

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Health: Facilities	++ ?	++	++
Health: Amenity and leisure	+	+	+
Population and housing	++	++	++
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	-	-	-
Cultural Heritage	_-?	_-?	_-?
Waste	0?	0?	0?
Minerals	?	?	_-?
Landscape	--?	--?	--
Soil	--	--	--
Water quality	_-?	_-?	--?
Air quality	_-?	_-?	-
Climate Change Mitigation	+?	+?	+?
Flooding	_-?	_-?	_-?
Economy	+++?	++	++
Congestion	_-?	_-?	_-?
Sustainable travel	++	++	++

7.3.3 All three options show broadly similar outcomes (in terms of significant effects) across most sustainability topics, with consistent positive effects on population and housing and sustainable travel, and negative impacts on biodiversity, soil, and landscape and 'congestion'.

7.3.4 Areas such as cultural heritage, water quality, flooding, and climate change mitigation are marked by uncertainty across all options.

7.3.5 Key differences emerge in three areas:

- **Economy and housing:** Options 2 and 3 offer clearer economic and housing related benefits, while Option 1 is more uncertain.

- **Water:** Option 3 is more likely to have a significant negative effect compared to options 1 and 2, but there is a degree of uncertainty.
- **Air Quality:** Option 3 shows a more definite negative impact, making Options 1 and 2 slightly more favourable.
- **Minerals:** Option 3 may have a slightly more negative effect compared to the others.
- **Landscape:** Whilst all three options are predicted to have significant effects on landscape, this is more certain / likely for Option 3 compared to options 1 and 2.

7.3.6 From a decision-making perspective, Options 2 and 3 may be stronger if economic certainty and housing delivery is prioritised, while Option 1 or 2 could be preferable where environmental sensitivity is a greater concern. It should be noted however, that the differences are marginal in respect of most sustainability topics.

7.3.7 Broadly speaking, the positive effects associated with greater housing delivery can be achieved without having a significantly different effect on environmental factors compared to a lower amount of growth.

7.3.8 Though the significance of effects is predicted to be similar across all three options, it is still possible to differentiate which options are preferable in relative terms for many of the SA objectives. This 'ranking' of the options is demonstrated in table 7.3 below. In some instances, the options are all differentiated, but in others, some options are ranked on par (for example, for biodiversity, option 1 is ranked most preferable, but options 2 and 3 are ranked the same).

**Table 7.3** Comparative rank for performance for the options

	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>
Health: Facilities	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Health: Amenity and leisure	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>
Population and housing	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Cultural Heritage	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Waste	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Minerals	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Landscape	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Soil	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Water quality	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Air quality	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Climate Change Mitigation	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Flooding	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Economy	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Congestion	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Sustainable travel	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

### **Rationale for selecting the preferred approach**

7.3.9 The Council's preferred option is broadly consistent with Option 2<sup>14</sup>. This makes provision for our own identified local housing need as well as a proportion of unmet need from the City, based on the functional relationship which the District Council agreed it would accommodate at Council in 2026. This option also provides for an appropriate buffer to provide a degree of flexibility should delivery assumptions regarding some sites change over the plan period. This option does not make further provision for any unmet need that may arise from elsewhere in the Leicestershire Housing Market Area. However, notwithstanding the above preference, it is clear that the environmental effects resulting from both options 2 and 3 are relatively similar.

<sup>14</sup> The sites proposed for allocation in the Plan do not align perfectly with those outlined under option 2. This reflects the changing nature of the baseline position with regards to active planning applications and the need to respond to the full range of evidence relating to sites. A limitation of the appraisal of strategic options is that it represents a snapshot in time when appraisals are undertaken.

- 7.3.10 Reflecting on this fact, and having regard to the complexity, in particular in respect of infrastructure, and scale of some of the allocations in the Plan the Council is minded to include a larger buffer to provide flexibility should some sites not come forwards as expected. This will provide a greater level of certainty that a 5 year housing land supply can be maintained even where sites start later or build out slower than we anticipate.
- 7.3.11 In terms of housing distribution, the Council considered a range of reasonable options in its interim appraisal, all of which looked to distribute growth throughout the settlement hierarchy, with some distribution options directing significant levels of growth to strategic sites or new settlements.
- 7.3.12 Having reviewed these options, in consideration of evidence and key stakeholder engagement the Council concluded it is not realistic to direct too much growth to the strategic sites in the plan period. This is due to infrastructure and delivery complexities of these sites, requiring longer timeframes from planning to development as well as a ceiling on the annual delivery rates once construction starts. In forecasting how much growth such sites could deliver in the plan period officers have had regard to available evidence such as Start to Finish 3<sup>15</sup>, published by Lichfields and its own experience in delivering the New Lubbethorpe development which has been building out in Blaby since 2016.
- 7.3.13 However, the Council remains committed to moving towards the delivery of strategic sites to meet the aspirations of the strategic growth plan as well as Blaby's own Growth Plan in the creation of new places in the district. These sites are therefore considered an important part of planning for growth and infrastructure provision in South Leicestershire in the longer term.
- 7.3.14 In respect of the PUA, the Council considers these settlements to be the most sustainable. However, there is a limit to the number of sites which can be considered unconstrained in the PUA. Several of the PUA settlements have very few sites put forward through the SHELAA because they are already urban in nature with few sites available for growth. Where sites are available these are often affected by constraints such as flood risk (Glen Parva) or heritage (Kirby Muxloe).
- 7.3.15 Beyond the PUA and strategic sites, proportionate growth in the Larger and Medium Villages is required especially in the short to medium term. It is not considered sustainable or realistic to direct significant growth to the smaller villages and hamlets given the Council's vision which seeks to ensure development is well connected to local services, shops, green spaces, jobs and education and our aspirations to provide genuine transport choice for shorter trips using active travel modes such as walking, cycling, and wheeling<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> <https://lichfields.uk/media/w3wjmw0/start-to-finish-3-how-quickly-do-large-scale-housing-sites-deliver.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> This notion is also supported by the earlier assessment work that explored the implications of higher levels of growth in the smaller villages. Although the supply position and context for growth has moved on since the issues and options stage

- 7.3.16 It is noteworthy that the Council's adopted Local Plan sought to direct most growth to the PUA (around two thirds of growth in the last plan was proposed for the PUA settlements) but housing delivery in these settlements has consistently been at a significantly lower level than the adopted Plan provided for.
- 7.3.17 Given that the housing need for the District now indicates that 539 homes per year are needed to meet Blaby's own need and 119 homes are required to meet the City's unmet need, there is also perhaps a little more flexibility to distribute some growth away from the PUA to the villages than was the case in historic plans. The preferred approach is to deliver around half of the growth we are proposing in the emerging local plan in the PUA.
- 7.3.18 This leaves around a quarter of the new housing growth to be allocated to the larger villages of Blaby, Countesthorpe, Enderby Narborough and Whetstone and around a 12% of growth being apportioned to the medium villages which comprise Cosby, Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. However, at the time of writing, it is worth highlighting that most of the allocations proposed for the villages have been subject to planning applications and a notable proportion are already committed or benefit from a resolution to grant planning permission. It is likely that many of the remaining sites will be permitted before the emerging plan is adopted given the application of the 'tilted balance' within planning decisions falling within Blaby District. On this basis it is unrealistic to seek a reduction in allocations in the medium villages in particular, but to a lesser extent in the larger villages too.
- 7.3.19 Therefore the distribution of growth in Blaby is to some extent controlled by existing circumstances, such as where sites are already committed or likely to be committed, the ability of the PUA to accommodate growth, the unsuitability of smaller settlements to accommodate high levels of growth given their less sustainable and accessible nature and the long lead in times and likely build out rates we can expect on strategic sites.

## 7.4 Employment strategy

### Exploring options

- 7.4.1 The Council examined the evidence base to determine the quantum and type of employment land needed in Blaby (and the wider functional employment area). In identifying reasonable alternatives, the Council was also mindful of the need to meet plan objectives, the need for suitable infrastructure to support growth, and the availability of suitable sites.
- 7.4.2 Referring to the evidence base to define options is important to ensure that the alternatives identified and tested through the SA are robust, realistic and justified. Key pieces of evidence includes the Blaby Local Employment Land Study, the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment and the Strategic B8 Study. These provide an objective understanding of future needs, market demand and functional requirements (e.g. for logistics locations), which helps ensure that options are not arbitrary but reflect deliverable and strategic priorities.
- 7.4.3 Reflecting different interpretations of the evidence base and assumptions around future economic growth. Three reasonable alternatives have been identified, which vary in both the scale of provision and the spatial distribution of development, including the role of the PUA, settlements and strategic sites.
- 7.4.4 This approach enables a proportionate assessment of the sustainability implications of alternative growth trajectories, from a more constrained, baseline position through to a more market-led, logistics-focused scenario. The three options are introduced below, followed by a breakdown of each within table 7.4.

#### **Option 1: Lower growth**

Represents a baseline, scenario based on the Employment Land Study, meeting minimum identified needs with limited new allocations. Growth is primarily directed to the PUA and existing commitments, with no new strategic sites. The option tests a more constrained approach, limiting land take.

#### **Option 2: Mid growth**

Represents a more balanced growth strategy aligned with the HENA, increasing provision and introducing a wider range of allocations, including strategic sites (with limited delivery in the plan period). Development is more dispersed across the PUA and settlements.

#### **Option 3: Higher growth**

Represents a more ambitious, market-facing scenario, maintaining similar local provision to Option 2 but significantly increasing strategic warehousing, including large-scale allocations expected to come forward within the plan period. Growth is more concentrated at strategic locations.

**Table 7.4:** The reasonable alternatives for Employment Strategy

<b>Option 1 Lower Growth</b>	<b>Option 2 Mid Growth</b>	<b>Option 3 Higher Growth</b>
<p><b>Requirements:</b></p> <p><u>Local Employment Land</u></p> <p>Total – Minimum/Around 22.9 hectares (91,600 sqm floorspace). (0 hectares office /R&amp;D, 22.9 hectares / 91,600 sqm industrial and non-strategic warehousing)</p>	<p><b>Requirements:</b></p> <p><u>Local Employment Land</u></p> <p>Total – Minimum/Around 41.5 hectares (160,900 sqm floorspace). (6.8 hectares / 22,100 sqm office /R&amp;D, 34.7 hectares / 138,800 sqm industrial and non-strategic warehousing)</p>	<p><b>Requirements:</b></p> <p><u>Local Employment Land</u></p> <p>Total – Minimum/Around 41.5 hectares (160,900 sqm floorspace). (11.4 hectares / 22,100 sqm office /R&amp;D, 34.7 hectares / 138,800 sqm industrial and non-strategic warehousing)</p>
<p><u>Strategic Warehousing Land</u></p> <p>Road based - Total 30 hectares (105,100 sqm floorspace) (Committed site will meet this need)</p> <p>Rail based – there is an identified need for 650,000 sqm of rail based directed to Blaby District but the expectation is that this will need to come forward as a DCO not a Local Plan allocation or planning application.</p>		
<p><b>Site specifics</b></p> <p>Local Existing commitments = 14.5 hectares (45,100 sqm)</p> <p>Strategic B8 Warehousing Existing commitments total = 35.5 hectares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land West of St Johns, Enderby 30 hectares (105,100 sqm)</li> <li>Land North of Leicester Lane 5.5 hectares (15,500 sqm)</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Local proposed Allocations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land North of Glenfield 20 hectares (64,000 sqm)</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Local Employment Provision: 34.5 hectares (109,100 sqm) in Plan period</b></p> <p>No proposed allocations for strategic B8 warehousing.</p> <p><b>Total Strategic B8 Warehousing Provision 35.5 hectares (Developable area) in Plan period</b></p>	<p><u>Local proposed Allocations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land North of Glenfield 20 hectares (64,000 sqm)</li> <li>Land West of Stoney Stanton 15 hectares total with 8 hectares (25,600 sqm) in plan period</li> <li>Whetstone Pastures 15 hectares total with 8 hectares (25,600 sqm) in plan period</li> <li>Land South of Whetstone 3 hectares (9,480 sqm)</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Local Employment Provision 53.5 hectares (169,780 sqm) in Plan period</b></p> <p><u>Strategic B8 proposed Allocations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land West of Stoney Stanton (Land South West of J2 of M69) 36 hectares (140,000 sqm) but <b>none</b> in Plan period</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Strategic B8 Warehousing Provision 35.5 hectares in Plan period.</b></p>	<p><u>Local proposed Allocations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land North of Glenfield 20 hectares (64,000 sqm)</li> <li>Land West of Stoney Stanton 15 hectares total with 8 hectares (25,600 sqm) in plan period</li> <li>Whetstone Pastures 15 hectares total with 8 hectares (25,600 sqm) in plan period</li> <li>Land South of Whetstone 3 hectares (9,480 sqm)</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Local Employment Provision 53.5 hectares (169,780 sqm) in Plan period</b></p> <p><u>Strategic B8 proposed Allocations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land West of Stoney Stanton (Land South West of J2 of M69) 36 hectares (140,000 sqm)</li> <li>Whetstone Pastures 80 hectares (280,000 sqm)</li> </ul> <p><b>Total Strategic B8 Warehousing Provision 151.5 hectares in Plan period</b></p>

### Summary of appraisal findings

	Option 1: Lower growth	Option 2: Mid growth	Option 3: Higher growth
Health: Facilities / accessibility	+	++?	++
Health: Amenity / safety	0	?	-
Population and housing	0	0	0
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	?	-	-
Cultural Heritage	?	-	--?
Waste	0	0	-
Minerals	0	?	?
Landscape	-	-	--?
Soil	-	-	--
Water quality	0	?	?
Air quality	?	-	-
Climate change: Mitigation	0	?	-
Flooding	0	0	0
Economy	+	++?	++
Congestion	0	?	-
Sustainable Travel	+	+	+

7.4.5 The findings show a clear relationship between the scale and distribution of employment growth and the magnitude of environmental, social and economic effects across the three options. In general, effects intensify as the quantum of employment land increases and as development moves from urban-edge and settlement-related locations toward larger, more strategic sites. None of the options presents significant constraints; however, each involves a different balance between economic ambition, environmental pressure and community impacts.

7.4.6 Option 1 involves only one site. Its proximity to Glenfield and the Leicester urban area supports strong accessibility, sustainable travel opportunities and moderate health and wellbeing benefits, while keeping impacts on landscape, biodiversity, heritage, transport networks and environmental quality limited and largely localised.

- 7.4.7 The key limitation of this option is its lower economic contribution, offering limited flexibility and reduced potential to accommodate longer-term market demand or strategic employment uses. This limits positive effects on socio economic factors to minor positives.
- 7.4.8 Option 2 provides a broader and more balanced growth strategy. By distributing employment land across several settlements and co-locating development with housing in some locations, this option delivers more widespread access to employment, stronger local health and wellbeing outcomes and an uplift in economic performance. While cumulative impacts on biodiversity, landscape, transport and water management are more negative than under Option 1, these effects are generally assessed as moderate or minor and capable of mitigation.
- 7.4.9 Option 3 delivers greater economic growth through the inclusion of large-scale strategic B8 sites, strengthening the district's role within the sub-regional and regional economy and providing capacity for significant job creation and inward investment. However, these benefits are accompanied by the greatest environmental and infrastructure pressures, particularly in relation to landscape character, agricultural land loss, traffic generation and emissions associated with logistics-led development. While many impacts could be mitigated through comprehensive masterplanning and infrastructure investment, this option carries a greater level of risk and reliance on effective mitigation.
- 7.4.10 In summary, Option 1 has the lowest environmental impact, but limits economic growth; Option 2 delivers a more balanced range of benefits with manageable impacts; and Option 3 maximises economic opportunity at the cost of increased environmental and infrastructure pressures. The relative merits of each option therefore depend on the weight afforded to economic ambition versus environmental capacity and local integration within the plan's overall objectives.

## 8. Site Options

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 To deliver the new growth strategy, the Council consider it necessary to allocate additional sites for different land uses, including housing and employment.
- 8.1.2 To inform the selection of sites, the Council established a site selection methodology and invited landowners and other interested parties to submit sites that should be considered for allocation through the new Local Plan.
- 8.1.3 A key element of the site selection process involves the consideration of sustainability factors. The SA is a mechanism for demonstrating how sites perform against a framework of site appraisal criteria, helping to identify the constraints and merits of each site option. The SA has been integrated into the site selection process to reduce duplication of effort.
- 8.1.4 Working alongside the Council, AECOM devised a site appraisal framework, which takes the SA Objectives as a starting point and develops specific measurable criteria to test each site. Objective criteria are used as much as possible to ensure that sites are compared on a consistent basis. To avoid duplication of effort and ensure consistency, the findings relating to sites for certain criteria are drawn from existing studies such as the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).
- 8.1.5 Site assessments within the SA have been undertaken at two key stages of plan development. The process and outcomes at earlier stages are summarised below for context, followed by a discussion of the most up-to-date site assessments that have been undertaken prior to Regulation 19 consultation on a draft plan.

### 8.2 Summary of the options consultation stage

- 8.2.1 A list of reasonable site options was taken forward for assessment in the SA at the Options Consultation stage (derived from the SHELAA). The findings were set out in an Interim SA Report and helped to influence the emerging strategy and potential site allocations. The sites were categorised as follows:
- 99 housing sites
  - 8 employment sites
  - 5 mixed use sites
- 8.2.2 The appraisal findings have not been replicated in this report as some of the sites are no longer reasonable alternatives for a variety of reasons:
- No longer being promoted.
  - Have been granted planning permission or built out.

- Have been ruled out due to significant constraints.
- Not deliverable.

### **8.3 Pre-submission stage**

- 8.3.1 At pre-submission stage, the Council identified the need to reappraise all sites submitted through the various Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 'call for sites' to ensure that all promoted sites were subject to a consistent site appraisal. The decision to reappraise all sites was taken because a number of further sites had been submitted to the Council since the options consultation, and in the time between the initial appraisal of sites and further sites being submitted some of the environmental information used to assess the initial sites against local or national data had been updated, or new evidence had been collected. A reappraisal of all 164 sites submitted to the Council and promoted for development was therefore requested by the Council. This was undertaken following the close of the Council's SHELAA in Spring 2024.
- 8.3.2 These site assessments were then used by the Council to help understand the comparative performance of all submitted sites. The National and Local factors reviewed were considered in stage 1 of the Council's Site Selection process and further detail on how we have integrated the findings of the SA site appraisal work with our site selection process is outlined in the Council's Site Selection Report (SSR).
- 8.3.3 Appendix D sets out the site appraisal framework in detail. For each criteria, the data sources used are listed, as well as any assumptions made in determining scores.
- 8.3.4 The matrix presented at Appendix E illustrates a summary of the site assessment scores for all the site options, using a colour coding system to show where effects are likely to be negative or positive, and to what extent. These colours correspond to the criteria within the appraisal framework in Appendix D.

### **8.4 Rationale for proposed site allocations**

- 8.4.1 The rationale for site selection is not based on a narrow consideration of sustainability. Site selection has also been influenced by other considerations including strategic factors and site-specific issues. This chapter sets out a summary of the site selection process, drawing out the key factors that have contributed to preferred sites across the different levels of the settlement hierarchy. A more comprehensive explanation is provided for individual sites within Appendix H of this document.
- 8.4.2 Rather than simply identifying sites with the fewest environmental or technical constraints, the process has centred on identifying those locations that align with the spatial strategy, support housing delivery, and enable sustainable patterns of development.

- 8.4.3 The need to secure a robust and deliverable supply of housing, particularly in the early part of the plan period, is also an important element of the strategy. Therefore, considerable weight is given to sites that are committed, or well advanced through the development management process. This is because there is a need to deliver growth quickly to address local housing needs that are not currently being met, and those sites that have been subject to scrutiny through the planning application process are likely to be well positioned to deliver homes early in the Plan period and therefore contribute towards housing delivery in the near term. Such sites will also help the Council to demonstrate that the plan can deliver a 5 year housing land supply at the point of adoption.
- 8.4.4 In the middle to latter part of the plan period, the Council is seeking to proactively direct growth in a way that supports longer-term sustainability outcomes, through the coordinated delivery of new infrastructure, improved accessibility, and reduced reliance on the private car.
- 8.4.5 This has led to a preference for sites that are not only deliverable, but which are also capable of forming part of a coherent spatial pattern of growth, particularly where they can contribute to wider urban extensions, infrastructure provision and opportunities for trip internalisation and a reduction in car usage. In this context, environmental and technical constraints—whilst clearly important—are generally treated as matters to be managed and mitigated, rather than as solely determining factors in their own right. Their relative weight in decision-making is therefore closely linked to the strategic role of the site.

#### **Principal Urban Area (PUA)**

- 8.4.6 Within the Principal Urban Area (PUA), the strategy seeks to direct a significant proportion of growth to the District's most accessible and well-connected locations, albeit reflecting historic delivery. The approach in this tier is characterised by a strong focus on integration with existing and committed development, particularly where sites form part of, or extend, established growth areas.
- 8.4.7 The preference is not for incremental or stand-alone sites, but for those that can reinforce and consolidate urban extensions, allowing for the coordinated delivery of infrastructure, services and active travel networks. Growth is directed to locations where it can be most effectively planned and delivered at scale, rather than dispersed across smaller, less connected parcels of land.
- 8.4.8 Smaller sites within the PUA, while in some cases accessible and capable of mitigation, are not allocated where they do not materially contribute to infrastructure provision, place-making, or sustainable transport objectives.

Conversely, larger sites that perform a clear strategic function are taken forward, even where they are subject to notable constraints, on the basis that these can be addressed through comprehensive masterplanning.

### **Larger villages**

- 8.4.9 Across the larger villages, a more nuanced position emerges, reflecting both the variability in settlement roles and the significant influence of existing commitments. In several cases, a substantial proportion of anticipated growth is already embedded within the pipeline of permitted or emerging development, reducing the need for further allocations. This introduces a further dynamic: site selection is influenced not simply by the relative merits of individual sites, but by the extent to which additional growth is required in that location at all.
- 8.4.10 The consequence is that a number of sites are not allocated despite being broadly suitable in technical terms, as their inclusion would result in disproportionate levels of growth or would not materially improve the overall distribution of development. This reflects a recognition that the spatial strategy must respond to what is likely to be delivered, rather than operate in isolation from growth being delivered through the development management process.
- 8.4.11 At the same time, where additional allocations are made within this tier, there is a preference for sites that align with a defined direction of growth and contribute to a more cohesive pattern of development at the settlement level.
- 8.4.12 This is particularly evident where growth is focused in locations that can support infrastructure improvements, reinforce settlement form, or respond to locally established priorities, including those set out in Neighbourhood Plans.
- 8.4.13 Larger sites within the villages are justified not because they are unconstrained, but because they offer a scale and flexibility that enables constraints to be addressed more effectively, while also delivering wider benefits. By contrast, smaller or more peripheral sites—particularly those that are poorly related to the settlement edge or which would erode important gaps—are typically not taken forward, even where environmental constraints may be capable of mitigation.

### **Medium Villages**

- 8.4.14 The approach to the medium villages is notably more restrained. These settlements are already subject to a considerable level of committed or emerging development, much of which has come forward in response to housing land supply pressures. As a result, the strategy largely seeks to consolidate existing growth, rather than introduce significant additional allocations.
- 8.4.15 This reflects an underlying judgement about the role these settlements play within the wider spatial structure. While they provide an important contribution to overall supply—particularly in terms of early delivery—their ability to support more sustainable patterns of development is more limited.
- 8.4.16 In particular, the scope to deliver new infrastructure or significantly reduce car dependency is constrained when compared to higher-tier settlements.

8.4.17 Consequently, the decision not to allocate further sites within many medium villages does not necessarily reflect an absence of suitable options, but rather a conclusion that additional growth would not materially advance the objectives of the spatial strategy, and may risk cumulative impacts on settlement character and infrastructure capacity.

### **Smaller Villages**

8.4.18 In the smallest villages, the strategy adopts a clearly defined and restrictive approach. These settlements, by virtue of their scale, accessibility and limited service provision, are not considered appropriate locations for significant growth. The emphasis instead is on accommodating small-scale, locally appropriate development, which maintains the character and function of the settlement.

8.4.19 Larger sites in these locations are consistently rejected, not necessarily because they are incapable of development in technical terms, but because they would represent a scale of growth that is fundamentally at odds with the spatial strategy. In particular, such development would be unlikely to support sustainable travel patterns or deliver the facilities required to offset increased demand.

### **Summary**

8.4.20 Taken together, the pattern of site selection across the District reflects a coherent application of the spatial strategy. The assessment process demonstrates that decisions have been driven partly by a comparison of environmental constraints, but also by a hierarchy of considerations centred on:

- Deliverability and timing
- Strategic scale and infrastructure provision
- Relationship to existing and committed growth
- Potential to support more sustainable travel patterns

8.4.21 Environmental and technical constraints are part of this process, but their influence is context-dependent, with weight given to the overall contribution a site makes to the strategy. This gives rise to some areas of tension. Sites with similar constraints are treated differently depending on their strategic role; smaller sites are both relied upon and de-emphasised; and accessibility, while important, is not applied as a uniform determinant. In addition, the influence of existing commitments and locally derived policy priorities introduces a degree of variability in outcomes.

8.4.22 However, these are largely reflective of the need to balance competing objectives within the plan-making process. Overall, the approach represents a prioritisation of strategic growth, deliverability and long-term sustainability, recognising that the effectiveness of the Local Plan is determined not simply by the sites it includes, but by how those sites collectively function to shape patterns of growth across the District.

## 9. Appraisal of the Draft Plan

### 9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 This section presents an appraisal of the Pre Submission Version of the Plan (March, 2026) considered 'as a whole' (i.e. the proposed strategy including the site allocations and all the supporting policies that will shape future development).

### 9.2 Methods of appraisal

9.2.1 For each SA topic, the appraisal first considers the potential effects associated with the level and distribution of growth proposed in the draft Plan (i.e. the cumulative effects of proposed site allocations / spatial strategy). Next, consideration is given to all the supporting policies. This provides a more meaningful appraisal of the Plan, as the strategy / site allocations will be influenced by policy requirements.

9.2.2 The appraisals have been undertaken by qualified professionals in impact assessment and plan-making, employing the following methods:

- Drawing upon information within the Scoping Report in relation to baseline data, trends, sensitive environmental receptors and key sustainability issues.
- Utilising Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to identify spatial features, environmentally sensitive areas and relationships between development locations and likely effects.
- Building upon appraisals undertaken at previous stages of plan making where relevant.
- Cross referencing information from supporting pieces of evidence such as landscape character studies and transport modelling

9.2.3 In any appraisal, every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however it is recognised that this is inherently challenging.

9.2.4 To determine the significance of effects, account is taken of a range of factors including magnitude, duration, frequency, likelihood, permanence, and timescale. The potential for cumulative and synergistic effects is also considered by taking account of how the different proposals within the Plan interact. Consideration is also given to the interaction of the Plan with other plans, policies and programmes that affect the baseline position.

9.2.5 Each Plan policy has been considered in the appraisal, but the findings have been discussed on a 'whole plan' basis (rather than commenting on every policy individually in the plan appraisal narrative set out in this section). This is important as policies should be read in the context of the whole Plan and not in isolation. Policies can interact with one another to create cumulative effects, synergistic effects and to help mitigate potential negative effects.

- 9.2.6 Where this is the case, such factors are discussed in the appraisal findings, including reference to individual policies as relevant.
- 9.2.7 Secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects have been considered for each topic as part of the assessment process. These are drawn out in the appraisal text as relevant. As discussed above, it is not necessary to comment on the characteristics of effects for every element of the Plan individually. It can be assumed that where effects have not been identified within the appraisal text for certain policies, that these were not important factors in determining overall significance.

## **9.3 Population and Housing**

### **Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy**

- 9.3.1 The spatial strategy broadly aligns with 'Option 2' of the housing strategy alternatives and Option 2' of the employment strategy alternatives<sup>17</sup>. The effects are discussed in detail in Appendixes F and G.
- 9.3.2 The key issues are reproduced in summary form in this section, concentrating on any minor changes to site allocations and the additional context that the plan policies provide in relation to delivering the strategy.
- 9.3.3 The housing strategy is considered likely to lead to likely significant positive effects as it delivers a level of growth which exceeds the identified need calculated using the standard method and accounts for needs generated in Leicester.
- 9.3.4 The range of sites and strategy seeks to address needs for affordable housing and specialist housing (e.g. adaptable homes for older people and people with disabilities), as well as pitches for gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople.
- 9.3.5 The strategy includes a mix of small, medium and large sites across a range of settlements, which provides choice and a realistic prospect of delivering homes across the plan period. The inclusion of two strategic standalone communities will also contribute housing towards the end and beyond the plan period.
- 9.3.6 The inclusion of employment alongside housing has the potential to support local population needs and provide opportunities for people to live closer to where they work. However, it is not anticipated that the increase in employment land provision would drive significant changes in population or housing demand locally over the plan-period.

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<sup>17</sup> Since the appraisal of spatial options, several sites that were not included within Strategic Housing Option 2 have since received planning permission, started to be built out etc. Therefore, these sites now form part of the committed supply position, and the final position within the draft Plan does not correspond perfectly with option 2. However, the total housing numbers and distribution of growth remains broadly the same.

## Additional implications

9.3.6 The housing chapter contains a suite of thematic policies that are of direct relevance to this topic and these are summarised below. The policies deal with affordable housing, mix and density, specialist and accessible accommodation, self and custom build housing and accommodation for gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople:

- Policy H2: Affordable Housing. Requires 25% of sites of 10 dwellings or more to be affordable and makes further provision for rural exception sites and cross subsidy sites in the districts villages to address needs in communities where development may not always be delivered by the provision of market homes.
- Policy H3: Housing Mix and Density: Sets out the appropriate mix of homes across different tenures on sites of ten homes or more as well as policies to maximise densities and therefore ensure the efficient use of land.
- Policy H4: Specialist and Accessible Accommodation: set outs specific requirements for the largest sites (Policies S7, S8 and S10) to deliver specific on site older peoples provision on larger strategic sites of 800 homes or more in the plan period, and for remaining strategic sites to deliver 5% of the sites housing to meet the needs of older people or those with other specialist needs. This policy also sets out a requirement in respect of all sites (strategic and non-strategic housing sites) of ten or more homes to make provision for 40% of all homes to be built to M4(2) (accessible and adaptable) standard, and a minimum of 3% of all dwellings on sites of ten or more homes to be built to M4(3) (wheelchair accessible homes). This policy also encourages developers to build homes that meet nationally described space standards though does not require this.
- Policy H5: Self and Custom Build Housing requires that where no specific requirement is outlined for self and custom build provision 5% of all dwellings plots on site should be made available for self or custom builders.
- Policy S14 addresses Accommodation for Gypsies and Traveller and Travelling Show Person and sets out a criteria-based policy to enable the provision of further sites throughout the plan period.

9.3.7 These policies are all influenced by local evidence studies which demonstrate different needs that need to be addressed in new homes. Therefore, it is likely that new homes across all allocations will be tailored to the needs of local communities in the short and longer term. Where standards and requirements are introduced that will add to development costs, these have been viability tested and there is flexibility in the policy wording to ensure that market homes can be delivered on individual projects should there be site specific issues.

9.3.8 The strategic housing allocations are each accompanied by a policy which set out important issues that need to be addressed. Typically, such stipulations can add costs to developments, which can affect viability and deliverability. However, the requirements are not unreasonable and are unlikely to have significant effects in this regard.

9.3.9 Several site-specific policies are of relevance to the Population and Housing topic and are discussed below.

- Policy S6: Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites
- Policies S7 – S12: These set out the requirements for strategic sites as follows:
  - S7 Land West of Stoney Stanton
  - S8 Whetstone Pastures
  - S9 Land to the North of the A47, Hinckley Road, Kirby Muxloe
  - S10 Land West of Beggars Lane, Lubbethorpe,
  - S11 Land at Carlton Park, Narborough
  - S12 Land South of Whetstone
- In particular larger site policies add detail with regards to housing types, mix, affordability, and density.
- Policies for West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures require specific provision for gypsy and traveller plots, self-build and custom build plots as well as provision for older people or those with accessibility needs. This will help to ensure that specialist provision is delivered in sustainable new communities.
- Land North of the A47, Kirby Muxloe (Policy S9) and Land South of Whetstone also include a requirement for the provision of self-build properties, whilst Policy S10 requires the provision of older people's accommodation.

9.3.10 In addition to strategic Housing Policies the Plan includes a further 18 Sites (H1A-H1R) small (non-strategic housing sites) which contribute to the Council's Housing Delivery. The specific housing requirements applied to these sites are set out in the Council's thematic housing policies referenced above, but will help to ensure that all new sites contribute towards identified housing needs.

9.3.11 Strategic policies S16 (Green Wedges)S17 (Areas of Separation) and S18 (Countryside) are all likely to place restrictions on housing growth outside of settlement boundaries.

- 9.3.12 Whilst this could have some implications for longer term housing delivery, this is largely a continuation of the current approach and does not affect the ability to meet housing needs within this current plan period. In addition, as noted previously Policy H2 does provide some flexibility for the delivery of affordable and cross subsidy homes in the District's villages. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted in this respect.
- 9.3.13 With regards to 'thematic' policies in the plan that seek to protect and enhance environmental assets, these will all contribute positively to the creation of higher quality housing. The key tension is whether this then affects delivery of homes. Requirements for green and blue infrastructure, urban greening factor, landscaping and heritage protection are broadly in line with national policy and do not introduce unreasonable or excessive local standards. Furthermore, there is reference to viability being an important factor. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that these policies would have any significant negative effect upon housing delivery.
- 9.3.14 Likewise, plan policies that support the provision of healthy and safe communities or contributions towards social and physical infrastructure improvements, will lead to the creation of more sustainable communities in the longer term.
- 9.3.15 The key tension is the burden that this puts onto housing developments and whether delivery could be slowed down or deterred as a result. Considering the proposed policies, there are not unreasonable or excessive local standards introduced, and viability is referenced as an exceptional circumstance. Therefore, significant negative effects upon housing delivery would not be expected. Where the policies introduce the requirement for additional evidence and assessment to support planning applications (for example health impact assessments and construction management plans), this is proportionate to the type and scale of development involved.

### **Overall effects**

- 9.3.16 The spatial strategy delivers housing above identified needs, including Leicester's unmet demand, through a mix of sites and two strategic communities for long-term growth. Policies support affordable, specialist, and custom-build housing, informed by local evidence, with viability safeguards to maintain deliverability. Strategic site policies add detail on housing mix and specialist provision without imposing unreasonable burdens. Environmental and thematic policies enhance quality and sustainability, while infrastructure and community policies are proportionate and unlikely to hinder delivery. Overall, the strategy is expected to have **significant positive effects** on meeting housing needs and creating sustainable communities, with no major viability risks.

## 9.4 Health and wellbeing

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.4.1 A feature of the Plan is the expectation that the two new strategic growth sites at Land West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures will provide new healthcare facilities directly on-site, rather than relying only on financial contributions to expand existing services. This marks a departure from the current Local Plan and aligns the district with good practice approaches to planning for health infrastructure in new communities. By requiring new GP surgeries and enabling the expansion of existing primary care facilities through developer funding, the Plan seeks to address one of the most persistent community concerns: the strain on primary healthcare capacity.
- 9.4.2 The locational strategy ensures new communities can access existing healthcare by ensuring growth is directed to sustainable locations close to existing local centres and are designed to be walkable, placing them close to homes, schools, shops and community spaces. In the case of the two new settlements new healthcare provision is proposed on site.
- 9.4.3 This supports more equitable access to care, particularly for those with limited mobility, without access to private vehicles, or living with long-term conditions that are sensitive to travel barriers. The creation of walkable neighbourhoods contributes to ensuring that daily needs (including healthcare) can be met locally, reducing car dependency and improving the likelihood of early and preventive care.
- 9.4.4 Nevertheless, it is recognised that the early phases of development may place additional pressure on existing GP practices before new facilities become fully operational. Such transitional impacts are typical of large-scale growth and will need careful coordination with healthcare providers. However, these pressures are expected to be temporary.
- 9.4.5 The Plan introduces a significant level of planned green and blue infrastructure provision in Blaby. The proposed Strategic and non-strategic sites are required to deliver significant amounts of greenspace (in some case up to 50%), incorporating parks, natural habitats, green corridors, sports facilities, children's play areas, youth spaces, allotments and private garden space. This level of provision surpasses existing local standards and will provide wide-ranging benefits for physical and mental health.
- 9.4.6 Large, connected green spaces encourage physical activity, reduce stress, and promote social cohesion by offering attractive and safe places for recreation and interaction. The integration of blue infrastructure and natural flood management enhances resilience to climate impacts while also improving biodiversity and creating natural environments for residents. Taken together, these requirements have the potential to deliver substantial health gains.

- 9.4.7 Housing is one of the strongest determinants of health. The Plan adopts a more specific and inclusive approach to housing provision than the current plan. It mandates a minimum of 25% affordable housing on strategic sites, requires compliance with accessible housing standards (including M4(2) and M4(3)), and introduces policy provisions for older people's housing, bungalows, wheelchair-adaptable homes and specialist accommodation.
- 9.4.8 These measures help ensure that housing is suitable across different life stages and for those with mobility or sensory impairments. They directly support healthy ageing by enabling people to remain in their homes for longer. The inclusion of self- and custom-build plots and dedicated Gypsy and Traveller accommodation further broadens the district's housing offer and enhances social inclusion. By expanding the supply of affordable and accessible homes, the Plan also makes an important contribution to reducing health inequalities.
- 9.4.9 The Plan includes allocations for employment land and emphasises the importance of locating jobs close to where people live. This approach improves economic security, reduces the cost of travel to work, and supports a healthier work–life balance.
- 9.4.10 Economic stability is strongly correlated with better health outcomes, and the Plan's employment strategy therefore represents a positive determinant of long-term health.
- 9.4.11 The Plan requires new primary and secondary schools, community centres, cultural spaces and local shops to be embedded within new neighbourhoods. These facilities support strong social networks and reduce isolation by providing places for people to meet, learn, participate in cultural activity and access essentials without long journeys.
- 9.4.12 Community cohesion, civic engagement and feelings of belonging are all important determinants of wellbeing, and the Plan's approach seeks to combat car-dependent patterns of growth that have characterised previous decades.
- 9.4.13 Although the overarching direction of the Plan is positive for health outcomes, several potential adverse effects require consideration and mitigation. Some of these are inherent to large-scale development, while others reflect the concerns raised through community engagement.
- 9.4.14 The most significant risks relate to short-term pressures on healthcare and school capacity. Until new GP surgeries and schools are delivered, existing facilities may experience increased demand. The Plan requires early phasing of key infrastructure, but the sequencing of development will be critical to minimising temporary gaps in provision.
- 9.4.15 In transport terms, the early stages of development may increase congestion, noise and air pollution before the full network of active and sustainable transport infrastructure is in place.

- 9.4.16 The Plan's strong emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport—supported by mobility hubs and high-quality strategic connections—should reduce car dependency in the medium to long term. However, interim impacts on amenity are likely during construction and early occupation.
- 9.4.17 Construction activity itself presents another source of potential negative health effects, including noise, dust, vibration, heavy vehicle movements and disruption to everyday life. These impacts can be particularly concerning for communities. Detailed Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs), required by policy, will be essential in ensuring that such impacts are controlled and minimised.
- 9.4.18 The transformation of land around villages into new settlements will also result in a permanent loss of open countryside. While large areas of new greenspace will be created in some areas, the change in landscape character and reduced access to informal rural walking routes may be perceived as a loss of amenity by existing communities.
- 9.4.19 Some residents are also likely to have concerns about air quality, the cost of living, energy efficiency and the risk of fuel poverty. The Plan responds by making provision for new energy-efficient homes, reducing reliance on car travel through the provision of walkable neighbourhoods and supporting improvements to active travel infrastructure, and enhancing access to local services, which can collectively reduce household costs and improve resilience.

### **Additional Implications**

- 9.4.20 In addition to the impacts associated with the spatial strategy and allocations, a range of other plan policies combine to bring about positive synergistic effects upon health and wellbeing (for both planned development and ad hoc developments).
- 9.4.21 Collectively, the housing policies are likely to have significant positive effects on health, as suitable accommodation is a critical component of long term health. Some important measures of note are as follows:
- 25% affordable housing minimum at strategic sites
  - Accessible housing (M4(2) and M4(3) thresholds)
  - 5% homes for older people on the largest sites
  - Self and custom build allocation.
  - Gypsy/Traveller provision
- 9.4.22 Together, these policies are likely to allow more vulnerable groups to gain access to suitable housing, and the provision of greater choice and affordability that can reduce health inequalities.

- 9.4.23 Policy S6: Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning seeks to ensure that new large developments deliver schools, GP facilities, community hubs and mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods.
- 9.4.24 Policy HW1: Healthy Communities requires development to promote active, healthy, safe and inclusive communities, protect residents from pollution, improve air quality, and ensure access to facilities that support wellbeing.
- 9.4.25 Open Space, Sport and Recreation (HW2), Mandates provision of parks, natural greenspace, children’s play, youth play, allotments and sports pitches using quantified standards per 1,000 residents. These standards directly support physical activity, mental wellbeing and social interaction.
- 9.4.26 Air Quality (HW4) : Requires development to avoid worsening air quality, mandates assessments for major schemes, and focuses on protecting AQMAs. This directly supports respiratory and cardiovascular health and reduces environmental inequality.
- 9.4.27 Policy S15: Design and Place-making. Requires well designed, resilient and inclusive places that encourage walking, social interaction, safety, surveillance, and access to green space. Designing for health is embedded through walkable neighbourhoods and safe public spaces.
- 9.4.28 ENV2: Green and Blue Infrastructure requires the provision of strategic green and blue infrastructure networks, biodiversity net gain, green corridors and natural flood management. Strategic sites must provide significant greenspace, delivering major improvements in access to nature, climate resilience, and mental health.

### **Overall effects**

- 9.4.29 Across its policies, allocations and spatial strategy, the Local Plan offers a comprehensive and forward-looking framework for promoting health and wellbeing. It directly addresses the structural determinants of health—ranging from housing and access to healthcare to green space provision, economic security and transport.
- 9.4.30 While negative effects related to construction, early service capacity and localised impacts on amenity are anticipated, these are largely temporary, manageable and proportionate to the scale of development. They are also considerably outweighed by the long-term benefits, which are substantial, district-wide and structurally embedded in the Plan’s policies.
- 9.4.31 On balance, the Plan is expected to deliver **significant positive effects** upon health and wellbeing in Blaby. However, short term **minor negative effects** are predicted alongside these to reflect the issues discussed above.

## 9.5 Biodiversity and geodiversity

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.5.1 The growth strategy is anticipated to lead to increased cumulative pressures on ecological networks and habitat connectivity. While much of Blaby remains relatively unconstrained in relation to this aspect, development within proximity to specific sites has the potential to result in localised issues pre-mitigation.
- 9.5.2 Whilst the majority of housing or mixed use allocations are a significant distance from SSSIs, several allocations lie in proximity to SSSIs, including those associated with Croft and Huncote Quarry, Croft Pasture, Narborough Bog and Burbage Wood and Aston Firs. In particular, land south of Narborough Road presents a risk of adverse effects on Croft and Huncote Quarry SSSI through indirect pathways such as dust, noise, pollution and hydrological change. Other nearby sites may similarly increase recreational pressure or affect water quality and flow. Early engagement with Natural England highlights the need for enhanced SuDS, water treatment and measures to manage visitor pressure.
- 9.5.3 At the local scale, potential indirect effects on designated sites such as Goss Meadows LNR will need to be addressed through careful design, including the control of lighting, noise and access. The presence of priority habitats is generally limited across the site portfolio, although there are notable constraints at specific locations. For example, land north of The Home Farm contains semi-improved grassland and lowland fen habitats of high ecological value, requiring retention and buffering.
- 9.5.4 Elsewhere, smaller areas of woodland provide opportunities to strengthen green corridors and ecological connectivity.
- 9.5.5 The overall scale of growth introduces potential cumulative effects on designated sites, priority habitats and the wider ecological network. Particular attention is required for land at Western Park Golf Course, which adjoins Kirby Firth LNR. While development is limited to access infrastructure, there remains potential for indirect effects, including disturbance and increased recreational pressure.
- 9.5.6 More generally, the redevelopment of the former golf course sites highlights the need to balance existing ecological value with opportunities for enhancement. Such sites can support urban biodiversity but also offer scope for habitat creation and improved connectivity where brought forward as part of a coordinated, landscape-led approach.
- 9.5.7 Overall, the draft Plan approach provides a clear opportunity to deliver BNG and strengthen ecological networks at a district scale. Nevertheless, the proximity of some allocations to sensitive receptors and the cumulative effects of growth introduce risks of localised impact.

- 9.5.8 With regards to proposed employment sites, there is some overlap with Local Wildlife sites, as well as features such as hedgerows, trees, and watercourses indicating a moderate local biodiversity value, with potential impacts arising from habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance associated with employment uses. The cumulative effect of development across multiple sites increases the risk of incremental loss of locally important habitats.
- 9.5.9 The initial employment site proposed at North of Glenfield, is located close to, or adjoining, Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), such as ‘Groby Glenfield Parish Boundary Hedgerow’ and is in close proximity to others such as ‘Rothley Brook’, as well as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) especially along the north boundary of the site. These features suggest that the site has existing biodiversity value at a local level, particularly in terms of linear habitats and connectivity. Employment development has potential to affect these features if not sensitively designed, particularly through land take and increased disturbance. However, the Plan recognises these issues, and the site area has been modified to exclude the LWS.
- 9.5.10 There is potential to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) onsite through retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows, alongside the creation of new green infrastructure within the site. Indeed, the site policy recognises the need to retain such linear features.
- 9.5.11 The Whetstone Pastures site (mixed use) contains a number of LWS, notably the Dismantled Railway & Whetstone Gorse, as well as Willoughby Waterleys Meadow, and others including mature trees. Given the large scale of the site, it should be possible to avoid and mitigate significant negative biodiversity effects.
- 9.5.12 Indeed, the site policy states that key features will need to be retained and enhanced, and acknowledges that the site presents an opportunity for strategic BNG. There is also support for flood management using natural solutions, which will be more likely to support biodiversity compared to hard engineered solutions.
- 9.5.13 Despite the localised challenges discussed above, the overall scale of development proposed through the strategy is large enough to provide significant opportunities for a landscape-scale approach to environmental enhancement. The strategic sites in particular offer opportunities to implement significant areas of green and blue infrastructure enhancement, which should help to attract positive effects in the longer term with regards to biodiversity.

### **Additional implications**

- 9.5.14 Policy S6: ‘Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites’ requires strategic masterplans to create an accessible, high quality, multi-functional green and blue infrastructure network that reflects locally identified opportunities in the Leicestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

- 9.5.15 The policy also requires development to include green and blue infrastructure that identifies the scale, distribution, type and design of the biodiversity net gain it will bring forward. This is considered a benefit for biodiversity and geodiversity by ensuring that larger scale development fully appreciates and reflects local biodiversity and geodiversity importance through design and seeks to enhance it where appropriate.
- 9.5.16 Biodiversity in development design is further considered through Policy S15: 'Design and Place-making', which seeks to ensure new development enhances the surrounding physical environment.
- 9.5.17 This includes encouraging development to enhance local biodiversity, fully regarding the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This could incorporate measures such as bird safe glass, hedgehog highways, bird and bat boxes, and swales and permanently wet attenuation basins. Biodiversity in development design is also considered through Policy H3: 'Housing Mix and Density', which outlines support for lower densities where development would come forward within proximity to biodiversity constraints. Both of these policies work to support biodiversity and geodiversity by reducing the potential for adverse effects on biodiversity value.
- 9.5.18 It is noted that where there are local issues in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity (as discussed above), the specific site allocation policies make appropriate provisions. For example:
- Strategic Development Site – Whetstone Pastures includes the need for development design to include informal open space for habitat creation. Additionally, key ecological features will be retained where practicable; and a habitat management and monitoring plan will be required to be submitted alongside the planning application. A large amount of greenspace will be required on site, which offers potential for net gain.
  - Strategic Development Site – Land South of Whetstone Strategic Site indicates development will need to be sensitively designed in relation to the Whetstone Brook Local Wildlife Site.
  - Strategic Development Site – Land West of Stoney Stanton requires development to be sensitively designed in relation to the SSSI in proximity, and ecological features will need to be retained through the development (including local wildlife sites).
  - Strategic Development Site – Land to the North of the A47 Hinckley Road, Kirby Muxloe Strategic Site [Hastings Fields Phase 2] sets out the requirement for development to retain the Oaks Farm Stream and Woodland candidate Local Wildlife site.

- Many of the site allocation policies also include the need for green and blue infrastructure to be integrated into the development design proposal for the site, in line with the Leicestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Additionally, a number of strategic development site policies require development proposals to retain important non-designated ecological features, including (but not limited to) existing trees and hedgerows, as well as including stipulations in relation to planting new vegetation.
  - Several of the strategic development site policies also require the submission of different supportive plans alongside planning applications. This includes Construction and Environment Management Plans (CEMPs), Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plans (BEMPs), Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMPs) and / or Landscape Ecology Management Plans (LEMPs). It is anticipated that through these specific policy provisions, the potential for negative effects on biodiversity and geodiversity arising from development is reduced.
- 9.5.19 The ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment’ chapter contains numerous policies that are directly applicable to the biodiversity and geodiversity topic. Policy ENV1: ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ is the main policy linked to this topic – which seeks to protect and improve biodiversity and geodiversity in Blaby as far as is possible and appropriate. This includes ensuring development adequately and proportionately mitigates adverse impacts where they are unavoidable – with financial compensation being a final resort. The policy also outlines that development leading to adverse effects on SSSIs will be refused unless its associated benefits clearly outweigh the effect it would have on the designation or within the wider SSSI network.
- 9.5.20 Furthermore, the policy indicates that other designations in Blaby, including Regionally Important Geological Sites, will be protected and enhanced where appropriate. The policy also includes the need to achieve biodiversity and geodiversity improvements. As such, it is considered likely that positive effects will come forward in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity, given the focus on protecting and enhancing important designations and value.
- 9.5.21 The remaining policies within the Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment chapter also contribute towards biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy ENV2 ‘Green and Blue Infrastructure’ seeks to protect and enhance the green and blue infrastructure network across Blaby, and deliver biodiversity net gain and support ecosystem services. Additionally, Policy ENV3 ‘Trees and Hedgerows’ outlines protection for existing trees and hedgerows and the increased planting levels associated with new development. These policies are anticipated to have a positive effect in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity through protecting and enhancing the biodiversity network in Blaby. This is anticipated to help maintain and improve biodiversity connectivity and value, as important features and areas will maintain their contribution to the network, and new features and areas have the potential to support increased species movement.

- 9.5.22 Wider plan policies are also anticipated to have an impact on biodiversity and geodiversity. This is largely through the creation of green and blue infrastructure, which is likely to include areas of habitat coverage. Additionally, green and blue infrastructure is anticipated to contribute towards biodiversity connectivity by acting as corridors between important habitats and designations – allowing for safe species movement.
- 9.5.23 Furthermore, development through the wider plan policies is required to deliver biodiversity net gains or biodiversity improvements. For example, this includes through the delivery of sustainable urban drainage systems or other flood management opportunities (Policy CC2 ‘Flood Risk’, and CC3 Policy ‘Water Quality, Supply and Wastewater’).

### Overall effects

- 9.5.24 In conclusion, while the anticipated growth in Blaby is expected to increase cumulative pressure on ecological networks and some sensitive areas, the proposed strategy utilises the scale of development to implement a landscape-scale approach to environmental enhancement. By prioritising the protection and improvement of biodiversity and geodiversity through overarching development policies and site-specific allocation policies, the plan, together with wider legislative requirements to secure a biodiversity net gain on development sites will ensure that any adverse effects are adequately addressed and achieve biodiversity and geodiversity benefits – including biodiversity net gain in the longer term.
- 9.5.25 Furthermore, the integration of specific biodiversity and geodiversity focused policies helps to promote multi-functional green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity-sensitive design measures across Blaby, which is anticipated to contribute towards maintaining vital habitat connectivity and supporting species protection and movement.
- 9.5.26 Ultimately, through the combination of protective and enhancing policies, overarching development policies, and site-specific stipulations, the strategy is anticipated to result in a **minor positive effect** on Blaby’s biodiversity and geodiversity in the long term.
- 9.5.27 However, it is likely that short term **minor negative effects** will arise as a result of construction phases (and before net gain schemes are mature).

## 9.6 Cultural heritage

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.6.1 The strategy involves residential and employment land development in proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets, areas, and features. This includes listed buildings (such as the Grade II listed Whetstone Pastures Residential Home), scheduled monuments (such as Sapcote Castle and Moat), conservation areas (such as the Willoughby Waterleys Conservation Area), and non-designated local historic environment records.

- 9.6.2 As such, growth has the potential to bring forward risks to both the physical fabric and the setting of these assets, both of which could have an influence over significance.
- 9.6.3 Whilst most development sites are not directly constrained by designated heritage assets, a number lie close to listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas.
- 9.6.4 Several sites are also characterised by historic features such as field patterns, ridge and furrow and potential for archaeology. Where the potential for effects exists the accompanying site policies require consideration of the measures needed to mitigate impacts on heritage.
- 9.6.5 More notable heritage sensitivity relates to the strategic allocation at Whetstone Pastures, which contains a Grade II listed building within its boundary and lies directly beside a conservation area. Development (both housing and employment) here will require careful, heritage-led design to ensure that the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area are protected. The accompanying policy requires heritage and archaeological assessments to be prepared and also strong landscaped edges to protect the character of settlements.
- 9.6.6 Several other sites also fall within 200–400 metres of scheduled monuments such as land south of Hinckley Road in Sapcote, or Grade II\* and Grade II listed buildings. Although direct physical harm is unlikely as a result of the development of proposed sites (although there is a risk of loss of below ground archaeology linked to the Scheduled Monument in the Hinckley Road, Sapcote site). However, for most sites close to heritage assets development could still alter views, visual character, and site context. These effects are likely to be capable of some mitigation but will require detailed assessments, sensitive layouts, and appropriate landscaping to maintain local distinctiveness. Several site policies refer to the need to respect designated and non-designated heritage assets, including the need to undertake a detailed heritage assessment.
- 9.6.7 Most of the predicted effects relate to changes in setting rather than direct loss or alteration of heritage assets. These can generally be minimised through mitigation measures such as landscape buffers, design, sympathetic materials, and the retention of historic features. Importantly, the scale of development also creates opportunities to enhance local historic character, integrate heritage features into green infrastructure, and improve public access to cultural assets where appropriate.
- 9.6.8 Employment on land north of Glenfield is within approximately 65m to a Scheduled Monument, the moated site and garden enclosure at Glenfield and Conservation Area.
- 9.6.9 There are several listed buildings in the surrounding area, including Grade II listed buildings within Glenfield, although no listed buildings are located within the site itself.

- 9.6.10 Given the site's relationship with existing urban development, the historic environment in this location is already influenced by modern land uses, which limits the sensitivity of the wider setting. It is anticipated that there is potential for minor negative effects on cultural heritage due to potential impacts on nearby heritage assets, however no direct impacts or loss of designated assets are likely.
- 9.6.11 The overall scale of growth, particularly in relation to potential greenfield and edge-of-settlement development, increases the likelihood of encountering previously unrecorded archaeological remains, and may lead to cumulative impacts on the area's historic character.
- 9.6.12 Overall, the combined effects are predicted to be **minor negative**, driven mainly by potential impacts on the setting of heritage assets rather than direct harm. With appropriate assessment and design (as required by thematic and site-specific policies in the Plan), the effects should be possible to manage to avoid significant harm.

#### **Additional implications**

- 9.6.13 Policy S6 Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites requires strategic masterplans to be informed by a technical and design evidence base – including an Urban Design Framework and design principles, in order to identify how a site protects and enhances heritage assets. This is anticipated to help further mitigate any adverse impacts on heritage assets, areas and features, through ensuring that strategic development does not detract from their historic significance.
- 9.6.14 Additionally, several strategic development site policies require development proposals to consider the impacts and mitigation required to address potential impacts on specific heritage assets (both designated and non-designated). Through these measures it is anticipated that impacts to heritage within site boundaries, and within proximity, will be appropriately mitigated.
- 9.6.15 The 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment' chapter contains a suite of policies that are directly applicable to the cultural heritage topic.
- 9.6.16 Specifically, Policy ENV5 'Heritage and Culture' works to ensure that the historic environment of Blaby is maintained and enhanced through development. The policy outlines that the Council is taking a positive approach in relation to the conservation of heritage assets, including (but not limited to) through ensuring new development makes a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, avoids harm to designated heritage assets, and promotes heritage assets as tourism opportunities where appropriate. As such, it is considered likely that positive effects will come forward through development in relation to cultural heritage, given that the protection of important assets (both designated and non-designated) is a focus of the Council.

- 9.6.17 The remaining policies within the ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment’ chapter also contribute towards cultural heritage. For example, Policy ENV2 ‘Green and Blue Infrastructure’ seeks to protect and enhance the green and blue infrastructure network across Blaby; Policy ENV3 ‘Trees and Hedgerows’ outlines protection for existing trees and hedgerows including those valued for their historic value and the increased planting levels associated with new development; and ENV4 Policy ‘Landscape and Settlement Character’ seeks to protect the individual character and setting of each settlement in Blaby.
- 9.6.18 These policies are anticipated to have a positive effect in relation to cultural heritage through maintaining and enhancing the settings of specific heritage assets and the wider historic landscape. This is further anticipated to preserve the historic significance of these assets.
- 9.6.19 Wider plan policies are also anticipated to have an effect on cultural heritage. Policy H3 ‘Housing Mix and Density’ indicates that lower housing densities will be accepted where the development site has associated heritage issues, or is within proximity to heritage constraints. Additionally, Policy R6 ‘Supporting Sustainable Tourism, Leisure and Visitor Development’ indicates that development proposals for new tourist and visitor facilities will be expected to deliver heritage conservation benefits (where appropriate). This demonstrates that cultural heritage is important within Blaby, and that development needs to maintain and enhance heritage assets, their setting and their significance as far as possible.

### **Overall effects**

- 9.6.20 In conclusion, the spatial strategy proposed for Blaby recognises that large-scale growth has the potential to result in minor negative effects on the physical fabric and setting of cultural heritage. However, these risks are considered to be addressed through the policy framework, which works to mitigate the potential for adverse effects. This is achieved through requiring development design proposals to be informed by technical design evidence, and the inclusion of site-specific stipulations within site allocation policies (for example, outlining the need for heritage and archaeological assessments and CEMPs to manage construction).
- 9.6.21 Furthermore, the integration of the wider plan policies, including the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure, is anticipated to contribute towards maintaining and enhancing cultural heritage through helping to protect and enhance historic settings.
- 9.6.22 By prioritising the conservation and promotion of heritage assets, areas and features (designated and non-designated), the Plan is likely to facilitate some improvements to the setting of heritage in parts of the district. This helps to offset the residual negative effects that are inevitable in other locations that are subject to development. On balance, a **neutral effect** is predicted overall.

## 9.7 Waste

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.7.1 Waste generation is an inevitable consequence of growth and is relevant to every stage of the development lifecycle, including design, construction, operation, and eventually demolition or reuse. At the operation stage this includes the storage, collection, and disposal of household waste.
- 9.7.2 The management of waste, including minimisation, re-use, recycling, and recovery, is governed by national policy and legislation and is implemented at the site-level through planning conditions and developer waste strategies, which are considered during the masterplanning stage of development. Due to this, significant negative effects are unlikely to arise as a result of the Local Plan. In this context, it is reasonable to assume that the level of waste generated will correspond to the quantum of development. A greater number of households is also likely to generate more waste compared to the same population being housed in fewer homes. The same is also generally true for larger homes versus smaller homes provided that recycling facilities are equal.
- 9.7.3 Focusing on waste generated during the operation stage of development, the smaller sites in proximity to existing settlements will likely be included in existing (or expanded) waste collection rounds for these settlements. However, for the larger strategic sites (Land West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures) entirely new waste collection rounds will likely be required. It is also recognised that strategic sites can present an opportunity to incorporate innovative waste management practices and technologies. The level of growth proposed could also trigger the need for a new waste handling facility (or increased capacity at existing facilities), though this would likely be beyond the plan period when most growth occurs at the strategic sites.
- 9.7.4 In addition to domestic waste generation, there will be an increase in employment waste during construction and operation phases.
- 9.7.5 Employment uses would generate commercial and industrial waste, the majority of which would be managed through established waste collection and disposal systems.
- 9.7.6 The sites involved are located within areas that are served by existing municipal and commercial waste infrastructure. It is therefore likely that waste can be effectively managed.
- 9.7.7 The Plan contains a range of other policies that will influence the impact of the spatial strategy and site allocation development in terms of waste management.
- 9.7.8 Notably this includes Policy INF11: Waste Management, Collection and Recycling which requires major schemes to submit a Waste Management Strategy covering construction and operation and encouraging on-site waste reduction and management measures.

- 9.7.9 Several site-specific policies also set out the requirement for Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) and long-term stewardship, which should help to integrate waste minimisation and materials management throughout project lifecycles.
- 9.7.10 More broadly, Policy S15: Design and Place Making requires development to facilitate effective waste management and recycling across the lifecycle of developments. Complementing this are principles embedded within Policy S6: Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites, which encourages holistic neighbourhood planning and understanding of utilities and infrastructure requirements (which includes waste management and collection). Policy CC1: Planning for Climate Change further supports waste objectives by supporting the re-use of existing buildings and materials.

### **Additional implications**

- 9.7.11 In addition to the impacts discussed above in relation to the spatial strategy and allocated sites, the broad principles and requirements relating to waste management will apply to all other developments across the District. There is not a major shift in policy compared to the current position, but nevertheless, positive effects would be anticipated, especially where there are firmer requirements to demonstrate compliance (i.e. through CEMPs).
- 9.7.12 A selection of other policies are also likely to have indirect effects with regards to waste management, for example:
- 9.7.13 The Green and Blue Infrastructure Policy (ENV2) and water policies (CC2), Flood Risk Management and (CC3), Water Quality, Supply and Wastewater prioritise natural approaches to flood management. These policies indirectly support waste aims by encouraging nature-based solutions reduces the need to capture and treat water offsite at waste water treatment works. Conversely, the expansion of green infrastructure and active travel networks could possibly involve imported materials, aggregates and other materials which could generate waste during construction.
- 9.7.14 Encouraging the vitality of town, district and local centres (chapter 9 policies) will help to reuse existing buildings and infrastructure, which is positive in terms of reducing construction waste.
- 9.7.15 Conversely, densification can make servicing and collection of waste more difficult (but this will need to be managed through adhering to design and waste policies discussed above).

### **Overall effects**

- 9.7.16 Whilst the Plan delivers new homes and employment sites, waste generation will likely be integrated effectively into existing waste collection regimes and is not considered likely to have significant effects on capacity over the plan period. Furthermore, all developments will be required to address waste and recycling considerations, to implement design that allows effective storage and servicing and encourage efficient use of resources.

- 9.7.17 This will help to ensure that additional waste streams are well managed. For certain developments, there are requirements for Construction Environmental Management Plans which will help to demonstrate compliance at construction phases.
- 9.7.18 Whilst growth will inevitably increase resource consumption, these policies should minimise additional waste, promote reuse and recycling, and support sustainable waste management over the lifecycle of developments. Several plan policies are also likely to have indirect positive effects in terms of waste reduction. Therefore, overall, **neutral effects** are anticipated with regard to waste.

## 9.8 Minerals

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.8.1 The spatial strategy includes housing and employment development in several locations that overlap with mineral safeguarded areas (MSAs). Several sites fall within MSAs for sand and gravel, almost entirely or partly.
- 9.8.2 The primary risk associated with the strategy in relation to minerals is the potential sterilisation of these resources, which occurs if these materials cannot be extracted before housing or employment construction begins.
- 9.8.3 However, it is recognised that minerals safeguarded areas cover a large part of the district, including these undeveloped areas, and therefore the potential sterilisation of resources is largely unavoidable if Blaby is to meet its identified housing and employment needs. It is also acknowledged that workable minerals may not be present in all safeguarded areas, and there are measures that can be taken to mitigate effects. For example, Mineral resources are protected through the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. In accordance with Policy M11 (of the minerals and waste plan) there is a need for sites that overlap with mineral safeguarding areas to undertake a minerals assessment.
- 9.8.4 Additionally, Strategic Development Site – Land West of Stoney Stanton requires development proposals to include measures to prevent the sterilisation of mineral resources within the site boundaries and within 500m of the site. These measures are anticipated to help reduce impacts to mineral resources, by ensuring that appropriate investigations are undertaken to understand the potential location and quality of resources and avoid their sterilisation.
- 9.8.5 Furthermore, the Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment chapter contains Policy ENV6: ‘Mineral Safeguarding Areas’. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals in areas identified for mineral safeguarding do not needlessly sterilise resources of national or local significance, in line with the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. As such, it is considered that the potential for the loss of resources (associated with the spatial strategy) is reduced.

## Additional implications

- 9.8.6 Outside of the strategic development site policies and the Policy ‘Mineral Safeguarding Areas’ there are few stipulations made in relation to mineral resources within the Plan.
- 9.8.7 However, it is considered that wider policies could deliver benefits in relation to this theme. For example, defining, safeguarding and enhancing green and blue infrastructure through Policy ENV 2: ‘Green and Blue Infrastructure’ has the potential to safeguard important resources that underly the network, thus saving them from sterilisation.

## Overall effects

- 9.8.8 In conclusion, the proposed spatial strategy seeks to balance the delivery of essential housing and development against the protection of mineral resources, acknowledging that overlaps with safeguarded areas are largely unavoidable due to the scale of identified need and widespread coverage of MSAs. To mitigate the risk of resource sterilisation, the Plan aligns with the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, requiring comprehensive minerals assessments for strategic sites. These assessments, mandated under Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, ensure that the location and quality of resources are understood before construction begins. Where necessary and appropriate, specific measures have been included within site allocation policies, to further prevent resource loss.
- 9.8.9 Furthermore, the potential for the loss of minerals is reduced through complementary policies, where the safeguarding of landscape features, soils, and green and blue infrastructure.
- 9.8.10 Ultimately, by integrating site-specific investigations and broader environmental protections, and aligning with county-wide policy, the Plan aims to meet development requirements while ensuring that the loss of workable minerals is minimised. As such, broadly **neutral effects** are predicted with regards to this topic.

## 9.9 Soil and landscape

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.9.1 With regard to landscape sensitivity to residential development<sup>18</sup>, approximately 50% of the allocated sites are concluded as having a “medium” sensitivity, whilst the remaining sites are identified as having a “low-medium” sensitivity. Mitigation will be required to minimise impacts on landscape character – particularly with respect to the “medium” sensitivity sites.

<sup>18</sup> Blaby District Council (2020): Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, available to access via [this link](#)

- 9.9.2 None of the sites are considered to have a “high” sensitivity, impacts on landscape character are less likely to be significant for individual sites. However, Countesthorpe, Huncote and Cosby which could bring cumulative negative changes to village character. Residual effects will be largely dependent on development design and masterplanning, which will be influenced by several plan policies.
- 9.9.3 All development will need to be guided by Policy S15: Design and Place Making, which seeks to achieve visually attractive developments that take account of landscape features. Likewise, Policy ENV4: Landscape and Settlement Character seeks to protect and enhance settlement and landscape character across the district.
- 9.9.4 Policy ENV2: Green and Blue Infrastructure requires development to incorporate multi-functional green and blue infrastructure, with specific reference to responding to landscape, townscape and historic character. Complementing this Policy ENV3: Trees and Hedgerows is also important as it guides developers to protect features with landscape importance and to achieve a gain in coverage if possible, which will benefit urban areas and help to preserve rural fringe environments where development is planned.
- 9.9.5 Policy S6: Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites will be important for allocated sites. This policy requires a holistic approach to be taken that respects local landscape, settlement characteristics and implements high quality environments. The need to deliver a green infrastructure strategy and encouraging natural drainage management systems will also have positive effects on landscape and soil.
- 9.9.6 The strategic site policies introduce specific requirements that reflect local circumstances and for all sites includes consideration of green infrastructure, landscaping and the retention of important natural and built features. The requirement to submit a landscape and environment management plan with developments will help to ensure compliance, as will the need for long term stewardship arrangements on certain sites.
- 9.9.7 The two largest strategic sites – Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026) (5,165 homes, of which around 965 in the plan period)) and Whetstone Pastures (WHE027) (4,500 homes, of which around 800 in the plan period) fall within the category of “low-medium”, and “medium” landscape sensitivity respectively. Given their scale and prominence relative to existing settlements, development of these sites has the potential to result in a significant change to local landscape character.
- 9.9.8 The Plan includes policies for each of these strategic sites that seek to address potential impacts upon landscape. There is an explicit requirement to deliver multi-functional green infrastructure on the Stoney Stanton site, with a key aim to provide a buffer between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. This will also be achieved through sensitive design that reflects settlement characteristics, maintains open views and retains trees and vegetation.

- 9.9.9 The Whetstone Pastures policy requires development to respect local character and be designed according to 'Garden Village' principles. This will involve significant open space, green and blue infrastructure and appropriate landscape buffers.
- 9.9.10 The Green Wedge, Areas of Separation and Countryside policies will also be important given that there will be increased urban development over the plan period. These policies will both ensure that certain settlements are not inappropriately developed and / or merge with nearby settlements.
- 9.9.11 In terms of soil resources, and with a focus on agricultural land classification (ALC), all but one of the sites are predominantly (>50%) underlain by grades 1-3 agricultural land. Therefore, development will likely lead to the loss of agricultural land. However, it is not currently known whether this grade 3 agricultural land is 3a (BMV) or 3b (poorer quality), and a degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect. In addition, it is recognised that the availability of brownfield land in the district is limited. Therefore, while the loss of agricultural land will be largely unavoidable in order to meet housing need, it will nonetheless result in the significant permanent loss of this natural resource.

#### **Additional implications**

- 9.9.12 For ad hoc development, the same thematic policies discussed above will apply, and there will be protections in place to ensure that significant effects upon landscape and townscape can be avoided or mitigated.
- 9.9.13 Policies that directly protect the countryside and / or aim to retain important gaps between built up areas are likely to have benefits for both soil and landscape character. This primarily includes: Policy S16: Green Wedges, Policy S17: Areas of Separation, and Policy S18: Countryside.
- 9.9.14 Several policies also have relevance for landscape protection for other types of land use development. For example:
- Policy CC4: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy requires development to mitigate visual impacts, largely reiterating national policy on renewable energy.
  - Policy S14: Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show Persons requires that sites are well related to settlements and do not have significant impacts on landscape.
  - Policy R6: Supporting Sustainable Tourism, Leisure and Visitor Development requires consideration of impacts on rural character.
- 9.9.15 Several policies are likely to have indirect positive effects on landscape and townscape character. For example:
- Policies that seek to protect and enhance open space, leisure and recreation will help to maintain green spaces.
  - Encouraging the use of natural flood management schemes.

- Retail and centres policies continue to support the vitality of town, district and local centres, which will help to improve townscape whilst reducing pressure for development in out of centre locations that could be more likely to affect landscape character (on urban fringe sites for example).

### Overall effects

- 9.9.16 The spatial strategy (and allocated sites) direct development to areas that have medium or low–medium sensitivity, meaning significant landscape impacts are unlikely if mitigation is applied. However, cumulative effects around Blaby, Countesthorpe, Huncote, and Cosby could erode village character, and the two strategic sites—Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures— could alter local landscape character if not appropriately delivered due to their scale.
- 9.9.17 The Local Plan includes strong policies on design, landscape character, green and blue infrastructure, and tree cover, alongside site-specific requirements and long-term stewardship, which will help manage these risks. While the loss of agricultural land is largely unavoidable, policy emphasis on green infrastructure, natural drainage, and heritage integration will help to offset visual and environmental impacts. Overall, successful masterplanning and adherence to these policies will be critical to preserving landscape character and creating high-quality, distinctive places.
- 9.9.18 On balance, **minor negative effects** are predicted with regards to landscape (factoring in policy requirements) and **significant negative effects** are predicted with regards to soil resources.

## 9.10 Environmental protection: Water quality

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.10.1 The level of growth will increase demands for drinking water and wastewater treatment. At the scale of growth involved, many of the smaller sites located near existing settlements could be accommodated within current treatment capacity. However, the option still includes two strategic sites—Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026) and Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)—where the scale of development could require upgrades to existing treatment plants. This introduces potential delays to delivery and highlights the need for early and ongoing coordination with water utilities to ensure that development phasing aligns with infrastructure readiness.
- 9.10.2 In terms of water quality, several proposed sites are crossed by or directly border local watercourses, including Whetstone Brook and Thurlaston Brook. Development on such land presents risks of pollution and increased surface water runoff.

- 9.10.3 For Whetstone Pastures, Land south of Whetstone, Land south of Abbott Way, and Land south of Narborough Road, the hydrological connections heighten the need for robust protective design measures such as buffer zones and high-quality (Sustainable Drainage Strategy) SuDS to ensure water quality is not adversely affected. While none of the sites fall within Source Protection Zones, these hydrological interactions still introduce vulnerabilities that require mitigation.
- 9.10.4 A more sensitive issue arises around Narborough and Enderby, where several sites lie within the Impact Risk Zone for Narborough Bogs SSSI, an ecologically significant area characterised by upland fen, wet woodland, and Leicestershire's only peat bog. The SSSI is already in unfavourable condition partly because of altered hydrology, eutrophication, and diffuse pollution, making it particularly susceptible to further disruption. Development at Hayes Gardens (NAR028), could present a risk, although initial evidence gathering indicates that surface water would discharge to watercourses downstream of the SSSI. Nonetheless until this is confirmed the precautionary principle should be applied and enhanced SuDS and carefully managed construction practices will help ensure the integrity of the protected site.
- 9.10.5 Policy S6: 'Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites' includes provisions for water. It indicates that development proposals will need to ensure the effective use of SuDS and sustainable water management. Whilst this stipulation relates more closely to flood risk management, it can be applied to the protection of water sources, as these measures are considered to reduce the potential for pollution to enter the water network through discharge and surface water flows.
- 9.10.6 Multiple site allocation policies require a drainage and water management strategy to be part of the development proposal, and for surface water management to be considered.
- 9.10.7 Furthermore, multiple site allocation policies also seek to ensure sustainable drainage systems based on natural flood management principles are integrated into the design of proposed development. A number of site allocation policies also include the need for CEMPs to be prepared, which address the impacts to surface water drainage during the construction phase. These measures are considered likely to contribute to the protection of water resources and their quality, through reducing water run-off from development sites – thus reducing the potential for pollutants to enter the water system.
- 9.10.8 It is noted that where there are local issues in relation to the environmental protection of water, the site allocation policies make appropriate provision, including:
- Strategic Development Site – Whetstone Pastures indicates that development will be supported where it integrates informal open space for water management.

- Strategic Development Site – Land West of Beggars Lane, Lubbethorpe Strategic Site includes the need for development design to consider potential surface water flow path.
- Strategic Development Site – Land at Carlton Park, Narborough seeks to ensure development design reflects the hydraulic connectivity of the site to the River Soar. Additionally, the policy stipulates that water discharged from the site should pass through a minimum of three treatment trains prior to discharge (acknowledging potential risks to Narborough Bogs SSSI where discharge is up stream of this site).
- Strategic Development Site – Land South of Broughton Road, Stoney Stanton requires a buffer to be incorporated into the development design to the north of the site, to protect the watercourse from discharge from the site.

### **Additional implications**

9.10.9 Policy CC3: 'Water Quality, Supply and Wastewater' is the main policy contributing to this topic; and its provisions are considered a benefit to the theme. The policy includes provisions to effectively meet future water resource needs, manage wastewater treatment, and manage drainage infrastructure.

9.10.10 This will be achieved through ensuring adequate water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure is delivered alongside identified growth, supporting work to reduce water demand (and thus reduce sewerage, drainage, and wastewater volumes), implementing SuDS into development, and ensuring development proposals with the potential to adversely affect water quality effectively mitigate this risk. As such, the provisions of the policy work well to safeguard water resources and their quality.

9.10.11 It is noted that further provisions for water resources and quality are made in the wider policy framework. Policy: HW3 'Ground Conditions, Pollution and Health' indicates that development will not be permitted if it results in an unacceptable risk to the environment due to contamination or pollution. Furthermore, development proposals within proximity to an aquifer or surface water feature will need to undertake a detailed investigation and identify mitigation measures to avoid adverse impacts to groundwater or surface water resources. Again, this helps to reduce the likelihood for negative impacts to water resources and quality, as development with contamination potential will be required to undertake mitigation.

9.10.12 Indirect beneficial effects are also likely to arise as a result of policies that promote green and blue infrastructure enhancement and flood risk management that makes use of natural solutions.

## Overall effects

- 9.10.13 Whilst proposed growth will increase drinking water demand and place stress on existing supply infrastructure, these challenges are expected to be managed through local network upgrades and capacity improvements. The policy framework in the Plan is mindful of such issues and seeks to ensure that development is designed to mitigate risk.
- 9.10.14 Whilst none of the proposed sites intersect with Source Protection Zones, some developments are located adjacent to water features and there is potential for indirect effects on water dependent habitats such as Narborough Bogs SSSI.
- 9.10.15 To address these risks, the policy framework includes the need for development to use SuDS, comprehensive drainage strategies, and CEMPs to reduce runoff and prevent pollutants from entering the water network. Targeted site-specific requirements provide additional safeguards where necessary, and the wider thematic policies ensure that development only proceeds when supported by adequate infrastructure and detailed contamination investigations. These measures combined effectively safeguard the district's water resources and quality. As such, **neutral effects** are predicted.

## 9.11 Environmental protection: Air quality

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.11.1 The spatial strategy involves a wide distribution of development across the District, increasing the total number of new trips made by private vehicles while also expanding opportunities for sustainable travel where the sites are well located and involve upgrades to public transport and active travel infrastructure.
- 9.11.2 None of the proposed sites lie within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), and only two housing sites—Land at Desford Road / Beggar's Lane and Land south of Carlton Park—fall just beyond the 500–600 metre zone around AQMA 6 – Mill Hill in Enderby. Development at these locations could contribute additional traffic to the already congested B582 corridor, where nitrogen dioxide levels are known to be elevated. While this raises the potential for a degree of worsening within the AQMA, both sites benefit from strong access to bus services and, in the case of Hayes Gardens, proximity to Narborough Rail Station. This offers the potential for reducing car dependency, although the extent to which this moderates impacts will depend on the quality, reliability and integration of public transport and active travel connections as well as the extent of new facilities and services to be provided on site. It is also worth noting that there is an expected downward trajectory in terms of emissions from vehicles associated with an increased uptake of low emission vehicles.

- 9.11.3 In this context, increased growth has potential to be accommodated without significantly raising air quality concerns. This is reflected in the Council's Air quality evidence that concludes *'even when the Local Plan growth is included, the predicted changes in NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are extremely small, typically less than one microgram per cubic metre, and are therefore considered negligible in terms of potential effects on human health. In simple terms, this means that future development proposed in the Local Plan is not expected to cause any new exceedances of air quality standards or noticeable deterioration in air quality' in existing AQMAs'*
- 9.11.4 Across the wider distribution almost all sites fall within walking distance of bus services, supporting a pattern of growth that is generally well placed to encourage sustainable travel behaviour. The strategic housing sites, in particular, have the scale to deliver significant on-site transport infrastructure, including new bus stops, mobility hubs and active travel networks, which could help shift some travel away from private vehicles. However, even with these opportunities, both housing and employment growth will still lead to an overall rise in vehicle movements across the District as evidenced in the Council's transport evidence.
- 9.11.5 Increases in commuter traffic, school trips, servicing, and delivery activity would be dispersed across a larger area rather than concentrated at specific hotspots, meaning that air-quality effects would be incremental and spread across multiple corridors. These changes would occur alongside generally improving air-quality trends within the District, but some uncertainty remains regarding the extent of peak-time congestion and the potential cumulative contribution to pollutant levels on sensitive sections of the network.

### **Additional implications**

- 9.11.6 Policy HW4: 'Air Quality' is the main policy concerned with this topic. It outlines support for development where it will not have a significant impact on local air quality – including through impacting upon air quality objectives, exposing residents and visitors to an excess in air quality objectives, and avoiding trapping air pollutants close to the ground.
- 9.11.7 The policy also requires development that is anticipated to result in negative effects on air quality to be supported by an air quality assessment, to consider the likely effects and create a plan to mitigate them. Furthermore, the policy outlines the need for CEMPs to accompany major development, to avoid, minimise or mitigate air quality effects on development sites and their surroundings. It is considered that these measures help to mitigate the potential for adverse impacts on air quality through development.
- 9.11.8 The wider policy framework also considers air quality. Development will need to meet the standards for air quality and should not result in adverse impacts to health as a result of poor air quality (Policy HW1: 'Healthy Communities').

9.11.9 This includes ensuring new gypsy and traveller accommodation does not come forward in areas where air pollution could adversely affect health or living conditions (Policy S14: 'Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show Persons').

9.11.10 To maintain or enhance air quality, or mitigate negative air quality impacts, development proposals should select appropriate tree species to integrate into new growth (Policy ENV3: 'Trees and Hedgerows'), and could also promote sustainable transport opportunities to reduce the need to travel by private vehicle (Policy INF5: 'Active and Healthy Travel'). This is anticipated to reduce poor air quality by lowering the level of vehicular pollutants being released (which is already on a downward trajectory due to cleaner vehicles).

### **Overall effects**

9.11.11 To conclude, taking these factors together, uncertain **minor negative effects** on air quality are predicted. The total scale of growth increases the likelihood of additional emissions, yet the spatial distribution of sites away from designated AQMAs, good levels of public-transport accessibility, and the potential for new sustainable transport infrastructure at strategic sites all help to limit the overall magnitude of harm. Although some contribution to congestion and localised air-quality deterioration is probable - the effects are not expected to be significant, and in the long term, the air quality baseline is anticipated to improve due to external factors.

9.11.12 The wider plan policies work well to protect and promote improved air quality in Blaby, achieved through site specific requirements for air quality surveys where growth would come forward within proximity to motorways, railways, and industrial sources. Furthermore, the policy framework is solidified through Policy HW4: 'Air Quality', which mandates air quality assessments and CEMPs for major developments to prevent an increase in pollutants and mitigate negative effects. By integrating these measures with wider environmental strategies, such as selecting appropriate tree species to filter air and promoting active and healthy travel, the impacts of growth on air quality ought to be possible to manage effectively.

## **9.12 Climate change:**

### **Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy**

9.12.1 In terms of fluvial flooding, there is only a minor overlap of site allocations with Fluvial Flood Zones 2 and 3, demonstrating that fluvial flood risk is not a significant constraint. Additionally, whilst a level of surface water flood risk is to be anticipated, it is likely that sensitive design (including the design of site layouts and the use of SuDS) will help to minimise this risk.

- 9.12.2 Regarding climate change mitigation, although an increase in the built environment in Blaby will inevitably raise net greenhouse gas emissions, the strategy works to mitigate this through ensuring development is well related to bus services, and supports active travel infrastructure to promote sustainable transport. This includes walking, cycling or wheeling, or travelling via public transport.
- 9.12.3 There is also support for sustainable design measures that will help (alongside the Future Homes Standard) to promote developments that are more carbon efficient and reduce per capita emissions compared to existing stock. As such, the strategy works to provide a balanced approach, working to meet the identified housing and employment needs whilst maintaining a low flood risk profile and delivering a good standard of design.
- 9.12.4 Ultimately, the success of the strategy will depend on detailed site design and the strengthening of the green infrastructure network to bolster resilience against heatwaves and flash flooding.
- 9.12.5 Where there are known local issues, the site allocation policies make provision in relation to climate change. These largely relate to flood risk, and includes (but is not limited to):
- Delivering a Drainage and Water Management Strategy to address areas of fluvial flood risk and surface water flows within sites.
  - Requiring that SuDS seek to retain surface water of greenfield rates - 20%
  - Ensuring development does not come forward within identified surface water flood risk flow paths including sites at Land West of Beggars Lane, Lubbethorpe Strategic Site and Land South of Maurice Drive and Gillam Butts, Countesthorpe; and Land West of Peatling Road, Countesthorpe).
- 9.12.6 Additionally, the majority of the strategic development site policies include provisions to ensure specific flood risk is addressed through development, based on natural flood management principles and using a sustainable drainage system. As such, it is considered that the site allocation policies work well to reduce the risk and effects of flooding within and in proximity to the site boundaries.

### **Additional implications**

- 9.12.7 In relation to carbon and greenhouse gas emissions, Policy S6: 'Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites' includes stipulations to help reduce the impact of growth. This includes a requirement for a Sustainability and Energy Framework to be implemented, to identify opportunities for low and zero carbon infrastructure.

- 9.12.8 Additionally, in relation to flood risk, Policy S6: 'Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites' requires large scale development to ensure the effective use of SuDS and sustainable water management based on natural flood management, to help reduce flood risk and flood effects within sites. As such, it is considered that this policy works well to reduce the climate change impact of large-scale development, by addressing flood risk and effects (where relevant) and exploring the potential to reduce emissions.
- 9.12.9 The main policies linked to the climate change topic are included in Chapter 4 – 'Climate Change and Flooding'.
- 9.12.10 Policy CC1: 'Planning for Climate Change' supports development which mitigates and adapts to climate change, including through incorporating or enabling renewable and low carbon technology, supporting the re-use of existing buildings to maximise the use of embodied carbon, and cutting embodied carbon and carbon emissions where new buildings are proposed.
- 9.12.11 The focus on including renewable and low carbon energy in development is reiterated through Policy CC4: 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy'. These overarching policies are considered to have positive effects in relation to climate change through promoting lower carbon growth, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions (broadly in line with national policy requirements).
- 9.12.12 Also within Chapter 4 is Policy CC2: 'Flood Risk', which outlines Blaby Council's sequential approach to flood risk management. The policy indicates that priority will be given to sites with the lowest risk of flooding, and the development of sites with a greater risk of flooding will only be supported where the wider anticipated sustainability benefits of the proposal outweigh the flood risk (as per national policy). The policy also outlines requirements for development in areas of increased flood risk, including the need for resilience, taking into consideration all forms of flooding, and ensuring mitigation measures are incorporated effectively. Additionally, the policy provides further guidance on proposals for flood management or other linked infrastructure, as well as on development within proximity to watercourses, to help further reduce flood risk and effects. These stipulations are considered to work well to reduce flood risk and flood effects on new and existing development linked to the spatial strategy.
- 9.12.13 Furthermore, Policy CC3: 'Water Quality, Supply and Wastewater' also contributes towards reducing flood risk through ensuring development works with Leicestershire County Council (as the lead Local Flood Authority for Blaby) to deliver SuDS that manage surface water run-off and reduce pressure on local drainage infrastructure. Again, this is anticipated to bring forward positive effects in relation to flood risk by reducing the potential for adverse effects.
- 9.12.14 The wider plan policies also have a focus on climate change and emissions. Policy S16: 'Green Wedges' outlines support for renewable and low carbon energy development in green wedges where it would not be harmful to the function of the important strategic area.

9.12.15 This focus is also reiterated through Policy 'Countryside'. Additionally, policies concerned with promoting active and sustainable travel uptake (Policy INF5: 'Active and Healthy Travel') are considered to have a benefit in relation to climate change through reducing carbon emissions linked to transportation in Blaby.

9.12.16 Wider plan policies also have a focus on flood risk management. This is demonstrated through ensuring development is sympathetically located and designed in relation to existing flood risk and effects, to ensure that new development does not exacerbate flooding concerns (Policy S14: 'Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show Persons'; Policy, R3: 'Motorways Retail Area, Everards Meadows and Meridian Leisure'; and Policy INF 3: 'Burial Provision').

### **Overall effects**

9.12.17 The spatial strategy for Blaby takes a balanced approach to growth by seeking to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation are built into how new development is planned. This means the strategy aims not only to manage the effects of climate change but also to help reduce future emissions.

9.12.18 A key part of this approach is strong flood risk management. The strategy aims to make sure new development is sustainable and resilient, and that it does not increase flood risk for existing communities.

9.12.19 To reduce greenhouse gas emissions linked to a growing built environment, the strategy places new development in locations where people can travel more sustainably.

9.12.20 Strategic policies also support low-carbon design by requiring large-scale developments to prepare Sustainability and Energy Frameworks, encouraging renewable and low-carbon energy technologies, and promoting the re-use of existing buildings to retain embodied carbon.

9.12.21 The strategy also uses a sequential approach to flood risk, meaning that sites with the lowest flood risk are prioritised for development. It requires the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and natural flood management techniques to control surface water.

9.12.22 In addition, each allocated development site must prepare a Drainage and Water Management Strategy to ensure that new development does not worsen existing flooding issues.

9.12.23 Overall, the strategy is expected to have **minor positive effects** on climate change resilience and mitigation. This reflects the emphasis on reducing flood risk, supporting climate-resilient development, and lowering per capita carbon emissions across new and existing development in Blaby.

## 9.13 Economy:

### Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy

- 9.13.1 The main policy concerned with the economy is Policy S3: 'Strategy for a Prosperous Economy', which supports the delivery of a strong and prosperous local economy in Blaby in line with the Council's Economic Development Framework. It seeks to deliver approximately 53 hectares of local employment land (of which 39ha is new provision) at appropriate locations across Blaby (in addition to existing strategic employment land commitments), to provide a flexible supply of future sites for offices, industrial and warehousing needs. The policy also supports local labour agreements, in order to enable secure employment and skills development, and supports participation in the green economy.
- 9.13.2 Additionally, Policy S5 'Site Allocations for Local and Strategic Employment Uses' seeks to safeguard further strategic employment provision post 2042. These policies are anticipated to bring forward positive effects in relation to the economy, as they are providing additional space for economic opportunities and certainty regarding the future provision of commercial land to meet local and sub regional needs.
- 9.13.3 The proposed spatial strategy is predicted to generate significant positive effects for the local economy in Blaby. This is through fostering job creation and sustaining essential local services. In addition to expanding existing employment areas, the strategy utilises mixed-use development approaches over the longer term to integrate housing with employment land and community infrastructure. This approach is anticipated to strengthen the self-sufficiency of new communities and support in-situ job creation, which is likely to contribute to bolstering the overall economic health of Blaby.
- 9.13.4 The employment sites are not all within walking distance to most existing communities. However, to promote accessibility for all residents, including those without private vehicles, development is located within walking distance of a bus stop as far as possible, to help promote sustainable transport patterns and maintain connectivity to employment opportunities within and beyond Blaby.
- 9.13.5 Furthermore, the increase in population and workforce associated with the proposed spatial strategy is anticipated to enhance the viability of town centres and local businesses by providing a larger customer and labour base, helping to mitigate the impacts of structural changes in the retail sector. Overall, the proposed strategy is anticipated to perform well in relation to the economy topic, by providing a necessary level of growth that effectively sustains services and employment whilst encouraging more self-contained and sustainable communities.

## Additional implications

- 9.13.6 Policy S6: 'Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites' makes provisions in relation to the economy topic, as it requires large-scale development to provide safe access to key facilities. This includes local employment opportunities. As such, it is considered that this policy positively contributes towards the topic, as new and existing communities will have a good level of access to employment infrastructure within Blaby, which will help to generate local income within the District.
- 9.13.7 The site allocation policies also include stipulations in relation to the economy. This includes (but is not limited to):
- Allocating employment land as part of the development proposal.
  - The provision of infrastructure and services, such as supermarket, convenience, and retail space.
  - Including small scale local employment space and opportunities in development proposals.
  - The creation of local centres as part of new developments.
- 9.13.8 This further demonstrates a focus on delivering economic benefits, by ensuring new sites deliver additional employment infrastructure and ancillary uses.
- 9.13.9 Chapter 8 – Employment includes a number of policies that will contribute towards the economy topic. Policy E2: 'Key Employment Sites and Existing Employment Areas' seeks to retain and enhance employment uses on identified Key Employment Sites, such as Blaby Industrial Estate and Wharf Way. The policy also indicates that proposals for the redevelopment, renewal, intensification, or extension of certain employment uses will be supported, and sets out clear criteria for instances where the loss of employment land would be permitted. As such, the policy works well to ensure a continuous supply of employment space in Blaby. This is reiterated through Policy E3: 'Employment Development on Unallocated Sites', which supports new employment developments on unallocated sites adjacent to certain settlement boundaries (Principal Urban Area, Larger Villages and Medium Villages).
- 9.13.10 Wider plan policies are also considered to have an economy impact. This includes Policy S13: 'Strategy for Retail and Leisure and 'Network of Centres', which creates an investment hierarchy to guide retail, town centre and leisure activity. This contributes to the economy topic by ensuring employment space and economic opportunities are focused in appropriate and accessible areas within Blaby District. This is further reiterated through Policy R2: 'Blaby Town Centre, District and local Centres', which ensures Blaby remains a focus for retail and leisure development, and Policy R4 'Neighbourhood Parades', which helps to maintain small-scale retail uses that meet the daily needs of local communities.

9.13.11 The economy is further considered through Policy HW1: 'Healthy Communities', which indicates that development proposals will be supported where they provide improved employment opportunities in Blaby, which will contribute high quality, well-paid jobs that are accessible to the local community. It is also considered through Policy R5: 'Sustainable Tourism, Leisure and Visitor Development', which seeks to support new visitor facilities and hotels, which will help promote the tourism economy in Blaby.

### **Overall effects**

9.13.12 The proposed spatial strategy focuses on fostering a robust and self-sufficient local economy by integrating housing with employment land and community infrastructure through mixed-use developments. To support this growth, specific policies aim to deliver additional employment land for industrial and warehousing needs, as well as for offices, light industry, and non-strategic distribution uses. This framework is reinforced by efforts to retain and enhance existing Key Employment Sites, while allowing for managed growth on unallocated sites to ensure a continuous supply of workspace.

9.13.13 Accessibility to employment remains a central priority, with development guidelines requiring proximity to sustainable transport links like bus stops and the provision of safe access to employment infrastructure to generate local income. Additionally, the strategy seeks to diversify the economy by establishing a retail investment hierarchy, supporting local employment space, and promoting high-quality, well-paid jobs alongside sustainable tourism. By expanding the local customer and labour base, the plan seeks to enhance the viability of town centres and mitigate structural changes in the retail sector. As such, **significant positive effects** are considered likely.

## **9.14 Accessibility**

### **Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy**

9.14.1 The proposed spatial strategy is characterised by its focus on bringing forward growth (both housing and employment land) in areas within walking distance (less than 800m) of an existing bus stop. This proximity to the public transport network is intended to facilitate resident access to employment, education, health services, and wider vital infrastructure and facilities across Blaby. This is important, given that some of the sites located close to smaller settlements may suffer from fewer services being readily available in the settlement centres. Some of the employment sites are also not within walking distance of settlement and require public transport or private vehicular access. It should be acknowledged though that close proximity to a bus stop does not necessarily equate to good accessibility if bus services do not provide links to important services and / or are of poor frequency. Therefore, mixed outcomes could be expected.

- 9.14.2 The two large mixed use strategic sites (Land West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures) are currently not well connected to existing services, but the scale of growth involved will support the creation of self-sufficient communities that encourage active travel and reduce the need to travel. There is also strong support for public transport enhancement that will be facilitated through the requirement for mobility hubs. Some of these effects are unlikely to arise until the end (or beyond) the Plan period, but it is important to acknowledge that this Plan lays the foundations for the creation of these communities.
- 9.14.3 Given that the spatial strategy seeks to focus growth largely in accessible locations within the district, it is likely that there will be a reasonable level of sustainable transport uptake. However, there remains a level of uncertainty over whether residents will opt for private vehicle usage over sustainable transport modes, which could lead to elevated congestion in parts of the District. It is also important to acknowledge that despite public transport services being present in some settlements, this is not of an equal standard across the District, so car use is likely to continue.
- 9.14.4 With regards to employment land, the sectors served are also likely to result in an increase in business trip movement, which will contribute to increased congestion on the road networks (though much of this could be contained on the strategic routes).
- 9.14.5 Where there are local issues, the site allocation policies make provision in relation to accessibility. This includes (but is not limited to):
- Delivering new and improved transport infrastructure, including improving existing walking and cycling routes and providing new ones.
  - Encouraging a shift towards active and sustainable travel uptake.
  - The creation of mobility hubs to increase non-car travel and encourage a modal shift towards sustainable and active transport alternatives.
  - The requirement to submit a Sustainable Transport Strategy and Movement Framework alongside the planning application for the site.
  - The maintenance of public rights of way.
  - Improving the road network.
- 9.14.6 Additionally, where required, specific site policies include access stipulations for ingress and egress of the site. Through these measures, it is anticipated that potential adverse effects to accessibility will be mitigated. This is through ensuring that sustainable and active transportation opportunities to key facilities are readily available and accessible to residents. This not only contributes to accessibility of infrastructure but could also contribute towards reducing congestion issues in Blaby, as there will be viable alternatives to the private vehicle, which will help to reduce the number of cars on the road network. In particular the provision of new facilities and services on strategic sites will help to internalise trips within new developments.

## **Additional implications**

- 9.14.7 Policy S6 'Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites' requires large scale, strategic development proposals to explain how they will connect new growth to new and existing facilities – given that safe access to infrastructure including schools and local employment must be provided. It also requires development proposals to integrate accessible and sustainable transport systems – walking through the creation of pedestrian friendly streets, cycling through connected cycleways, and public transport through connected footpaths and sustainable transport routes. Under this policy, development must also be supported by a masterplan that outlines key transport infrastructure, including (but not limited to) access points, street hierarchy, and footways and cycleways, undertaken through a Transport Assessment. This policy demonstrates the focus of design on ensuring sites are accessible for a range of users, which is a clear benefit for this topic.
- 9.14.8 The Infrastructure and Transport chapter contains numerous policies that have a direct influence on accessibility in Blaby. Policy INF4: 'Sustainable Travel in New Developments' outlines support for development proposals that are supported by a clear transport vision, which includes ensuring that appropriate provision is made for safe access via walking, cycling and wheeling modes, and providing for public transport users. It also requires that developments deliver the assumed level of trip containment and modal shift expected and seeks to ensure that where travel strategies do not perform as expected further measures are identified to ensure effective delivery.
- 9.14.9 The policy also requires that travel generated by the development does not have an impact upon highway safety, transport infrastructure efficiency and the efficiency and availability of public transport services.
- 9.14.10 Furthermore, development with significant transport implications will need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, in line with the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide, to identify and mitigate impacts of the development proposal on the transport network. As such, Policy INF4: 'Sustainable Travel in New Developments' is anticipated to bring forward positive effects in relation to the accessibility topic, as it ensures that new development is safe for all transportation types and users. By encouraging a focus on sustainable and active transportation types, it is also likely the policy will help to lower congestion compared to unconstrained growth.
- 9.14.11 Furthermore, the focus on promoting active travel opportunities, where appropriate, is reiterated through Policy INF5: 'Active and Healthy Travel', which encourages development to integrate infrastructure (such as route marking and cycle storage) into development design. Additionally, the focus on accessibility via public transport is further reiterated through Policy INF6: 'Public Transport', which seeks to further integrate infrastructure (such as bus shelters and real time travel information boards) into development design.

9.14.12 The wider Infrastructure and Transport policies also have a focus on accessibility. Policy INF8: 'Parking and Highway Design Standards' outlines parking requirements in development, indicating that parking should also reflect the availability and opportunities for public transport use. Additionally, Policy INF2: 'Community Facilities' indicates that where new infrastructure is required, it should be provided where there is good accessibility by walking, cycling / wheeling and public transport. Finally, Policy INF3 'Burial Provision' outlines the need for proposals for new burial grounds or expansions to existing burial grounds to include good means of access to the highway, bus routes or other transport nodes. These policies also contribute towards accessibility through ensuring travel considerations are integrated into development design.

9.14.13 Wider plan policies also have a focus on accessibility. This is largely through ensuring that development is well connected in relation to public and active transportation opportunities (Policy: CC1 'Planning for Climate Change'; Policy: H4 'Specialist and Accessible Accommodation'; Policy E3: 'Employment Development on Unallocated Sites'; Policy R1: 'Sequential Test and Impact Assessment'; Policy R3: 'Motorways Retail Area, Everards Meadows and Meridian Leisure'; and Policy R5: 'Supporting Sustainable Tourism, Leisure and Visitor Development'). This is also achieved through securing improvements to the local and wider transport network (Policy R3: 'Motorways Retail Area, Everards Meadows and Meridian Leisure'), and providing necessary highway mitigation work (Policy R5: 'Supporting Sustainable Tourism, Leisure and Visitor Development').

### **Overall effects**

9.14.14 In conclusion, the proposed spatial strategy for Blaby supports sustainable and accessible growth by focusing development in areas within proximity to existing (or planned) active and sustainable travel opportunities and infrastructure. This helps to ensure that residents have direct access to important employment, education, and health services.

9.14.15 While there is acknowledged uncertainty regarding whether residents will fully transition from private vehicles to sustainable modes, the strategy implements policies to mitigate potential congestion and improve the transport network.

9.14.16 These policies require large-scale developments to be supported by masterplans and Transport Assessments that integrate pedestrian-friendly streets, connected cycleways, and enhanced public transport infrastructure, such as mobility hubs and real-time travel information. Furthermore, the integration of accessibility into wider plan policies ensures that safe and active transportation is a focus and design element of new developments. Ultimately, these measures aim to encourage a modal shift toward non-car travel, creating a more accessible and efficient transport network for all users. As such, potential / uncertain **significant positive effects** are identified as likely in relation to sustainable travel.

9.14.17 Though measures are in place to address increases in traffic, it is likely that the Plan will still generate residual **minor negative effects** in terms of 'congestion' - although more notable impacts could arise in some localised areas. There will likely be short term disturbances due to construction activities, and an overall increase in the number of locations generating car trips. Though the Plan itself is not predicted to have significant effects in terms of congestion and traffic, it is important to note that levels of background growth (i.e. the baseline position) are already expected to create a more significant impact. Whilst the additional growth proposed by the Plan is predicted to have minor effects - when combined with the existing impacts - the baseline position will be affected further.

## 9.15 Summary of Plan effects

9.15.1 Table 9.1 below presents the overall effects for the SA topics. This is followed by a summary discussion.

**Table 9.1** Overall effects of the Plan

SA Topics	Overall effects
Health: Long term health outcomes	Significant positive
Health: Short term impacts	Minor negative
Population and housing	Significant positive
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Minor positive
Cultural Heritage	Neutral
Waste	Neutral
Minerals	Neutral
Landscape	Minor negative
Soil	Significant negative
Water quality	Neutral
Air quality	Minor negative ?
Climate Change Mitigation	Minor positive
Climate Change resilience	Minor positive
Economy	Significant positive
Congestion	Minor negative
Sustainable travel	Significant positive ?

- 9.15.2 The appraisal of the draft Blaby Local Plan demonstrates that it is predicted to deliver predominantly significant positive effects, particularly in relation to housing provision, health and wellbeing, economic resilience, sustainable accessibility and climate change response, while managing environmental risks through a strengthened policy framework.
- 9.15.3 The key significant negative impact relates to the loss of soil resources, whilst other negative effects are likely to be more minor in nature relating to landscape, congestion, air quality and health (in the short term).
- 9.15.4 The Plan adopts a more strategic, infrastructure-led and outcomes-focused approach, consistent with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable development, healthy communities and long-term place-making. Key distinguishing features include:
- Housing delivery above minimum need, including provision for Leicester's unmet housing demand.
  - A greater focus on long-term growth, through two strategic standalone communities that extend benefits beyond the plan period.
  - A marked shift towards embedding infrastructure, services and health facilities directly within new communities, rather than relying primarily on financial contributions.
  - Stronger policy integration across housing, health, climate change, green infrastructure and transport.
- 9.15.5 The appraisal identifies several negative effects, primarily arising from the scale and pace of growth rather than from policy gaps. These include permanent changes to landscape character and loss of agricultural land, short-term pressure on healthcare, schools and transport networks during early phases of development, temporary construction impacts on amenity, localised biodiversity disturbance, and some effects on the setting of heritage assets. The Plan addresses these risks through a robust, plan-led mitigation framework, including landscape-led masterplanning, green wedges and buffers, early and on-site provision of infrastructure, strong requirements for sustainable transport and construction management, mandatory biodiversity net gain and site-specific ecological safeguards, and heritage-led design supported by detailed assessment.
- 9.15.6 While some residual effects are unavoidable, particularly in relation to soil, landscape change and construction disruption, these are proportionate to the level of growth, largely temporary or localised, and are significantly reduced through policy requirements, ensuring that the majority of negative effects are minor. For soil, which there remains a significant negative effect, mitigation has been identified (and strengthened in response to recommendations made through the SA process). See section 10 below.

# 10. Mitigation and Enhancement

## 10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 This section summarises the key mitigation and enhancement measures that have been identified throughout the SA process.
- 10.1.2 The measures identified at each stage are appropriate and proportionate to the corresponding level of detail and progress of the Plan at that point in time. Therefore, recommendations made at vision/objectives stage are very high level, whilst those made at the draft Plan appraisal stage are more specific.
- 10.1.3 Given that there were still choices to be made with regards to the spatial strategy and site allocations, some of the recommendations made at the options consultation stage relate to identified impacts associated with different patterns of growth.
- 10.1.4 Other measures relate to thematic policies and generally seek to pose a challenge to the Plan in terms of seeking to achieve high standards of sustainability. However, it is acknowledged that there may be barriers to the implementation of such recommendations (such as viability), and there will also be trade-offs to be made between sustainability factors.

## 10.2 Vision and objectives

Recommendation	Council Response
<p>Though draft Plan Objective SO8 is already compatible with the SA objectives in relation to biodiversity, it is considered beneficial to strengthen the references to biodiversity recovery. It could therefore be amended to explicitly embed the principle of 'environmental net gain'.</p>	<p>A section has been added to the biodiversity policy (ENV1) which specifically addresses biodiversity and geodiversity Improvements. In addition, other policies have been included in the Plan including a green and blue infrastructure policy (ENV2) that requires that new developments deliver a biodiversity net gain and support ecosystem services. A tree planting policy (ENV3) has been included within the Plan to ensure the retention of and planting of new hedgerows and trees on development sites. The policies drafted have regard to aims of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and reflect the Lawton principles of 'Bigger, Better and More Joined Up'. The Plan also includes a Design and Place-making Policy (S15) to include a requirement for new development to enhance local biodiversity including through the inclusion of easily deliverable measures such as bird safe glass, hedgehog highways, swift and bat boxes and the inclusion of swales and permanently wet attenuation basins.</p>

Recommendation	Council Response
Environment net gain should be referred to explicitly in the objectives.	Biodiversity net gain is now referred to as part of Plan Objective to reflect both the mandatory nature of BNG but also the need for new development to deliver an improvement in the ecological baseline of the district.

### 10.3 Strategic options

10.3.1 As part of the assessment of strategic options, several recommendations were made with the intention of influencing the spatial strategy in general terms.

Recommendation	Council Response
<p><b>Health</b></p> <p>Site allocations will need to meet the requirement of providing adequate play, open space and green infrastructure where possible, and to also retain in situ or replace facilities where these are located within site options.</p>	<p>The plan seeks to specify open space standards. For larger (strategic) developments these are specifically set out within site policies, whilst for smaller sites Policy HW2 sets out provision requirements per 1000 people for a range of typologies including parks, play space, natural greenspace and allotments. INF2 (Community Facilities) set out requirements for the provision of new or expanded community facilities. In addition the Design and Place-making Policy (S15) includes a requirement for new development to address social sustainability issues, by supporting healthy lifestyles, including through the promotion of active travel, the incorporation of, connectivity to, and provision of public open space, sports and other leisure facilities.</p>
<p><b>Health</b></p> <p>In terms of opportunities, a strategic approach to green infrastructure provision could help to strengthen links between built up areas and settlements. This approach should be explored as the preferred strategy emerges.</p>	<p>As noted above the Council has sought to take a strategic approach to the retention and delivery of green and blue infrastructure. Policy ENV2 outlines the types of green infrastructure we will seek to protect, enhance and strengthen. The Plan also has regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Council's Blue Green Infrastructure Study. In addition, the Plan includes strategic policies in respect of Green wedges (Policy S16) Areas of Separation (Policy S17) and thematic policies in respect of Biodiversity and Geodiversity (ENV1) and Landscape and Settlement Character (ENV4).</p>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
<p><b>Soil</b></p> <p>it would be advisable to avoid locations where quality appears more likely to be high such as to the east of Huncote and north of Cosby.</p>	<p>This is noted, although there is little soil in the District which is grade 2 and none which is grade 1. Most soil in Blaby is comprised of grade 3 soils but on strategic level mapping it is not possible to differentiate between the two classes Grade 3a (best and most versatile) and Grade 3b.</p> <p>Nonetheless we have included provisions in Policy HW3 to (Ground Conditions, Pollution and Health) to ensure new development includes mitigation to avoid any adverse impacts on soils of high environmental value.</p> <p>We have also included a Housing Mix and Density Policy (H3) in the Plan to ensure the efficient use of land.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Support the allocation of sites (and policy content) that allow for drainage solutions that mimic natural processes.</p>	<p>The Plan has been drafted to support natural drainage solutions. It includes a significant number of provisions to ensure that SuDS are incorporated into new development and that these are based on Natural Flood Management (NFM) provisions rather than engineered SuDS. These requirements are set out in the strategic site allocations, local site allocations and Policies CC1 (Planning for Climate Change), CC2 (Flood Risk) in particular clause 3 which requires SUDS mimic natural drainage patterns, and CC3 (Water Quality, Supply and Wastewater)</p>
<p><b>Economy</b></p> <p>Greater amounts of growth should be placed in areas where work is accessible to a wide range of communities, ideally by sustainable modes of transport.</p>	<p>The Plan has sought to distribute housing and commercial growth to locations that are immediately sustainable or to large mixed use communities where jobs can be balanced with new housing growth. In addition, the Plan seeks to prioritise active travel and other sustainable modes of access. This is evident in Policies S7 (Land West of Stoney Stanton), S8 (Whetstone Pastures), S12 (Land South of Whetstone) and Policy E1a (Land to the North of Mill Lane) all of which include requirements to ensure access by a range of non-car means. New housing is similarly located in sustainable locations so residents can access existing employment opportunities.</p>

Recommendation	Council Response
<p><b>Accessibility</b></p> <p>Regardless of the strategy, there is a need to ensure that new development is supported by public transport improvements, enhancements to local services, and enhancement of local transport networks.</p>	<p>A number of policies have been included in the plan to ensure that new residents have access to local services and facilities. INF4 (Sustainable Travel in New Developments), INF5 (Active and Healthy Travel) and INF6 (Public Transport) have been included in the plan to ensure all new development contributes towards improving access to all destinations by a range of transport modes.</p> <p>The Plan seeks to maximise the delivery of new services and facilities on strategic sites, S7-S12 and the Council will, through discussion with stakeholders and site promoters, ensure that new communities can access services and facilities close to where they live through a wide range of transport modes and in particular through active travel.</p>

## 10.4 Draft Plan Appraisal

10.4.1 At this stage of the SA, only one recommendation was made in relation to significant negative effects on soil. This is to be expected given that:

- Previous stages of SA have helped to inform Plan development.
- The assessment at this stage is 'policy on', and the Plan includes a range of policy measures designed to mitigate potential negative effects (and maximise positives).

10.4.2 Where residual negative effects are predicted, this does not mean that mitigation has not been considered or addressed. Indeed, it is acknowledged that there are a range of policy measures in the Plan that have helped to reduce the significance of negative effects, so that only minor impacts remain. These are summarised below under the corresponding SA topics where negative effects are predicted.

<b>Recommendations / residual negative effects</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
<p><b>Soil</b></p> <p>Significant negative effects are predicted with regards to soils, which in part is unavoidable given the need to deliver housing and employment land and the relative lack of previously developed land in the District. It is noted that Policy (Ground Conditions Pollution and Health) requires an understanding of impacts and suitable mitigation in relation to a range of factors including 'soil and agricultural land'.</p> <p>Given the significant effects predicted and the potential for further impacts associated with ad hoc development, it is recommended that the policy requirement in relation to soil are strengthened.</p> <p>For example, the need to undertake a soil resource survey and a soil management plan will provide a more proactive approach to avoiding and mitigating (and enhancing) soil resources.</p>	<p>The policy has been amended to strengthen the requirements in respect of soil resources. Specifically, it requires the submission of a soil management plan alongside any planning application. Either as a standalone document or as part of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) that sets how the measures to mitigate or reduce the impacts on soils have been considered as part of the development proposals.</p>
<p><b>Health: Short Term Impacts</b></p> <p>Short term negatives effects are predicted in respect of health. Much of this may arise due to perceived impacts on local infrastructure and facilities such as healthcare facilities and schools. Or impact on the environment for example in respect of traffic and construction dust, noise and other disturbance. The loss of countryside around existing settlements may also affect some residents</p>	<p>Smaller scale developments will come forward at the start of the plan period. These will make contributions to expand existing facilities as required in Policy INF2: Developer Contributions and INF2: Community Facilities. The plan programmes larger sites to come forward in the middle to latter part of the plan period and so access to and delivery of infrastructure as part of these developments can be planned in advance.</p>

Recommendations / residual negative effects	Council Response
	<p>In addition, requirements have been inserted into site policies to require the Provision a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) within site allocation policies. This is supplemented by policy HW3: which seeks to limit development which could have a detrimental impact on health including from noise, vibration, light and odour and HW5 which seeks to minimise affects associated with air quality effects. Policy ENV1 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) seeks to retain key ecological features on site and create new habitats and linkages to ensure sites make a positive contribution to the natural environment and protects natural greenspace which may be important to the wellbeing of local communities.</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p> <p>Cumulative effects around Blaby, Countesthorpe, Huncote, and Cosby could erode village character, and the two strategic sites - Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures - pose the greatest risk due to their scale</p>	<p>The Plan includes a thematic policy considering Landscape and Settlement Character. This requires that key landscape elements within developments sites are retained and any recommendation in the Council's landscape sensitivity work are adhered to in order that developments protect and enhance the setting of individual settlements. In addition, site based policies also include specific requirements to help mitigate landscape effects.</p>

<b>Recommendations / residual negative effects</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
<p><b>Air Quality</b></p> <p>Planned growth will likely contribute to congestion and on site dust generation during the construction of sites and localised air-quality deterioration is possible.</p>	<p>Evidence gathered to understand the impacts of the plan indicates that national policy changes will likely improve air quality over the course of the Plan period at a district level.</p> <p>However, in some areas there may be a localised deterioration in air quality as a result of new development. To address this issue the Council requires the submission of Construction Environment Management Plans alongside development proposals.</p> <p>In addition Policies HW3 Ground Conditions, Pollution and Health and HW5 (Air Quality) have been included in the plan to try and reduce likely air quality impacts.</p>
<p><b>Congestion</b></p> <p>Minor negative effects are predicted in respect of congestion. This could have an impact on local accessibility and air quality.</p>	<p>The Plan seeks to promote accessibility by a wide range of modes and in particular is seeking to encourage the internalisation of trips on larger sites by seeking to retain residents within sites by providing services within the development. In particular the strategic sites policies (S7-S12) have been drafted to include the provision of new services and facilities on site as well as new active travel infrastructure.</p> <p>Policies to encourage modal shift including INF4: Sustainable Travel in New Developments, INF5: Active and Healthy Travel and INF6: Public Transport are also set out in the plan.</p>

<b>Recommendations / residual negative effects</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
<p><b>Historic environment</b></p> <p>Whetstone pastures contains a listed building. It is unclear whether this would be lost as a result of development.</p> <p>Whilst the accompanying site policy requires heritage and archaeological assessments to be prepared, there remains some potential for this asset to be lost if it is deemed 'acceptable'.</p> <p>A firm requirement to ensure that the building is not permanently lost would strengthen the policy in this respect, whilst allowing flexibility for impacts on setting to be addressed through a site specific heritage assessment.</p>	<p>The policy has been amended to reflect this comment and the policy now states that the listed building (Whetstone Pastures Residential Care Home list entry No. 1386063) is to be retained as part of the development.</p>

# 11. Monitoring and next steps

## 11.1 Monitoring

- 11.1.1 There is a requirement to outline the measures envisaged to monitor the predicted effects of a local plan. In particular, there is a need to focus on the significant effects that are identified.
- 11.1.2 Table 11.1 sets out draft monitoring measures under each SA topic which are intended to be used to monitor any significant effects and to track the baseline position more generally.
- 11.1.3 At this stage the monitoring measures have not been finalised, as there is a need to confirm the feasibility of collecting information for the proposed measures. The monitoring measures will be finalised once the Plan is adopted, and will be set out in a Sustainability Appraisal Statement in accordance with the SEA Regulation.
- 11.1.4 Wherever possible, measures have been drawn from the Local Plan monitoring framework to reduce duplication and to aid in future data collection.

**Table 11.1** Proposed SA monitoring indicators

<b>SA Topic and summary of effects</b>	<b>Proposed monitoring measures</b>
<p><b>Health</b></p> <p>Significant positive effects ✓✓</p> <p>Minor negative effects ✖</p>	<p>Proposals benchmarked against Building for Healthy Life Framework 2020</p> <p>Number of units completed for specialist accommodation (sheltered/ retirement housing, extra care housing)</p> <p>Number of accessible homes built to M4(2) and M4(3) standards:</p> <p>Development granted on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities.</p>
<p><b>Population and housing</b></p> <p>Significant positive effects ✓✓</p>	<p>Net additional homes provided (and gross)</p> <p>Supply of ready to develop housing sites (5yhls)</p> <p>Number and Percentage of new affordable homes completed</p> <p>Number of self-build and custom housebuilding plots marketed and delivered</p>

	<p>Number of rural exception sites granted permission</p> <p>Number of new permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches provided</p> <p>Number of new plots for Travelling Show Persons</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b></p> <p>Minor positive ✓</p>	<p>Number of Local Wildlife Sites</p> <p>Number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in favourable and unfavourable condition</p> <p>Number of Local Nature Reserves and number of which that have a management plan.</p> <p>Number of Regionally Important Geological Site</p>
<p><b>Cultural Heritage</b></p> <p>Neutral</p>	<p>Number of Listed Buildings</p> <p>Numbers of Historic Parks and Gardens</p> <p>Number of Scheduled Monuments</p> <p>Number of Conservation Areas</p>
<p><b>Waste</b></p> <p>Neutral</p>	<p>Proportion of sites approved planning permission including a requirement for submission of a Construction Environment Management Plan. (Measured on major sites only)</p>
<p><b>Minerals</b></p> <p>Neutral</p>	<p>Number of objections from the Mineral Planning Authority on Minerals Sterilisation grounds (Major schemes only).</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p> <p>Minor negative ✖</p>	<p>On site tree canopy cover at site maturity</p> <p>Area (in Ha) of Green Blue Infrastructure delivered through major developments</p>
<p><b>Soil</b></p> <p>Significant negative ✖✖</p>	<p>Area of soils lost to built development (measured annually on completion of sites (major sites only)</p> <p>Proportion of sites meeting density requirements as set out in Policy H3. Measured on completion major sites only)</p>
<p><b>Water quality</b></p> <p>Neutral</p>	<p>Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency or Lead Local Flood Authority advice</p>

<b>Air quality</b> <b>Uncertain minor negative *?</b>	Number of Air Quality Management Areas
<b>Climate Change Mitigation</b> <b>Minor positive *</b>	Greenhouse Gas/Carbon Dioxide emissions per capita (industry, sector, and transport)  Surface water runoff from new development to be restricted to QBar greenfield rate minus 20%
<b>Climate Change resilience</b> <b>Minor positive *</b>	New Dwellings adherence to BR G2 Water efficiency standards  On site tree canopy cover on major development sites (at site maturity)
<b>Economy</b> <b>Significant positive ✓✓</b>	Gross additional floorspace provided.  Amount of key employment land/ floorspace enhanced/redeveloped and extended within Key employment sites  Loss of floorspace on Key Employment Sites  Loss of employment land (floorspace) on other employment sites (not designated KES)
<b>Congestion</b> <b>Minor negative *</b>	Number of major developments that contribute towards highway capacity improvements.
<b>Sustainable travel</b> <b>Uncertain Significant positive ✓✓?</b>	Proportion of developments that contribute towards the delivery of identified LCWIP routes  Proportion of major developments within 400m of a new or existing bus service

## **11.2 Next steps**

- 11.2.1 This SA Report has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 19 version of the Blaby Local Plan. The report draws together all the SA outputs that have been prepared to date.
- 11.2.2 Consultation will be undertaken under Regulation 19, but the focus will be on the soundness of the Plan, rather than the direction it should take and the issues it should focus on.
- 11.2.3 The final Plan will be 'Submitted' for Examination in Public (EiP). The Council will also submit a summary of issues raised (if any) through representations at the Publication stage so that these can be considered by the Government appointed Planning Inspector who will oversee the EiP. At the end of the EiP, the Inspector will judge whether or not the Plan is 'sound'.
- 11.2.4 Further SA work may be required to support the Plan-making process as it moves through Examination (for example the preparation of SA Addendums to deal with changes / modifications).

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# Appendix A: Commitments, SHELAA potential and potential freestanding strategic sites

Settlement (but includes sites for whole Parish)	Commitments (1 April 2019)	Additional Potential Supply (SHELAA 2019)	Commitments plus SHELAA Supply	Potential Strategic Sites (SHELAA 2019)
<b>PUA</b>				
Braunstone	23	0	23	0
Glenfield	90	1384	474	0
Glen Parva	197	84	281	0
Kirby Muxloe	907	2245	3152	0
Leicester Forest East	87	1405	1492	0
Lubbesthorpe	3979	800	4779	0
<b>PUA Totals</b>	5283	5981	11201	0
<b>Extended PUA</b>				
Blaby	83	788	871	1018
Countesthorpe	28	1094	1122	0
Enderby	7	220	227	0
Narborough	10	924	934	0
Whetstone	186	861	1047	2800
<b>Extended PUA Total</b>	314	3887	4201	3818
<b>Medium Villages</b>				
Stoney Stanton	23	461	484	5000
Cosby	225	1027	1252	0
Croft	21	179	200	0
Huncote	24	348	372	0
Littlethorpe	93	403	496	0
Sapcote	185	574	759	0
<b>Medium Villages Total</b>	571	2992	3563	5000
<b>Smaller Villages</b>				
Elmesthorpe	10	358	368	1012
Kilby	4	54	58	0
Sharnford	8	21	29	0
Thurlaston	1	66	67	0
Aston Flamville	1	0	1	0
Leicester Forest West	0	0	0	0
Potters Marston	0	0	0	0
Wigston Parva	0	0	0	0
<b>Smaller Villages Total</b>	24	499	523	1012
<b>Overall Totals</b>	6192	13296	19488	10618

Colour Code Key	Proposed Settlement Hierarchy
	PUA*
	Extended PUA*
	Other - Current Rural Centre & Medium Central Villages*
	Other – Smaller villages*

\* These groupings are to give a reasonable indication of distribution for initial locational strategy option appraisal purposes.

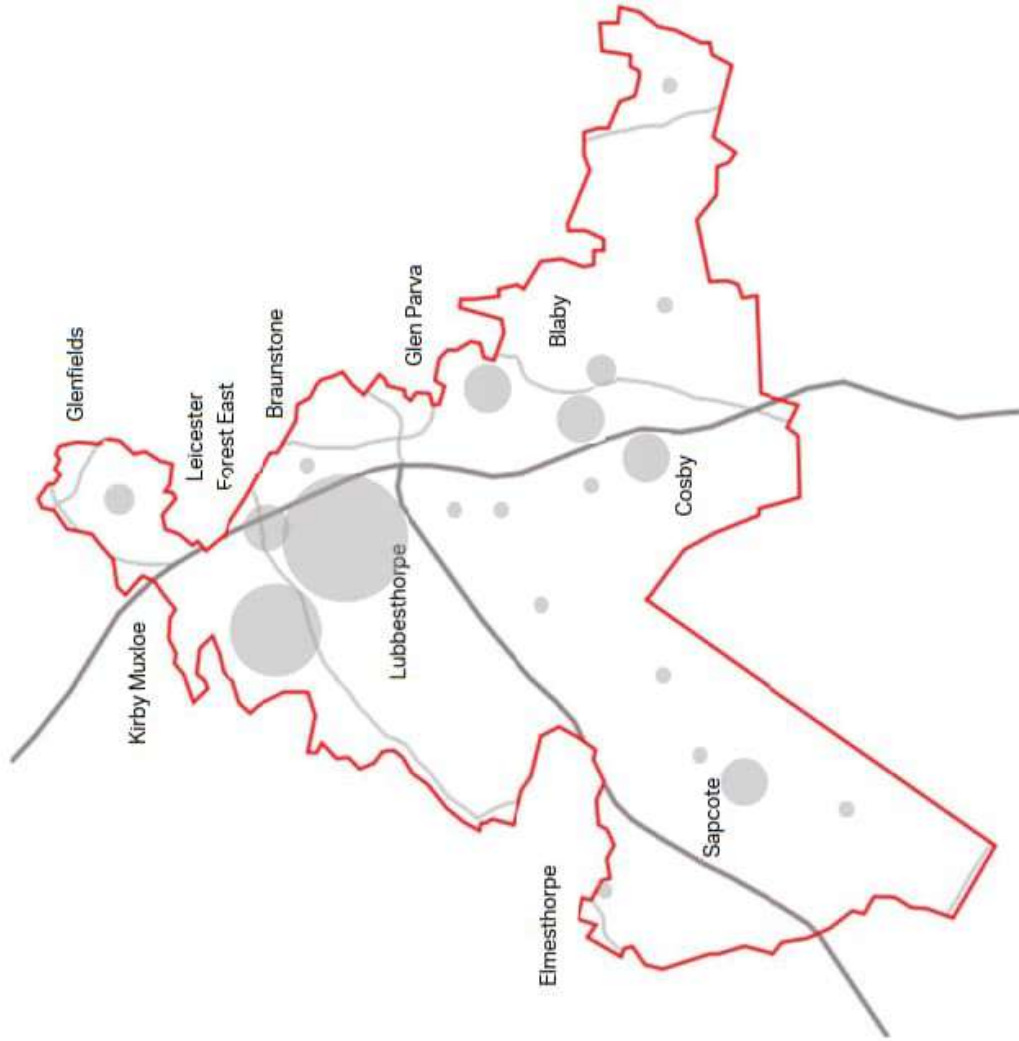
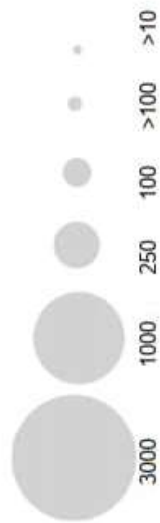
\*\*The table above presents a breakdown of the supply position at 2019, which was used to inform the appraisal of strategic alternatives at issues and options stage.

# Appendix B: Conceptual Maps for the Spatial Options

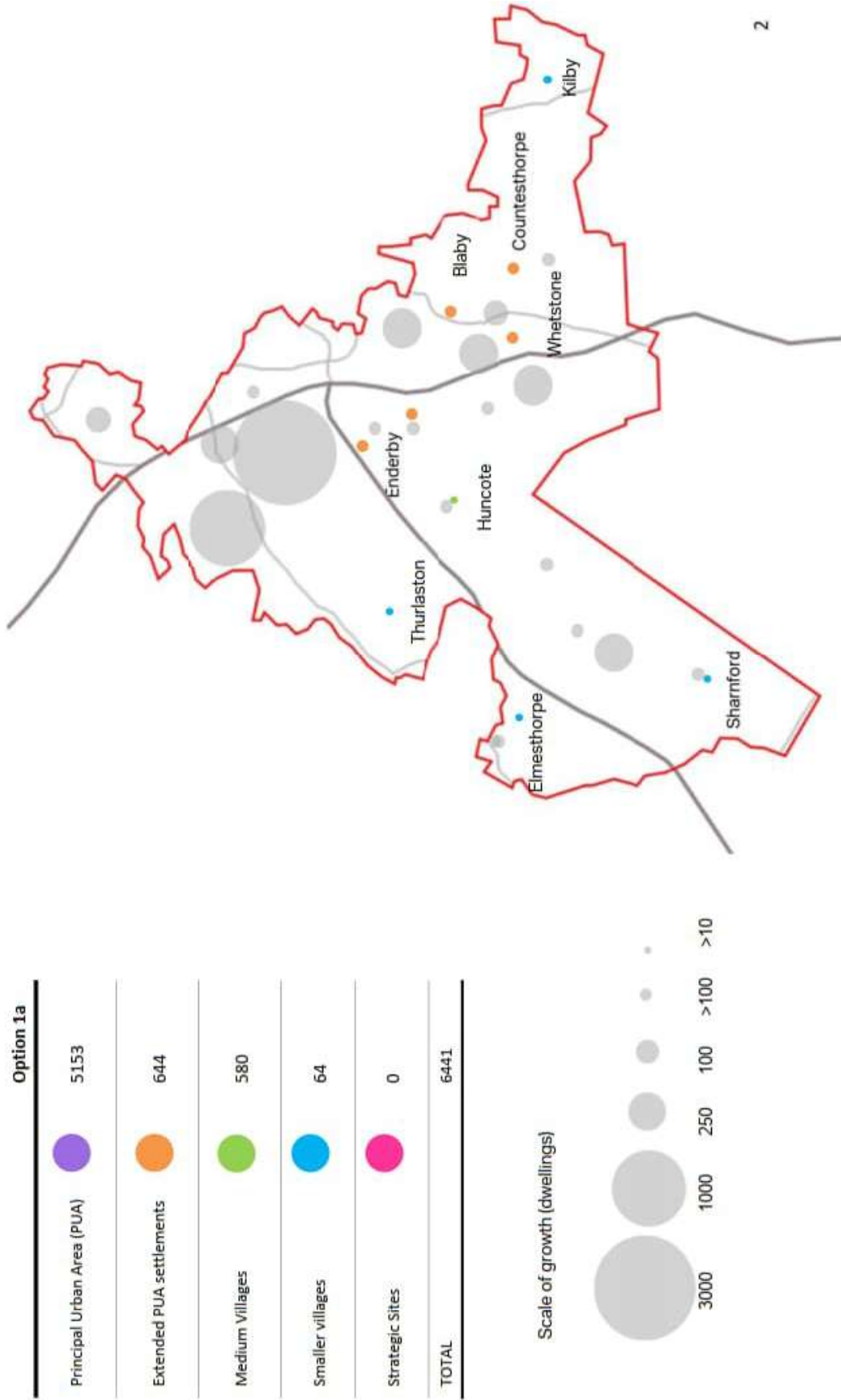
## Baseline: Existing Commitments

	Existing Commitments
Principal Urban Area (PUA)	5283
Extended PUA settlements	314
Medium Villages	571
Smaller villages	24
Strategic Sites	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6192</b>

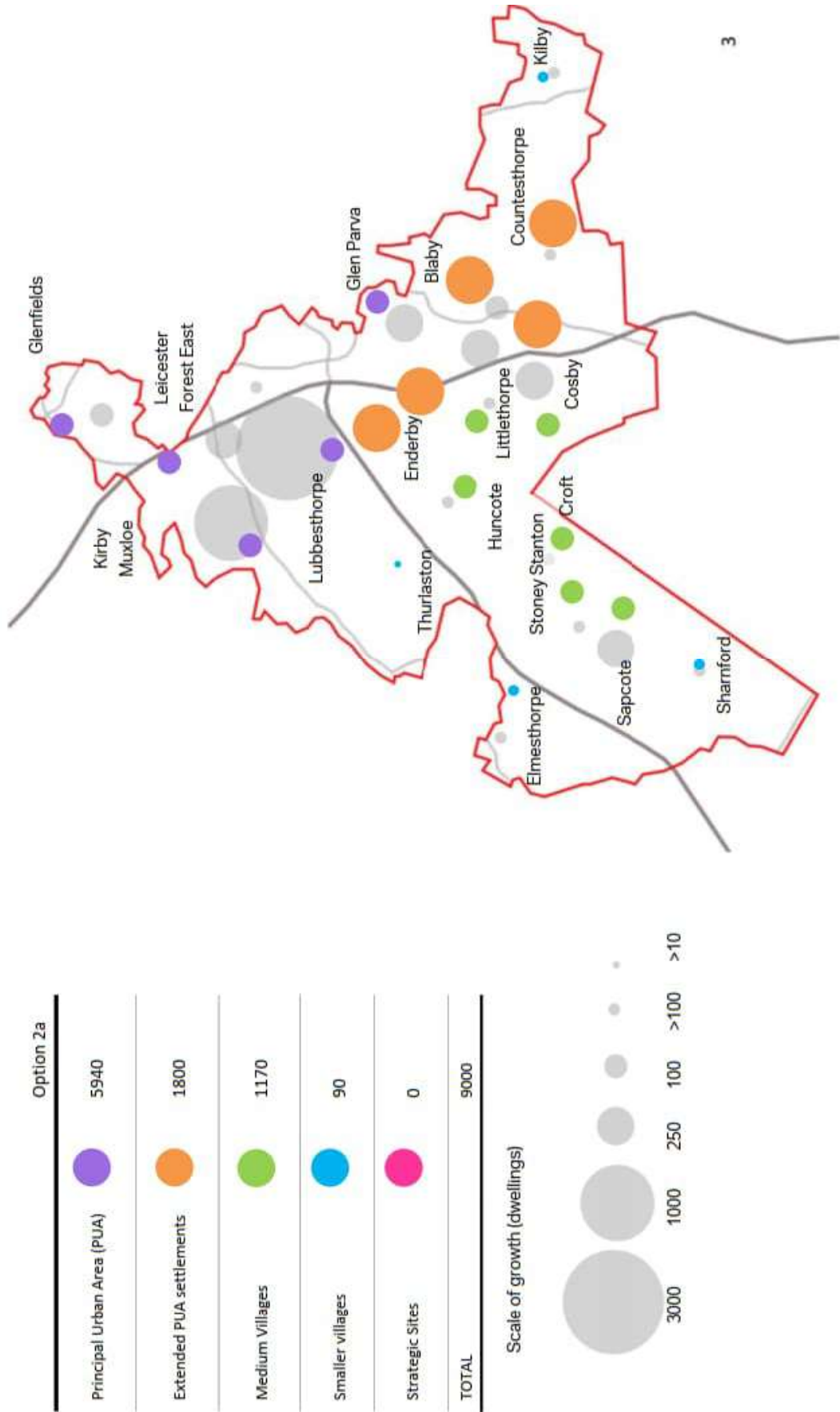
Scale of growth (dwellings)



## Scenario 1: Standard Methodology. Option 1a – Principal Urban Area Focus



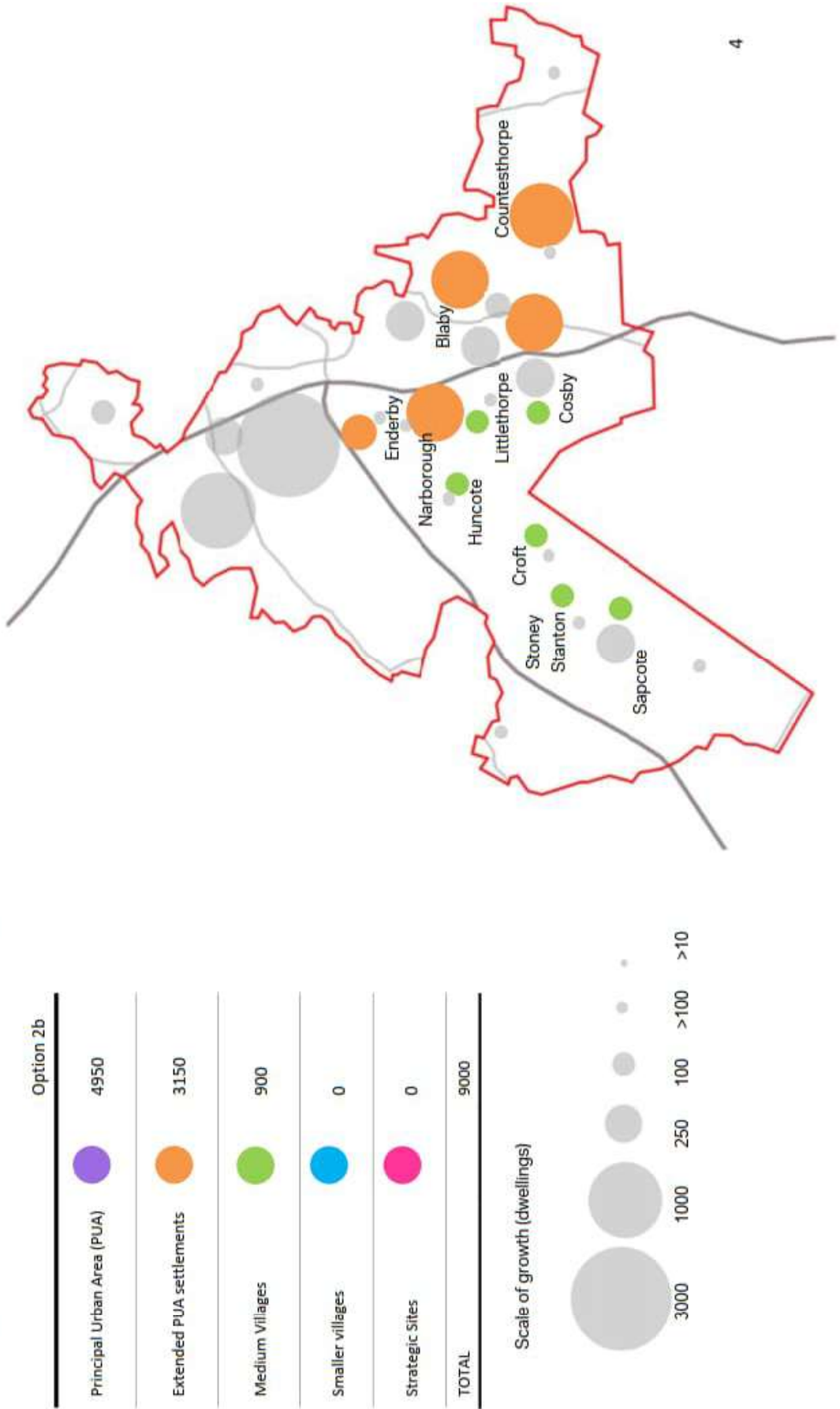
## Scenario 2: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (Low) (9,000 dwellings) Option 2a – Principal Urban Focus





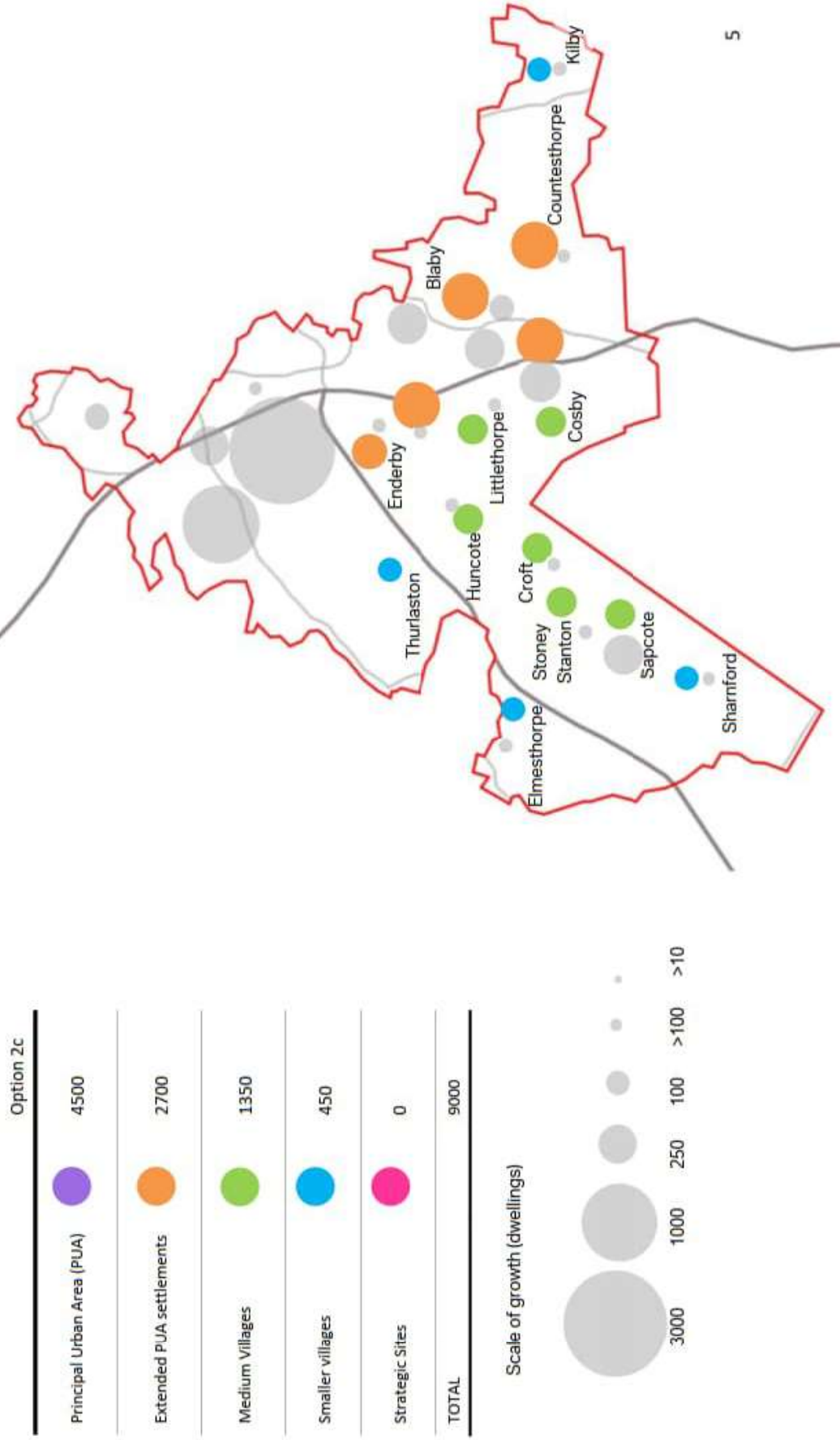
## Scenario 2: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (Low) (9,000 dwellings)

### Option 2b – Extended Principal Urban Area Focus



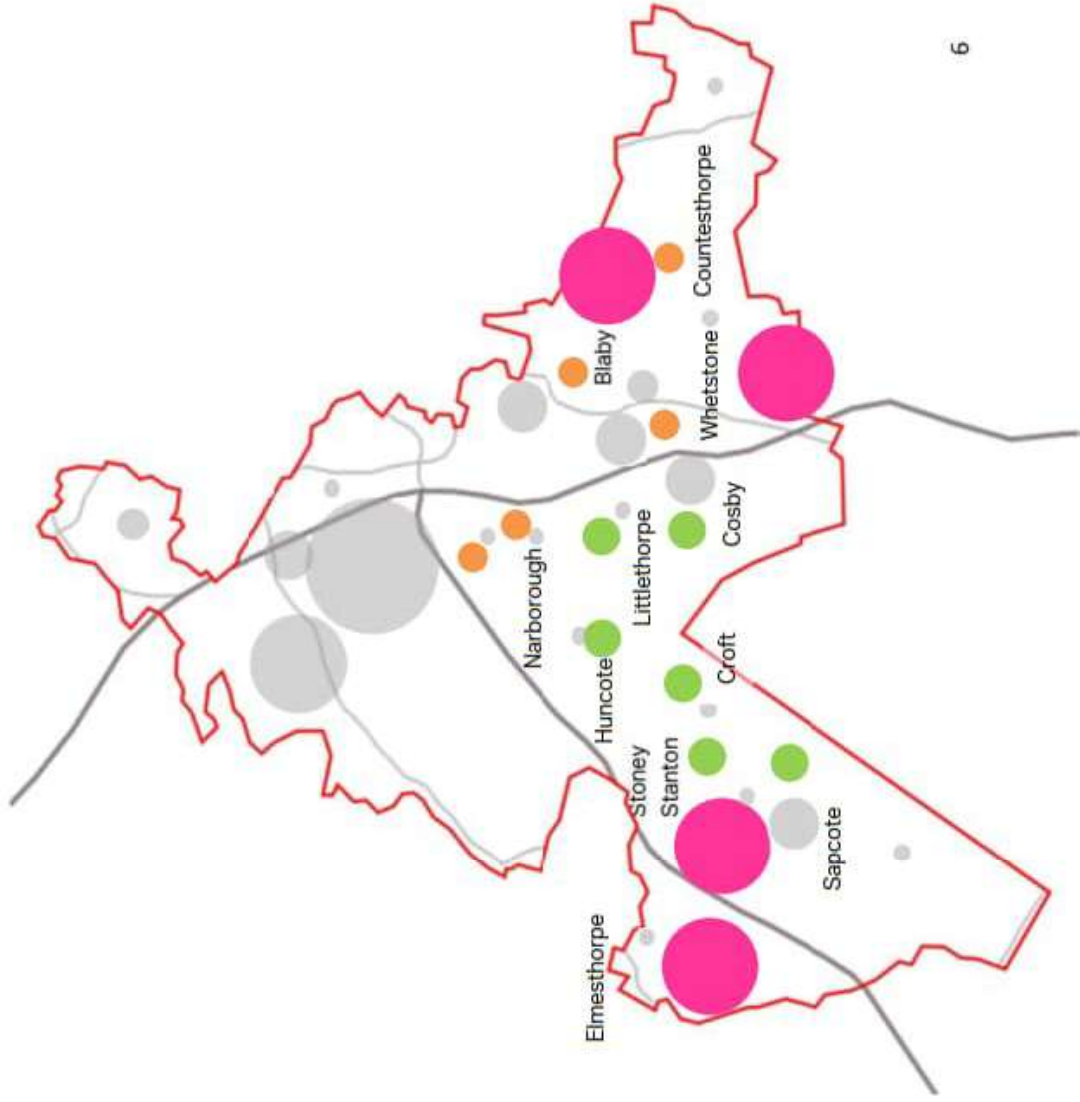
## Scenario 2: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (Low) (9,000 dwellings)

### Option 2c – Spread the Distribution





## Scenario 2: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (Low) (9,000 dwellings) Option 2d – Strategic Sites/ Garden Villages



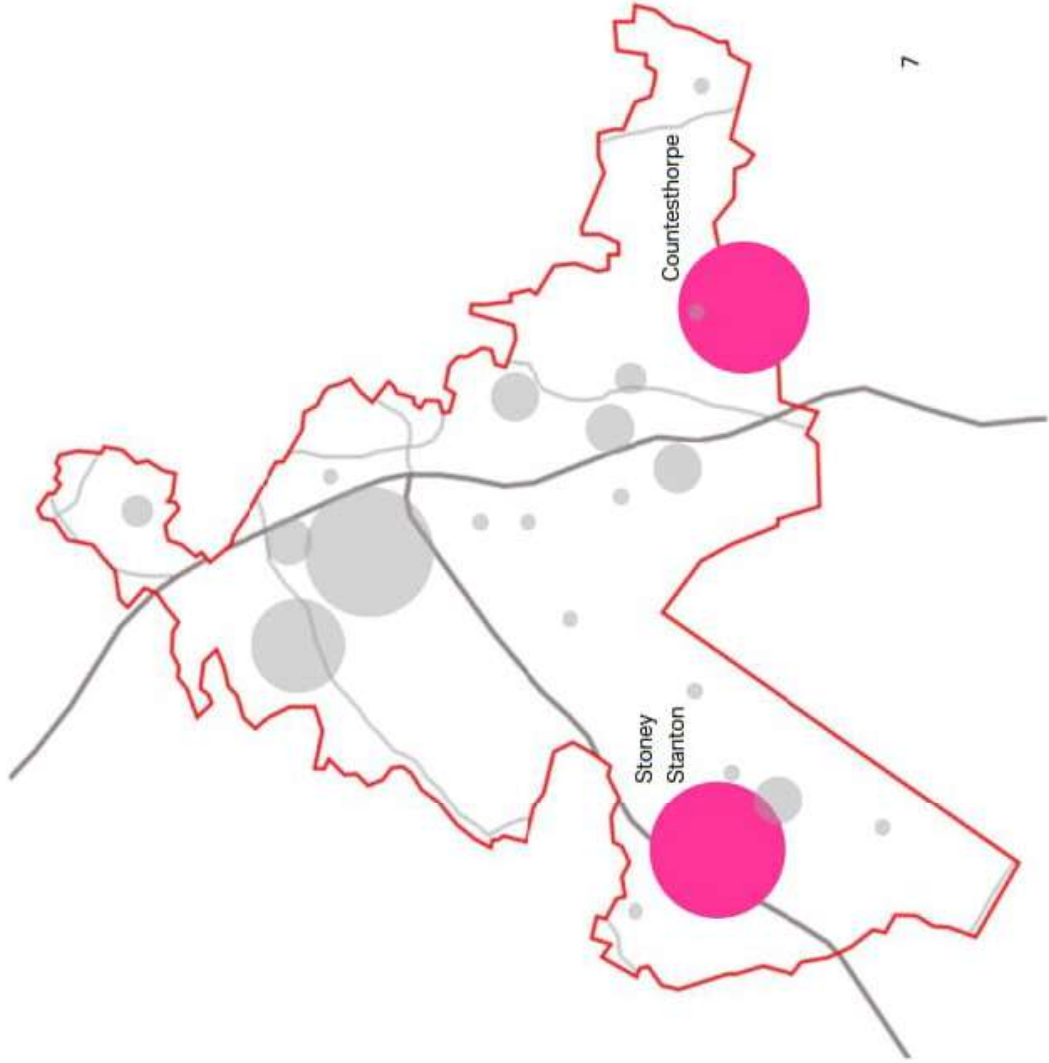
## Scenario 2: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (Low) (9,000 dwellings)

### Option 2e – Single New Settlement

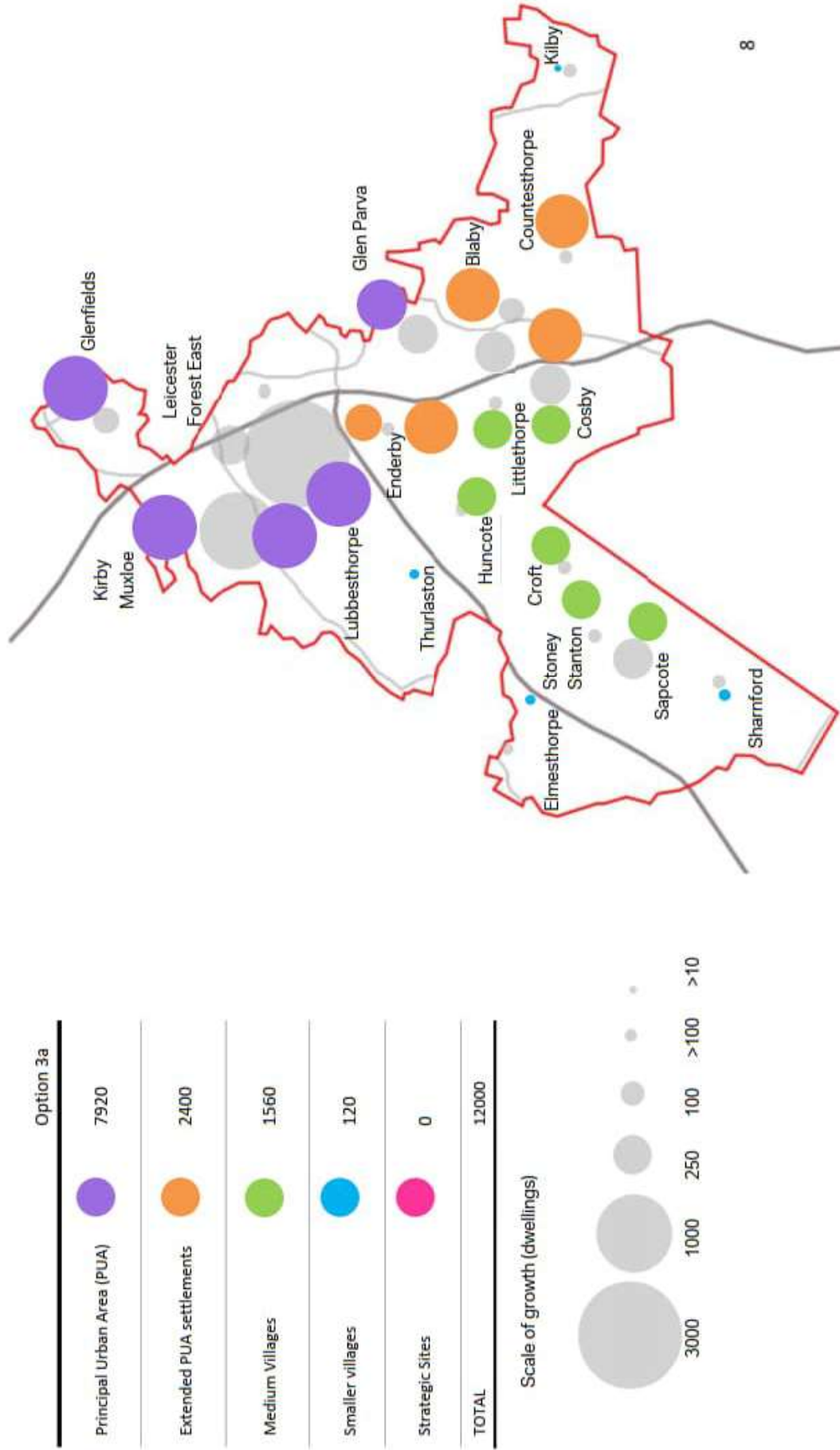
	Option 2e
Principal Urban Area (PUA)	4050
Extended PUA settlements	0
Medium Villages	0
Smaller villages	0
Strategic Sites	4950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9000</b>

Scale of growth (dwellings)	
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# Scenario 3: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (High) (12,000 dwellings) Option 3a – Principal Urban Area Focus

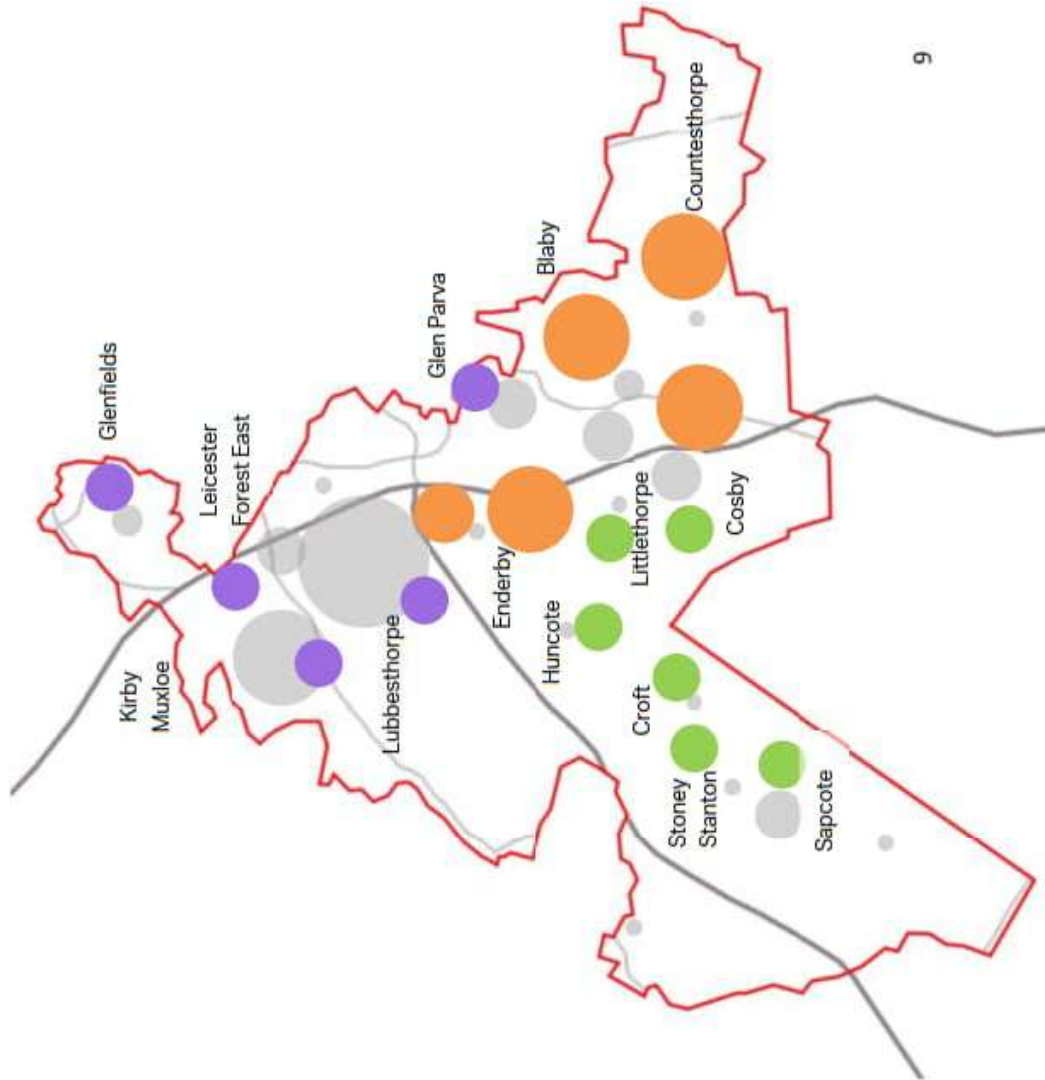


# Scenario 3: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (High) (12,000 dwellings) Option 3b – Extended Principal Urban Area Focus

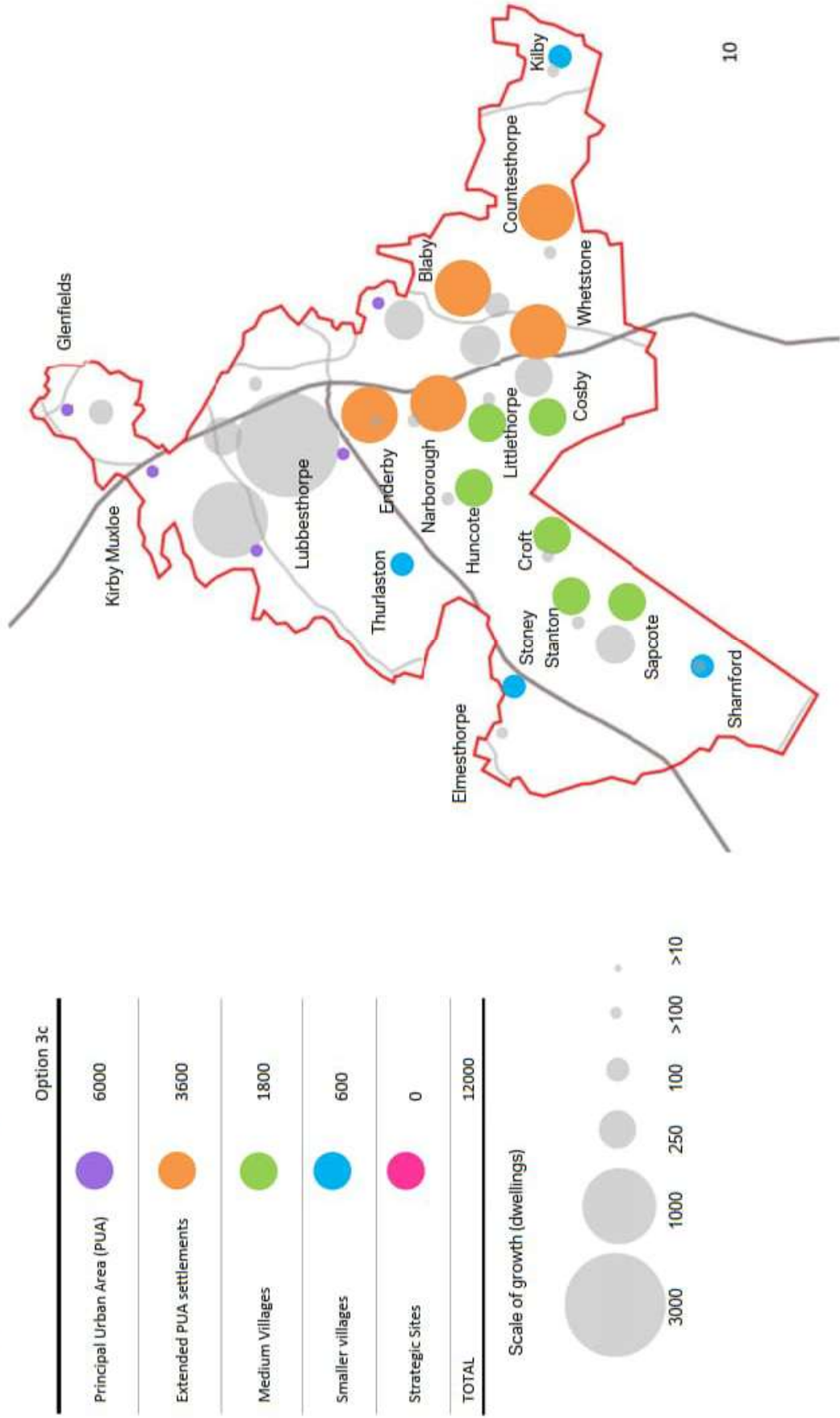
	Option 3b
Principal Urban Area (PUA)	6600
Extended PUA settlements	4200
Medium Villages	1200
Smaller villages	0
Strategic Sites	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12000</b>

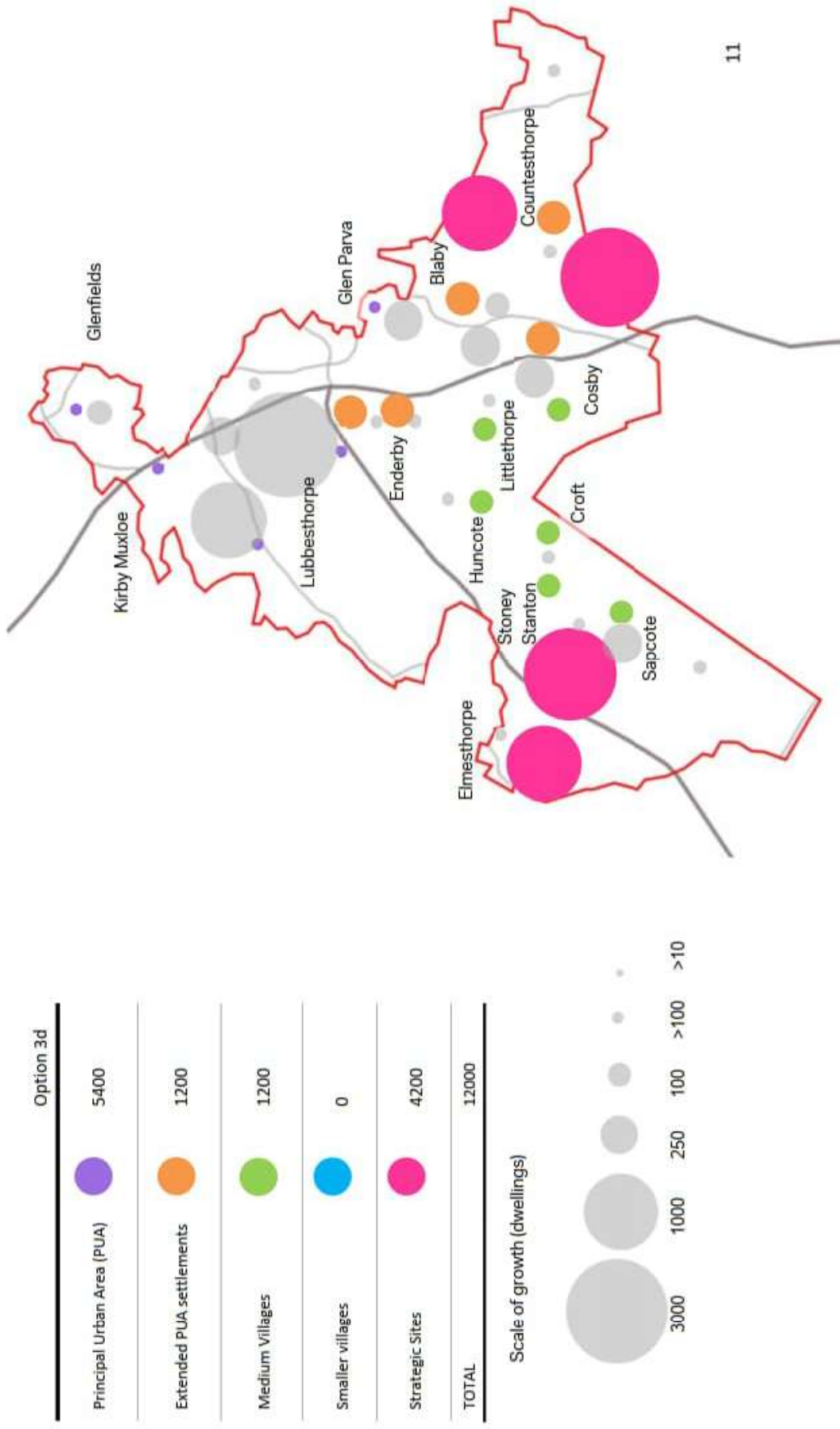
Scale of growth (dwellings)	3000	1000	250	100	>100	>10



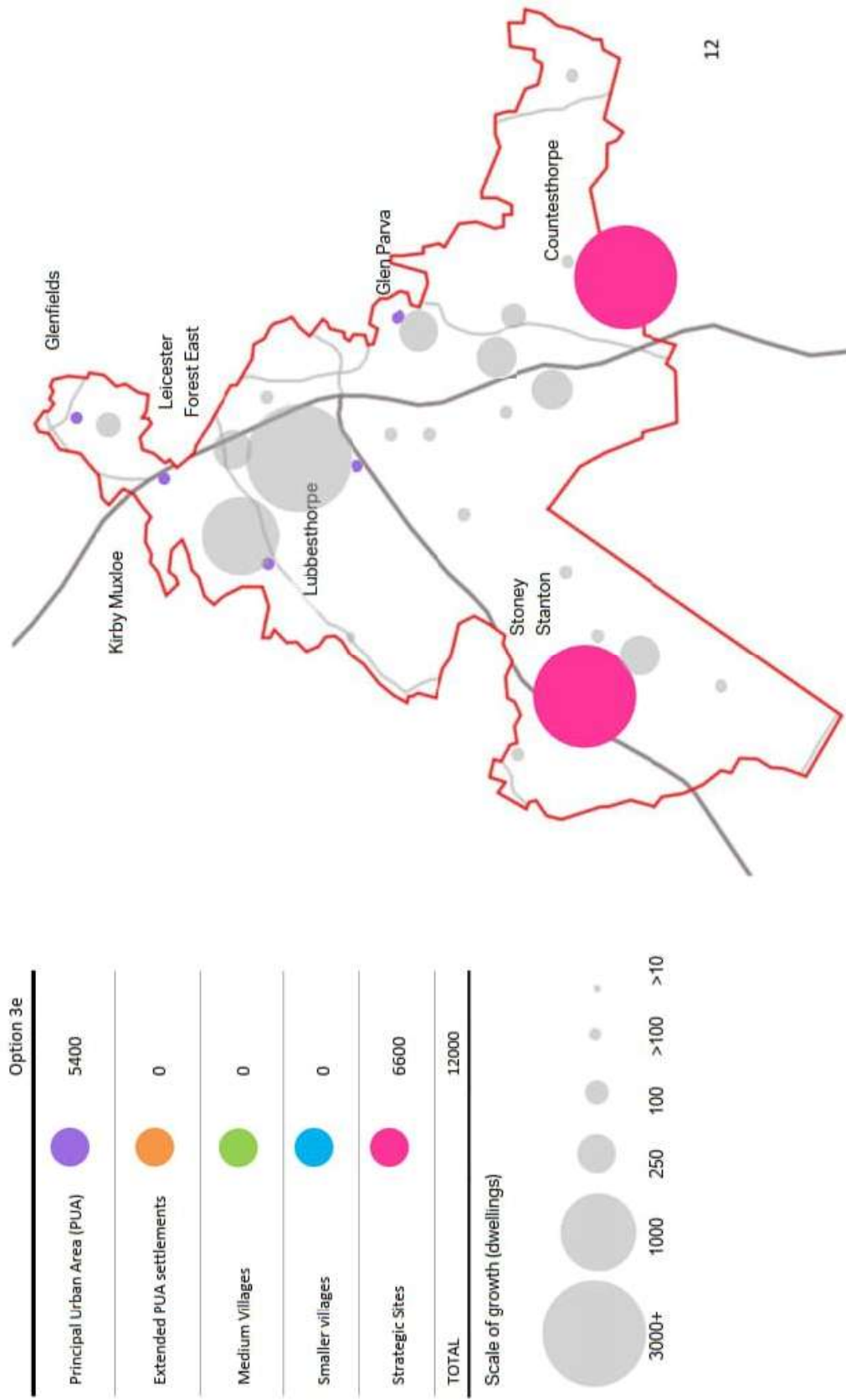
# Scenario 3: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (High) (12,000 dwellings) Option 3c – Spread the Distribution



## Scenario 3: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (High) (12,000 dwellings) Option 3d – Strategic Sites / Garden Villages



## Scenario 3: Standard Methodology plus unmet need (High) (12,000 dwellings) Option 3e – Single New Settlement.



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# Appendix C: Detailed Appraisal of Spatial Options

## 1. Population and housing

### Overview

- 1.1.1 The spatial options will accommodate between approximately 6,500 and 12,000 dwellings within the District. Allocating a large number of dwellings within close proximity to existing urban areas and the Leicester Urban Area is likely to have positive outcomes as it would promote compact settlement patterns and reduce urban sprawl. This is a similar pattern of growth to that promoted in the current Plan, and is reflected by committed development. Development in such locations is likely to lead to positive effects on the population and community by bringing closer where people live and work within a suitable location, whilst also enhancing the offer of services, facilities, improvements of public realm and access to green space. At the higher scales of growth there are opportunities to support improvements to transport infrastructure and promote walkable communities. However, without such enhancements, there could be increased pressure on existing infrastructure and services.

### Spatial Options Analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 1.1.2 **Option 1a** seeks to meet the housing needs across the District through a reliance on existing committed development. Only small pockets of growth in the extended PUA, medium villages and smaller villages are proposed. In terms of housing delivery, there are sufficient site options to meet needs and to provide a buffer to ensure delivery. The additional growth in the extended PUA ought to be well located in relation to demand for housing in urban areas, and the sites would be smaller scale and possible to bring forward simultaneously. In the short term, this is positive in terms of housing development. However, the range of existing sites across the district is limited, and there is less flexibility should delivery rates at committed sites not come forward as expected.
- 1.1.3 This option, with the lower scale of growth, does not allow for additional opportunities to expand communities or allow for additional strategic sites which could deliver large communities and have potential to improve connectivity, infrastructure, social cohesion and housing communities.

- 1.1.4 There will be small scale growth spread across Thurlaston, Elmesthorpe, Sharnford and Kilby. This scale of growth would be very small though at each settlement and in combination.
- 1.1.5 The overall effects are dependent upon the range and number of additional sites allocated to meet needs. Without flexibility built in, there is potential for minor negative effects, as there would be limited flexibility and choice in terms of the location and size of existing committed sites. However, building in flexibility would mean that more sites were identified in the supply to ensure that needs are more likely to be met. This would be a **minor positive effect**.
- 1.1.6 On a more strategic level, this option does little to address unmet needs from Leicester.

## Scenario 2

- 1.1.7 All the options under scenario 2 raise the level of growth to 9000 dwellings, which would provide greater ability to meet local housing needs and a proportion of unmet needs from Leicester City.
- 1.1.8 **Options 2a, 2b and 2c** involve varying levels of expansion to existing urban settlements, but mostly adjacent to the main urban areas near to the PUA such as Narborough, Enderby, Whetstone, Blaby, Countesthorpe and surrounding Medium Villages (Sapcote, Stoney Stanton, Littlethorpe, Croft, Huncote, Cosby). Compared to Option 2a, lower growth is positioned in the PUA in Option 2b whilst Option 2c places more of the growth in smaller villages with potential development locations (i.e. Elmesthorpe, Sharnford, Thurlaston, Kilby).
- 1.1.9 Each of the options is positive in relation to overall levels of growth, but the distribution of housing land would determine where these benefits were felt. **Option 2a** provides a spread of development across the district that ought to allow for a range of choice to the market. It also provides a proportion in the immediate PUA, which ought to be well linked to Leicester. Therefore a **significant positive effect** is predicted.
- 1.1.10 **Option 2c** offers a similar spread of development to Option 2b, but rather than growth being focused in the PUA, there is a greater focus on the medium and smaller villages. This too should offer a wide range of choice and flexibility, but some areas may not be as well-connected to Leicester. Nevertheless, a **significant positive effect** is predicted from a housing and population perspective.
- 1.1.11 **Option 2b** places most of the additional growth in the extended PUA, but less in the PUA, and a limited amount in other villages. Whilst the overall level of growth is positive, and would be well connected to Leicester, the spread of development is limited to a small number of locations.

- 1.1.12 Therefore, there is an element of uncertainty related to **significant positive effects** being generated (i.e. would the choice of housing locations help to meet needs for a range of communities?).
- 1.1.13 **Options 2d and 2e** introduce strategic site options which will accommodate the bulk of additional growth. As such, there would be more limited development in the extended PUA settlements, medium villages and smaller villages (particularly for option 2e).
- 1.1.14 Strategic sites could offer benefits such as infrastructure improvements to the existing local communities. The scale of development would also support substantial affordable housing, a range of housing typologies and supporting local services and facilities. However, the large nature of the strategic sites could mean that delivery takes place over a longer time period. Depending upon the precise location of the strategic sites involved, some growth could be well located in relation to Leicester (for example strategic sites at Blaby and Whetstone Pastures), whilst others are slightly more disconnected (at Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton).

**Option 2e** places all additional growth in a single strategic site, and therefore does not take full advantage of opportunities to expand existing settlements. An over-reliance on one strategic site could also be detrimental in terms of short term delivery of housing and providing flexibility and choice. As such, only **minor positive effects** are predicted.

Option 2d still includes growth in other settlements across the district, and could possibly include more than one strategic site. This lessens the reliance on one large strategic site. Therefore, a potential **significant positive effect** is predicted.

### Scenario 3

- 1.1.15 Each of the options at this scale of growth provide a substantial uplift on growth compared to the needs identified for Blaby District. In this respect, all of the options are likely to ensure that local housing needs are met in full, as well as catering for unmet needs from the City of Leicester. The distribution of development will also influence the nature of effects and where the benefits are most likely to be felt.
- 1.1.16 **Option 3a** proposes the largest amount of growth for the PUA. Existing committed sites such as the Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) in Lubbesthorpe make up a substantial part of this growth. However, additional growth would accommodate up to 2637 additional dwellings in the PUA. Their location would be close to Fosse Shopping Park, employment and business parks, existing residential areas and open green space which is good for people's health and wellbeing (and therefore attractive for the housing market).

- 1.1.17 Growth in this location and the extended PUA should also have strong links to Leicester City itself, thereby ensuring a proportion of needs from Leicester are met close to where they are arising.
- 1.1.18 The Extended PUA Settlements would also be the focus of much growth, which would provide further choice along the urban fringes of Leicester. Taken together, the intensity of growth in this location ought to bring about major significant positive effects in relation to housing and population.
- 1.1.19 Development is also involved at the medium villages and smaller villages, which expands housing choice in these settlements and helps to support population retention in these areas.
- 1.1.20 Overall, **significant positive effects** are predicted for population and housing.
- 1.1.21 **Option 3b** involves less additional growth at the PUA, but expanded growth at the extended PUA. This approach is similar to options 1a and 2b in terms of housing provision given that it promotes the majority of growth along the periphery of the Leicester urban area but the scale of growth is higher. Therefore, similar positive effects are likely to arise in relation to meeting needs where they arise and at settlements with good accessibility.
- 1.1.22 Some additional growth is proposed at the medium villages, which ensures there is still a choice of smaller sites across a range of settlements across the district. However, no additional growth is proposed in the small villages, which could be restrictive in those locations in terms of population retention and the vitality of settlements.
- 1.1.23 Whilst the overall effects are likely to be **significantly positive** in relation to housing, the benefits would be spread less evenly under this option.
- 1.1.24 **Option 3c** still involves a large amount of growth at the extended PUA, and adds growth to the large committed developments in the PUA itself. This will help to address needs in the urban areas, which is a positive approach. However, this option also disperses some of the additional growth away from PUA, seeking to involve the Medium Villages and Small Villages more substantially. From a centre hierarchal perspective this makes sense to follow the existing urban settlement patterns. It also rebalances the housing market across the district, given that the vast majority of existing commitments are focused in the PUA. Another benefit of this approach is that it provides a wider choice of locations for growth, which will support existing communities in a range of settlements that may wish to remain living in that area. It also helps to encourage a boost in short term supply as the number of site opportunities that could commence simultaneously would likely be higher. As a result, this option is predicted to have **significant positive effects** in terms of housing and population.

- 1.1.25 **Options 3d and 3e** focus additional growth at strategic sites, with Option 3e almost entirely relying upon a strategic site to deliver all additional growth.
- 1.1.26 In terms of locational effects, these two options are similar to Option 2d/2e however at a higher scale of approximately 3,000 dwellings more.
- 1.1.27 Increasing this scale of growth will have significant positive effects in terms of the delivery of housing needs for Blaby District and Leicester. Strategic sites of such a scale ought to support new communities with high quality housing and a range of facilities, and this is positive in terms of creating sustainable communities. This could also have wider reaching benefits for nearby settlements. The relationship between new communities and Leicester City would depend upon the exact location of growth and the infrastructure improvements that are created. The links would likely be less strong than existing settlements in the PUA and extended PUA though.
- 1.1.28 A drawback of these two approaches is the limited growth afforded to other settlements. Whilst option 3d does include growth for certain settlements, option 3e would not support populations within any other settlements, and therefore, the choice of housing and locations to live would be more limited. For some smaller settlements this could lead to negative effects on the population and vitality of services in the longer term.
- 1.1.29 A reliance on one or two large strategic sites could also be problematic in terms of ensuring delivery in the short and medium term. There will be infrastructure requirements, and a phased approach to growth could limit the number of development parcels that can come forward. Given that the existing committed developments already consist of large SUEs, such a focused approach might not bring about significant positive effects (at least not in the short term).
- 1.1.30 Overall, a **significant positive effect** is predicted, as the scale of growth being planned would exceed local needs and help to support the wider City targets. However, there are uncertainties related to delivery, and some areas may suffer from a lack of further growth.

## Summary

- 1.1.31 There is sufficient land supply to meet local housing needs for any of the options. However, it would likely be necessary to allocate more housing than the overall housing need figure to ensure that there is flexibility to meet the targets proposed under each option. The effects for option 1 are less positive when compared to the higher growth options because the option does not provide the opportunity to contribute to the unmet needs of Leicester.

1.1.32 For the higher growth options, this provides a degree of flexibility in terms of meeting local needs (and also a proportion of Leicester’s unmet needs), which should ensure that significant positive effects are achieved for Blaby District. The distribution of growth is important though, and those options that present a more balanced dispersal of growth are likely to be more beneficial to a wider range of populations, whilst offering greater choice and flexibility in terms of the locations for new homes.

1.1.33 The options that rely solely on strategic sites carry a degree of uncertainty, given that this limits flexibility in location and there could be short term delivery issues.

1.1.34 It should be noted that the higher growth options (particularly scenario 3) would also produce positive effects for neighbouring authorities, particularly Leicester, by helping meet a greater proportion of housing needs in the wider Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA).

Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
+	++	++	++	++	++ ?	++	++	++	++	++ ?

## 2. Health and Wellbeing

### Overview

- 2.1.1 Blaby is one of the 20% least deprived Local Authority areas within England. Accordingly, levels of health are generally good. However, there are still health issues in specific locations and for particular groups. For example, there are small pockets of higher deprivation in Glen Parva, Braunstone, Sapcote, Whetstone and Blaby (IMD, 2019).
- 2.1.2 In making predictions about the potential effects of each option, assumptions are made about the potential effects on healthcare provision. It is presumed that relatively small amounts of growth could be accommodated at existing health care facilities such as existing general practice services, or that improvements could be secured through contributions. However, this will depend upon current capacity, planning from healthcare commissioners, and the extent of development carried out across the district and in specific locations. Where levels of growth are more substantial, it is possible that pressures on health care infrastructure will arise unless new facilities can be funded. This could be through pooling of contributions, or on larger strategic sites through securing entirely new facilities.
- 2.1.3 There is a network of green infrastructure across the district and where these are accessible to communities it is presumed that it would be beneficial for people's health and wellbeing. Currently across the District there are no significant accessibility shortfalls from parks and gardens and informal open space, however the quality of some facilities require improvements in most locations. Development contributions could offer the potential to secure such enhancements.
- 2.1.4 There is a need to consider the health and well-being impacts that development could have upon residents. This includes the benefits growth can bring in terms of improving health and wellbeing facilities, upkeeping public green spaces to a high standard and considering active transport.
- 2.1.5 Site allocations will need to meet the requirement of providing adequate play, open space and green infrastructure where possible, and to also retain in situ or replace facilities where these are located within site options.

### Spatial Options Analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 2.1.6 **Option 1a** has **minor positive effects** for health and wellbeing as the additional growth on top of committed development is not significant.

- 2.1.7 Most of this is concentrated in the extended PUA, and would not be of the scale to support new school and health facilities.
- 2.1.8 However, improvements to existing facilities would be presumed. The level of growth would not contribute to significant improvements to existing health and wellbeing facilities and infrastructure, but the growth is positioned in relatively accessible locations with access to play, open space and green infrastructure. There could be some loss of greenfield land, which could cause localised amenity concerns. However, such land would not necessarily be publicly accessible, and development could possibly lead to some minor improvements. There would also be potential to avoid and mitigate effects.

## Scenario 2

- 2.1.9 **Option 2a** provides relatively small amounts of additional growth across the PUA, with greater amounts distributed to the extended PUA and medium villages. Limited additional growth is also involved in the smaller villages.
- 2.1.10 Several site options within the PUA and Extended PUA have relatively good access to services and facilities. The scale of growth involved would likely require upgrades to school and health facilities (or perhaps new / satellite facilities), which should be possible to implement through development contributions depending on the capacity of facilities and the space available to expand. This is predicted to have minor positive effects. The areas that are most deprived within the District are those bordering City of Leicester and Sapcote parish. Development in these locations could be beneficial for health in terms of the provision of affordable homes, the improvement of the public realm, and upgrades to healthcare, schools and recreational facilities. Without upgrades to healthcare services, there could be negative implications on existing facilities (in terms of longer waiting times etc). However, with planned upgrades and possibly new facilities in the longer term the effects ought to be positive by concentrating investment into areas of need.
- 2.1.11 At the medium villages, the amount of growth involved at each settlement would be less likely to support new facilities, but it is presumed would contribute towards improvements as required. This will depend upon the current capacity of facilities and their ability to physically expand if necessary. At this stage, minor positive effects are anticipated.
- 2.1.12 The level of growth at small villages is very small and likely to have neutral effects in terms of access to schools and health care because only a small amount of development would be located in less accessible locations. There may be some knock on implications for the larger settlements though (which would need to accommodate additional demand for facilities).

- 2.1.13 In terms of recreation, the majority of site options across the district are located on the urban fringes. There would be a loss of greenfield land, and this could affect amenity and mental health / wellbeing for nearby communities that value these green spaces. These are minor negative effects for all locations. Whilst there would be a loss of greenfield land, much of this is not public open space or used for recreation. Development of larger site options may provide opportunities to enhance open space provision for new communities and existing residents. Contributions could also be made towards the improvement of existing facilities. These are minor positive effects.
- 2.1.14 Overall, this option is predicted to have mixed effects in terms of health and wellbeing. On the one hand, **significant positive effects** are predicted as development will bring affordable housing and investment in local school, healthcare, community facilities and open space. Also, the distribution proposed would be unlikely to put undue pressure in any particular location. On the other hand, temporary **minor negative effects** are recorded to reflect the loss of amenity and disturbance that would be caused by construction of new homes on greenfield land on the urban fringes. However, these issues ought to be possible to minimise and mitigate, so these effects are uncertain to an extent.
- 2.1.15 **Option 2b** will not place additional growth within the PUA but rather spread it more extensively across the Extended PUA. Some growth is still involved at the Medium Villages but not at the Smaller Villages.
- 2.1.16 This approach will put more pressure on individual settlements in the extended PUA. The scale of growth involved is such that existing school and healthcare facilities may not be able to accommodate growth without new facilities being provided. A coordinated and planned approach with health and education commissioning groups would help to ensure that new facilities could be secured in each location (given the wider catchment areas they serve and the fact that existing facilities are located here), which ought to be a significant positive effect with regards in these locations (and could also benefit wider communities).
- 2.1.17 With regards to the medium villages, the scale of additional growth is relatively modest at each settlement and would be likely to have neutral effects with respect to health care and education facilities.
- 2.1.18 In terms of recreation, the level of growth involved in the extended PUA would likely involve the loss of substantial greenfield land. Some sites are already within proximity of accessible natural greenspace, whilst the larger peripheral sites are not within ideal walking distance. However, much of this is not public open space or used for recreation.

- 2.1.19 Development of larger site options will provide opportunities to create new open space, green infrastructure and community facilities and this ought to provide the potential for positive effects. A few potential sites actually consist of public open space, but it ought to be possible to accommodate the scale of growth involved without needing to lose these assets.
- 2.1.20 In terms of amenity, there are a number of site options located adjacent to existing residential areas that could have negative effects during construction, and may not be welcomed by existing residents. However, these effects are not considered to be significant in the longer term, as new accessible green space should be accessible to surrounding communities. Other site options are located close to existing industrial estates and A roads, and residential development here may be affected by amenity issues such as noise, road traffic and other forms of pollution. For example, this is mainly an issue for sites close to Enderby and Glenfield. At the scale of growth presumed in each of the extended PUA settlements, some development could be expected in these locations. The scale of the site options should allow for mitigation, and so only minor negative effects are predicted.
- 2.1.21 Overall, this option is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** in terms of health and wellbeing. This is related to the focus of growth in the extended PUA, which should offer economies of scale in terms of supporting new and improving new facilities. **Minor negative effects** are also predicted in relation to amenity and wellbeing concerns associated with a loss of green space. However, mitigation and avoidance ought to be possible, but this is uncertain.
- 2.1.22 **Option 2c** also involves further growth in the extended PUA. Whilst at a slightly lower level than that for Option 2b, the effects in terms of access to facilities and recreation are likely to be similar in terms of bringing positive investment. Minor negative effects are also likely to occur in relation to amenity.
- 2.1.23 However, Option 2c places more growth in the medium villages and smaller villages. For the medium villages, access to existing open space is good, and the site options are not formal open space. There is therefore potential for enhancement to occur in this respect. Development of some site options located adjacent to existing residential areas could cause amenity concerns for existing residents living nearby, which are minor negative effects. The majority of potential site options are not constrained by surrounding amenity constraints, and so new development will not affect the health and wellbeing of new residents.

- 2.1.24 In terms of access to local services and facilities such as schools and healthcare, the scale of growth involved (more than 200 dwellings per settlement) could potentially put pressure on existing services, but this is unlikely to be of a level to support entirely new health care facilities or schools in each location. Therefore, there may be a reliance on such facilities elsewhere for some members of the community.
- 2.1.25 Indeed, some medium villages, such as Croft and Cosby, do not have GP practices. In terms of economies of scale, it may be better that the demand for such services from several nearby settlements are met in one place. This would be a matter for health and education bodies to consider alongside planners. As a result of this, some minor negative effects are anticipated.
- 2.1.26 This issue is more pronounced in the smaller settlements, some of which do not have any immediate healthcare facilities or secondary schools. As a result, new communities and existing people living in these areas may experience more difficulties accessing local health and education facilities. These are minor negative effects.
- 2.1.27 Overall, **significant positive effects** on health and wellbeing are still anticipated as a large amount of growth would be located in accessible locations such as the extended PUA. There would also be potential to enhance open space in many settlements across the district, and access to natural green space ought to be good. **Minor negative effects** are also recorded, as some communities could experience amenity issues, whilst a higher proportion of development would also be placed in locations that do not have local access to healthcare and education facilities.
- 2.1.28 **Options 2d/2e** place a significant proportion of additional development at the strategic sites. Currently all of the strategic site options comprise of mostly agricultural land and are not formally used for open space or recreation. Given the scale of the sites, it is probable that large areas of new open space could be created for new communities, and provided the scale and quality is sufficient this could also benefit communities from nearby existing settlements. In terms of recreation and open space (and the links to wellbeing), significant positive effects are therefore possible. There may also be potential to enhance linkages at some of the strategic site options which are adjacent to existing wildlife sites and open space.
- 2.1.29 In terms of access to local services and facilities, this would be entirely dependent upon whether the strategic site options provide on-site facilities. If this is not the case, the new communities would not be well serviced by, for example healthcare and education, locally. With Option 2d, the exact overall scale of growth and number of strategic sites would influence whether new primary schools, local centre, secondary school and GP would be supported and when. For Option 2e, one location for growth would be more likely, and this would provide critical mass for a greater range of new on site facilities.

- 2.1.30 The potential for significant positive effects in this respect is therefore more certain for Option 2e.
- 2.1.31 With regards to amenity, the strategic site options are somewhat isolated from existing communities and are in locations where amenity concerns should be possible to avoid and mitigate. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted in this respect for both Options 2d and 2e.
- 2.1.32 Option 2d also involves additional growth in the extended PUA and medium villages, at a scale that would be likely to have minor effects in terms of access to local services and facilities. The more dispersed approach compared to Option 2e does spread the benefits of development wider though.
- 2.1.33 Overall, option 2d is predicted to have uncertain **significant positive effects**. New communities ought to be developed with good access to some local services and facilities, and the remainder of growth across the district would be dispersed so as not to overwhelm any one location and to spread the benefits of growth. However, it is uncertain whether new healthcare and secondary education would be supported by the smaller strategic site options. Negative effects on health and wellbeing ought to be possible to avoid for this option in terms of amenity.
- 2.1.34 Overall, Option 2e is predicted to have **significant positive effects** as it should allow for a new community to be built that is self-sufficient in terms of local services and facilities. A green infrastructure led approach which ensures access to green space, recreation, maintains natural features and introduces areas of biodiversity habitat enhancement, should also help to avoid or minimise amenity issues for both new and existing communities. This approach would focus the benefits of development in just one part of the district.

### Scenario 3

- 2.1.35 **Option 3a** will place new homes within the PUA, which should be positive in terms of active travel, and access to a range of existing education and health services. However, this is uncertain because the capacity of existing services and facilities is not known. There is also a range of recreational and open space grounds within the PUA that are over 1ha and accessible. The site options should provide the opportunity to introduce new open space and community facilities in areas of need. However, some of the site options that would be required at this scale of growth are somewhat detached from the existing urban areas, and therefore access may not be as good in these areas (without a coordinated approach to growth). At the scale of growth involved, there may also be a need to build on sites that are existing open space. This is a potentially significant negative effect, but new development ought to provide enhancements that offset this to an extent.

- 2.1.36 Therefore, only minor negative effects are recorded. Growth in this area will need to be well related to large committed development such as the Lubbethorpe SUE (to make sure new facilities and transport routes between sites are linked together). The effects in the PUA are therefore somewhat mixed.
- 2.1.37 Given the higher overall level of growth involved for the options under scenario 3, there would also be considerable growth in other locations across the district.
- 2.1.38 This includes growth in the extended PUA, which ought to bring positive effects in terms of local services and facilities, open space and recreation, but could cause amenity concerns in some locations.
- 2.1.39 Growth in the medium villages could have mixed effects too. On the one hand, the levels of growth involved provide opportunities to enhance local services and facilities and affordable housing, but on the other could put some pressure on existing facilities and have amenity impacts. The effects in this respect are similar to Option 2c, which involves similar levels of growth in the medium villages, and some growth in the smaller villages.
- 2.1.40 Overall, **significant positive effects** are predicted as a large amount of growth will be distributed across the district and help to bring investment in local services and facilities and affordable homes. However, some growth is likely to be in locations that do not have ideal access to local services, could result in the loss of existing open space and there may also be short term effects in terms of amenity. This is a **minor negative effect**.
- 2.1.41 **Option 3b** involves additional growth in both the PUA and the extended PUA. As for option 3a, this could have mixed effects. On the one hand development is likely to be located in locations with good access to local services, and with potential for enhancement to open space, green infrastructure and community facilities. The lower level of growth in the PUA could mean that it is easier to avoid the development of site options that contain existing open space. The scale of growth involved in the extended PUA is the largest for any of the options. This puts greater pressure on these settlements in terms of local services and a loss of open space. However, it could create the economies of scale to support entirely new local services facilities in certain locations. Some of the site options may involve amenity concerns for existing and new communities, and hence minor negative effects are predicted.
- 2.1.42 At the medium villages, the amount of growth involved at each settlement would be less likely to support new facilities, but it is presumed would contribute towards improvements as required. This will depend upon the current capacity of facilities and their ability to physically expand if necessary. At this stage, minor positive effects are anticipated.

- 2.1.43 Overall, **significant positive effects** are predicted, mainly reflecting the benefits of growth in the extended PUA. **Minor negative effects** are also predicted due to possible amenity issues and short term impacts on the capacity of local services (should improvements not be secured in a timely manner to support large amounts of growth across the area).
- 2.1.44 **For Option 3c** significant positive effects are predicted associated with growth in the PUA and extended PUA. Similar to the other options involving growth in these areas, there could also be some minor negative effects.
- 2.1.45 This option involves the highest amount of growth at the medium villages and smaller villages. For the smaller villages in particular, this is likely to result in more housing being located in locations that are not well serviced by health care and other local services. The levels of growth involved in any one settlement may not be sufficient to support new facilities, although the prospect of creating hubs that serve several settlements might be a mitigating factor. In terms of recreation and open space, many of the smaller settlements have access to local open space, but are more distant from strategic open space sites. These areas are also less likely to be favourable for active and sustainable travel given their relative distance from jobs and services. These issues are less prevalent for the medium villages, but still noted.
- 2.1.46 Overall, this option is predicted to have **significant positive effects** in the PUA, but may also generate **significant negative effects** in relation to the other settlements across the district. This is dependent upon the sites involved, mitigation and enhancement and how new facilities are planned to deal with dispersed growth. As such the effects are uncertain.
- 2.1.47 For options 3d and 3e, even greater amounts of growth are directed towards strategic sites. The scale of growth required would mean that more than one of the strategic site options would be needed under option 3d. The maximum scale of growth for some of the sites may limit on site facilities being secured for healthcare and other local services supporting wide geographies. However, the larger strategic site options with substantial capacity (Whetstone Pastures and Stoney Stanton) would have better potential to accommodate higher levels of growth (and thereby bring more investment in services). For Option 3e, the scale of growth required would mean that two of the larger strategic site options would be required to deliver sufficient homes, both of which would support a range of local services and facilities (though full build out would not be likely in the plan period). For both options, the potential for **significant positive effects** therefore exist in terms of creating new sustainable communities.

## Summary

2.1.48 All of the options are predicted to have positive effects as they would bring with them investment in affordable housing and supporting local services and facilities, open space and community facilities. For the higher scales of growth (scenario 2 and 3) effects are predicted to be significantly positive, though there is a question mark over Option 2d (it is uncertain the extent to which new infrastructure could be secured at the level of growth involved). Negative effects could potentially occur too, given that growth could lead to amenity concerns for some communities.

2.1.49 Distributing a greater amount of growth to the medium and smaller villages could also place new homes in locations that have poorer access to health care and other local facilities, which accounts for options 2c and 3c performing slightly worse than the other distributions.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Health: Facilities and services	+	++	++	++	++?	++	++	++	++	++	++
Health: Amenity and accessibility	0	?	?	-	0	0	-	-	--	0	0

### 3. Biodiversity and Geodiversity

#### Overview

- 3.1.1 There is a relatively small number/area of nationally and locally designated wildlife sites within the District and surrounding areas. There are two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within Elmesthorpe and Glen Parva and several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), identified for their biodiversity and geodiversity value, scattered across the district at Narborough, Huncote, Croft, Enderby and Aston Flamville. Two of the SSSIs (Croft & Huncote Quarry and Enderby Warren Quarry) are designated primarily for geodiversity reasons.
- 3.1.2 There are a range of Local Wildlife Sites and Regionally Important Geological sites (RIGS) that hold value for wildlife, geodiversity or both.
- 3.1.3 In addition, there are numerous areas that are categorised as priority habitat such as deciduous woodland and grasslands.
- 3.1.4 The majority of existing development commitments are located within the PUA. This will lead to changes in the current ecosystems in this location, which consist of watercourses such as the River Soar and Sence, Rothley Brook, pockets of deciduous woodland and a Local Nature Reserve to the west of Glen Parva.
- 3.1.5 Additional growth in the PUA will therefore need to be considered in the context of such changes, and what implications additional growth in this location could have. The same principle applies for other committed development.
- 3.1.6 It is also important to acknowledge the role that local authorities will have to play in terms of contributing to a net gain in biodiversity. New development is likely to play a crucial role in this respect, as not only could it lead to development in sensitive areas, but will be required to achieve improvements whether this be through compensation and / or enhancement.

#### Spatial Options Analysis

##### Scenario 1

- 3.1.7 **Option 1a** involves minimal additional growth beyond the baseline position of commitments. It would be distributed across several of the settlements across the PUA, extended PUA, Medium Villages and Small Villages. The settlements involved contain several site options, of which the majority do not fall within areas of sensitivity. Therefore, given the fairly low additional numbers involved, **neutral effects** are predicted in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity. Should net gain be achieved, then a positive effect could be achieved through development, but this is not certain at this stage.

## Scenario 2

- 3.1.8 **Option 2a** will increase dwellings across the PUA (approx. 650 dwellings or potentially more to allow for flexibility in meeting this higher target). The sites involved would be mostly agricultural in nature with no designated assets likely to be affected. In combination with growth that is already committed, there will be further urbanisation in this location, which could affect connectivity between habitats of local value. It is expected that mitigation and enhancement measures would need to be in place, which should ensure that effects are neutral in this location.
- 3.1.9 More substantial growth is proposed across the extended PUA. Though there are SSSIs in these locations (Narborough Bogs and Enderby Warren Quarry), the site options would be in locations that are less sensitive from a biodiversity / geodiversity perspective and unlikely to have significant effects upon the SSSIs. Combined with existing growth in this location and also when joining up with the PUA development, the total area of greenfield land would decrease, which could potentially be a minor negative effect. However, development ought to offer the opportunity to improve the ecological value of sites across this area by introducing new habitat areas.
- 3.1.10 Though direct effects are unlikely (as described above), the PUA includes several Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in Kirby Muxloe, Glen Parva and surrounding parishes. Demand for access to these areas will likely increase with focused development and knock on effects occur (for example recreational pressures). This is an uncertain minor negative effect.
- 3.1.11 There is further development proposed across other settlements within the District, with the majority at the medium villages. There are SSSI sites located near to Croft and Huncote, whilst at Stoney Stanton there are several RIGs and local wildlife sites. However, despite the scale of growth, the number of potential site options involved should offer flexibility to avoid the most sensitive locations and / or to implement mitigating features. As a result, only an uncertain minor negative effect is predicted in this respect.
- 3.1.12 The level of growth involved in the small villages is not sufficient to cause any effects with regards to biodiversity and geodiversity, so neutral effects are predicted in this respect.
- 3.1.13 Overall, Option 2a is predicted to have **uncertain minor negative effects**. It is unlikely that significant negative effects will arise, and for most locations of growth, sensitive areas would be avoided. However, there could be some indirect effects on ecological systems as a result of cumulative growth across the PUA and extended PUA. Development at Huncote / Croft could also have effects on nearby assets, though avoidance / mitigation ought to be possible.

- 3.1.14 **Option 2b** is likely to have similar effects upon biodiversity and geodiversity as for Option 2a when considering the total quantum of growth in the PUA and Extended PUA together. Though more of the growth would be shifted towards the Extended PUA settlements, the main effects would likely be cumulative and indirect (such as pressure on existing wildlife sites). There are SSSIs in the extended PUA, and local wildlife sites, but the scale of growth and location of sites ought to mean that effects are avoidable. This is an uncertain minor negative effect.
- 3.1.15 The effects upon medium villages are likely to be similar, but the lower scale of growth involved provides further flexibility in terms of avoidance and mitigation. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted.
- 3.1.16 No growth is involved in the smaller villages, and so neutral effects are likely for these locations too.
- 3.1.17 Overall, the effects are recorded as **uncertain minor negative effects**; mainly related to the potential for cumulative pressures on natural habitats.
- 3.1.18 **Option 2c** is also likely to have similar effects on biodiversity and geodiversity however this scale of growth for the PUA and Extended PUA is lower than for Options 2a and 2b. Pressures in this location are therefore likely to be lower.
- 3.1.19 More growth is directed to the Medium Villages such as Croft and Huncote within close proximity to SSSIs and so the potential for negative effects for the Medium Villages is therefore higher for both biodiversity and geodiversity. This option also involves a greater amount of growth in the smaller villages, which tend to be more tranquil. Whilst not formally identified as important for wildlife, it is likely that increased urbanisation in these locations could have minor negative effects. Cumulatively, this amounts to minor negative effects for the smaller villages. As for other development across the district, mitigation and enhancement ought to be possible, and the dispersed nature of growth means that pressures in any particular location would be lower. Consequently, the overall effects for Option 2c from a district perspective are **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 3.1.20 **Option 2d** involves much less growth across the PUA / extended PUA, and so effects in this location are predicted to be neutral. The effects associated with medium villages and smaller villages would also be more limited.
- 3.1.21 **Option 2e** involves only growth at a single strategic site, and so effects elsewhere would be neutral.
- 3.1.22 The strategic sites in **Option 2d/2e** display different characteristics with regards to biodiversity and geodiversity. Therefore the exact effects will depend upon the locations involved and the nature of the development schemes.

- 3.1.23 The strategic sites are very large and are partly arable, farming land such as the Whetstone Pastures and Blaby locations. These areas do not contain designated sites, nor are there any nearby. Therefore, the potential for significant effects is likely to be low provided on site mitigation and enhancement is secured. The scale of the sites should also allow for enhancement to be achieved and good potential for biodiversity net gain.
- 3.1.24 The site at Elmesthorpe is more sensitive in respect of its location adjacent to Local Nature Reserve, and it also within fairly close proximity to a SSSI (Burbage Common and Woods). Development here could therefore present the potential for significant negative effects.
- 3.1.25 The site at Stoney Stanton does not overlap with any designated sites, and there is limited overlap with priority habitats. However, there are a variety of habitats such as hedgerows and trees that could be affected by development. The scale of development and the site ought to present the potential for mitigation and enhancement.
- 3.1.26 **Option 2d** involves approximately 3150 dwellings at the strategic sites. This could be accommodated in a number of ways. If spread across the different site options, the effects could largely be avoided as the schemes could be low density and avoid areas of greatest sensitivity but this approach might not be effective in terms of other objectives. An **uncertain effect** is predicted at this stage.
- 3.1.27 Overall, an **uncertain minor negative** effect is predicted for this option as it could lead to negative effects and depending upon the location of strategic sites that are allocated, could put pressure on designated sites.
- 3.1.28 **Option 2e** involves 4950 dwellings at strategic sites, which due to their size would more likely be accommodated at one or a combination of the larger strategic sites at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures. These locations contain arable land and some local wildlife features, so there is potential for negative effects. However, sensitive areas such as designated sites ought to be possible to avoid, and the scale of growth ought to allow for enhancements to be made a strategic level. At this stage the effects are considered to be **neutral / uncertain**.

### Scenario 3

- 3.1.29 **Option 3a/ 3b** involves the highest amount of growth for the PUA. The location of growth would most likely be on agricultural land, which has some value for wildlife (despite a lack of designated status). The scale of growth involved will lead to increased urbanisation, and the main issues are potentially related to fragmentation and cumulative pressure on agricultural land, semi natural greenspace and local wildlife sites.

- 3.1.30 Conversely, well designed development could help to incorporate biodiversity net gain across the PUA, and with a strategic approach, links between areas could be made. At this stage though, a precautionary approach is taken and so minor negative effects are predicted.
- 3.1.31 The amount of growth in the extended PUA would also be fairly substantial. Though direct effects upon wildlife are likely to be limited due to the location of site opportunities, the cumulative pressure on natural systems could create minor negative effects (for example pressure on the SSSIs at Narborough and Enderby). Again, enhancement could be a possibility, but this would need to be planned at a strategic level. Overall, the increase in development across the PUA and extended PUA would increase the extent of the urban area adjacent to Leicester, which could have minor negative effects on the objective of biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 3.1.32 Option 3a also involves growth in the medium villages. As described above, some of the locations are more sensitive than others. Therefore, higher scales of growth could potentially lead to significant negative effects in certain locations. The ecological value of most of the sites ought to be possible to increase, given that they are largely arable. A strategic approach to enhancement could also lead to improved connectivity of habitats between settlements. At this stage, a precautionary approach is taken, and so minor negative effects are predicted overall.
- 3.1.33 The scale of growth scattered across the smaller villages is unlikely to give rise to notable effects, and so neutral effects are predicted.
- 3.1.34 Overall, Option 3a avoids sensitive locations, but the cumulative pressure of development at the PUA / extended PUA could lead to negative effects. Furthermore, negative effects at medium villages near to SSSIs could occur. From a district perspective, a **minor negative effect** is predicted.
- 3.1.35 Option 3b involves less growth at the PUA, but shifts this primarily to the extended PUA settlements. The effects are therefore likely to be similar to option 3a in terms of cumulative pressures on the SSSIs, the local wildlife sites and ecosystems at the periphery of Leicester. The shift towards the extended PUA is perhaps marginally more problematic given that SSSIs and Local Wildlife Sites existing in this location. Overall, the effects in for the PUA and Extended PUA in combination are predicted to be minor negatives.
- 3.1.36 The scale of growth at the medium villages is slightly less, which ought to give more flexibility to avoid the sensitive locations. No development is proposed for the smaller villages, and so effects here are neutral.
- 3.1.37 The overall picture for Option 3b is a **minor negative effect**.
- 3.1.38 **Option 3c** pushes more growth away from the PUA and extended PUA, which reduces pressures in these areas.

- 3.1.39 The higher scale of growth in the medium villages could potentially give rise to significant negative effects should this involve development adjacent to or within influencing distances of SSSIs (such as at Croft). However, mitigation and enhancement ought to be possible, so the likelihood of this occurring is not certain.
- 3.1.40 This approach also involves a greater loss of arable land around the smaller villages. Whilst this is unlikely to affect designated assets, there are local features and some priority habitats that could be negatively impacted. This is a potential minor negative effect.
- 3.1.41 The overall picture for Option 3c is also a **minor negative effect**. Whilst, the negative effects would be spread across the district, the potential for disturbance to the SSSI at Croft Huncote could be greater, and there would still be an overall loss of greenfield land at this higher scale of growth. This brings negative effects for both biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 3.1.42 **Option 3d/3e** position most growth towards the strategic sites, and at a higher level when compared to 2d/2e.
- 3.1.43 When considering all of the strategic site options, the potential for negative effects exists in several locations. In particular, the location near Elmesthorpe borders priority habitats and designated sites including the Burbage Common & Woods LNR and Burbage Woods and Aston Firs SSSI. The effects could potentially be mitigated / avoided with lower capacity schemes and / or mitigation and enhancement measures. However, an uncertain **significant negative effect** is recorded. Development at the Blaby site would add to existing growth adjacent to Leicester, and could potentially put recreational pressures on nearby SSSIs and Local Wildlife Sites.
- 3.1.44 Overall, an uncertain negative effect is predicted in relation to the strategic sites for Option 3d. However, this option ought to avoid negative effects in other locations throughout the district (depending upon the location of growth in the medium villages). The picture from a district wide perspective is therefore recorded as a **minor negative effect**.
- 3.1.45 Option 3e places virtually all of the additional growth to the strategic sites. Therefore, effects elsewhere in the district are likely to be neutral.
- 3.1.46 At the scale of growth involved for this option both the Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures site options would need to be brought forward as neither is of sufficient size alone. The sites are not sensitive in terms of designated sites, but the scale of growth involved means a lot of greenfield land would be lost. The strategic nature of the sites ought to allow for enhancement to be incorporated. At this stage, an **uncertain minor negative effect** is predicted from a district perspective.

## Summary

- 3.1.47 The distribution of development is considered unlikely to cause significant negative effects at lower levels of growth (i.e. for scenarios 1 and 2), as there would be flexibility to avoid the small number of sites that are more sensitive in terms of designated sites. The flexibility is somewhat lower at the higher growth scenario 3, but significant effects are still unlikely from a district wide perspective.
- 3.1.48 Whilst the effects are minor negative overall for each option under scenario 3, the location of effects differs depending upon the spatial approach and ultimately the specific sites identified for development. This is also the case for scenario 2 options, but there is greater likelihood that negative effects could be mitigated regardless of distribution (hence the uncertainties recorded).
- 3.1.49 For all options, mitigation and enhancement is likely to be possible, and this could in fact lead to positive effects. However, without the benefit of scheme details, a 'policy / mitigation off' approach is taken at this stage. It is acknowledged that higher levels of growth could conversely lead to greater opportunities for net gain, as this should be a requirement for all new development. The larger nature of sites should also allow for areas to be set aside for habitat creation.
- 3.1.50 In terms of opportunities, a strategic approach to green infrastructure provision could help to strengthen links between built up areas and settlements. This approach should be explored as the preferred strategy emerges.

Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
0	?	?	?	?	0 <sup>?</sup>	-	-	-	-	?

## 4. Cultural Heritage

### Overview

- 4.1.1 Across Blaby there are a broad distribution of approximately 200 listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas which are of importance and contribute to the Districts cultural heritage. There are also a range of locally important assets that contribute to community identity. Development has the potential to affect these heritage assets either directly or indirectly.
- 4.1.2 The nature of effects could be negative by changing the character of an area, or can offer opportunities to enhance assets, either through regeneration of a specific asset or through improvements to an asset's setting and wider environment.
- 4.1.3 Whilst development has the potential to impact on the historic environment and cultural heritage, it should be noted that existing historic environment designations and local plan policies will offer a degree of protection to cultural heritage assets and their settings. The assessment should therefore be undertaken in this context.
- 4.1.4 Public realm facilities such as design, layout and car parking spaces should be considered when thinking about what aspects from development can affect the built historic environment.

### Spatial Options Analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 4.1.5 **Option 1a** will most likely have **neutral effects** on the historic environment as limited additional growth is proposed for all of the settlement areas and parishes. At the scale of growth involved, there is a great deal of flexibility to accommodate the housing target on site options that are less sensitive (i.e. they do not contain heritage assets and are unlikely to affect the setting of any such assets).

#### Scenario 2

- 4.1.6 **Option 2a** involves a modest amount of additional growth at the PUA. Depending upon the sites involved, the effects upon heritage could range from neutral to significantly negative. For example, there are sensitivities at Kirby Muxloe, but a range of other site options that could accommodate modest levels of growth without generating significant effects. Given the flexibility involved, the effects are predicted to be neutral, but there is a degree of uncertainty.

- 4.1.7 At the extended PUA, there is also modest growth across a range of settlements. There are several sites where effects are likely to be neutral. However, some sites are in gateway locations to settlements and could potentially affect the character of the urban fringes (which correlate with Conservation Areas in some settlements such as Narborough and Enderby). There are sufficient site options of low sensitivity that ought to be able to accommodate the level of growth involved without generating significant effects. Therefore, neutral effects are likely across this area too.
- 4.1.8 Development is also proposed at the medium villages, which are of varying sensitivity. At some site option locations, listed heritage assets are adjacent (for example a Listed Church Building in Croft), whilst in others they are at gateway locations to the settlements (for example at Stoney Stanton, Littlethorpe, Cosby, Sapcote). Site options are adjacent to conservation areas in some instances too, such as at Cosby and Croft.
- 4.1.9 The scale of growth should offer some flexibility to avoid the more sensitive sites, but negative effects could potentially occur. As a result uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.
- 4.1.10 The scale of growth at the smaller villages is low, but even small scale growth could have impacts on cultural heritage in such locations. Given the number of site options, there is flexibility to avoid negative effects, and so uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.
- 4.1.11 In terms of archaeology, there are a number of site options that require further investigation into the significance of the history and heritage assets. These locations include Croft, Countesthorpe, Enderby, Huncote, Kilby and Kirby Muxloe.
- 4.1.12 Overall the effects upon heritage in any particular location ought to be minor or neutral. The cumulative effects are also unlikely to give rise to significant negative effects. Therefore, at a district level, the overall effects are predicted to be **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 4.1.13 **Option 2b** proposes limited additional growth for the PUA and so avoids effects there, but increases development at the extended PUA settlements. As described above, there are a range of site options that could be developed across these areas, of differing sensitivity. Given the higher scale of growth involved though, the flexibility to avoid negative effects would be lower. Therefore minor negative effects are predicted for the extended PUA.
- 4.1.14 Growth in the medium villages would be slightly lower than for option 2a, which would provide more flexibility to avoid the most sensitive locations. However, on the presumption that growth would be spread across the settlements, this still presents the potential for negative effects if certain sites are involved.

- 4.1.15 In the main though, the site options are more likely to affect the character of the settlement fringes rather than have direct impacts on heritage assets. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.
- 4.1.16 Overall, from a district perspective, this option is predicted to have **uncertain minor negative effects**. There is potential for minor negative effects at the extended PUA, but for most settlements in the district, it is considered less likely that negative effects will occur given the flexibility to avoid and mitigate (hence the uncertainties).
- 4.1.17 **Option 2c** is similar to 2b, but has less growth at the PUA and extended PUA. As a result, more growth is proposed for the medium villages and smaller villages in particular.
- 4.1.18 The effects in the extended PUA are likely to be similar to option 2b, but there is greater flexibility due to the lower level of growth. Therefore, an uncertain minor negative effect is predicted.
- 4.1.19 In terms of the medium villages, a higher scale of growth is more likely to mean that the form of settlements is altered, and this could affect cultural heritage (for example through development at gateway locations on the fringes of settlements, adjacent to Conservation Areas or closer to heritage assets). The larger scale of growth might also mean that sites closer to heritage assets are more likely to be involved (given the need to allocate a greater number of dwellings). As a result, there is more certainty that negative effects could occur. Minor negative effects are recorded accordingly.
- 4.1.20 The smaller villages exhibit a range of sensitivities, but a critical factor is the presence of listed buildings and the small scale nature of settlements. Therefore, even lower levels of growth could have implications for the historic environment. At the scale of growth involved there would be a need for considerable development at Thurlaston, Elmesthorpe, Kilby and Sharnford in relation to their current size. Though there are no identified sites at the other smaller villages, growth may also be necessary in those locations to reach the target involved for this option.
- 4.1.21 Kilby contains a number of listed buildings, and is relatively small scale. The potential for significant effects upon the setting of these assets and the character of the settlement therefore exist. Likewise, Elmesthorpe involves sites that contain or are near to listed buildings (For example Home Farmhouse Grade II listed building). Development could have significant effects through the loss of this asset or effects on setting. Even at this relatively modest scale of growth involved it may be difficult to avoid these effects.

- 4.1.22 Other smaller villages display sensitivities too, but known site options are less likely to have significant effects upon heritage given their proximity to assets. Overall, the potential for significant negative effects exists at a number of the smaller villages. At the scale of growth involved it might be difficult to mitigate and avoid such effects and so an uncertain significant negative effect is predicted.
- 4.1.23 From a district perspective, option 2c is predicted to have a **minor negative effect**. Though some locations would be protected / less pressured, it is possible that effects could occur in locations within the extended PUA and the medium villages. Though there is a degree of uncertainty, the effects at the smaller villages could potentially be significant. Therefore, it is more likely that the overall effects for the district will be negative.
- 4.1.24 **Option 2d / 2e** will involve a significant proportion of growth at strategic sites. Each strategic site option has its own characteristics and development poses potential negative effects in terms of the historic environment. Characteristics include natural features such as ponds, watercourses, hedgerows and evidence of human activity with field patterns and farm buildings. Whetstones Pastures contains a Grade 2 Listed Building and there are some aspects of archaeology from the roman and medieval times.
- 4.1.25 The other three strategic site options do not contain designated heritage assets, nor are they directly adjacent to any. However, there are built structures on the sites such as farm buildings and walls.
- 4.1.26 For option 2d, one approach is to spread growth across the strategic site options and so could potentially be accommodated without generating significant negative effects. However, this approach might not be the most feasible from other perspectives. Nevertheless, an approach that makes use of multiple strategic sites ought to offer some degree of flexibility to avoid and mitigate the most sensitive areas. Though Whetstone Pastures involves a listed building, a lower scale of growth could give greater flexibility to avoid demolition and to implement a more sensitive lower density design. Development of a lower scale at Stoney Stanton could be accommodated without generating significant effects, as too should be the case at Blaby and Elmesthorpe. However, impacts upon natural features and historic landscapes could occur and this will be more significant where fewer strategic site options are taken forward for development and land take / densities increases in any one particular area. Overall, minor negative effects are predicted at this stage, but there is uncertainty related to the exact sites and extent of development involved at each.
- 4.1.27 Option 2d also involves growth at the extended PUA and medium villages, but at a scale that ought to be possible to avoid significant effects. There still remain some sensitive locations, and so uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.

- 4.1.28 From a district perspective, Option 2d is predicted to have **uncertain minor negative effects**, reflecting the issues identified above.
- 4.1.29 **Option 2e**, focuses all the additional development at a single new settlement. The predicted effects will depend on the location of the growth. If all the growth is focused at the strategic site option at Stoney Stanton, it ought to be possible to limit effects, but a degree of harm could possibly occur given the scale of growth. However, a proportion or a larger amount of growth at the Whetstone Pastures strategic site option could give rise to significant negative effects
- 4.1.30 Conversely, for option 2e, pressure would be relieved from the settlements across the district, which is beneficial. However, despite this, the overall effects for the district are predicted to be **minor negative effects** at this stage (reflecting the issues that could occur at a large new settlement).

### Scenario 3

- 4.1.31 Option 3a allocates additional growth in the PUA. At the scale involved, it could potentially involve site options that have cultural heritage value. For example, Kirby Muxloe is particularly sensitive to development. There is a scheduled monument and Grade 1 listed building and also potentially below-ground archaeological features. Growth at Glenfield could also have implications for the setting of heritage assets, including a scheduled monument and numerous listed buildings. An expansion of growth at Leicester Forest East could have implications for the setting of listed farm buildings, which are already likely to experience a change to their character due to committed development.
- 4.1.32 The overall implications of high growth in the PUA could therefore be a significant negative effect depending on the location of the growth.
- 4.1.33 Due to the overall increase of growth for the options under scenario 3, there would still be a need for growth across the extended PUA settlements. This could lead to minor negative effects. Likewise, growth in the medium villages and smaller villages could also give rise to negative effects.
- 4.1.34 Overall, a **significant negative effect** is predicted in relation to option 3a. Significant effects are more likely to occur in specific locations at the PUA, and though the effects are of a more minor nature elsewhere, there would be cumulatively an adverse effect on heritage across several settlements in the district.
- 4.1.35 **Option 3b** concentrates additional growth across the Extended PUA. This takes some pressure from sensitive site options in the PUA, but the potential for significant effects in the PUA still exists depending upon location and scheme details. At this scale of growth a greater element of uncertainty is present. Therefore, uncertain significant negative effects are predicted.

- 4.1.36 The much higher scale of growth in the Extended PUA is likely to have mixed effects. On one hand, there are site options with low sensitivity that could accommodate some growth. However, the scale of growth means there is less flexibility to avoid more sensitive locations such as close to Conservation Areas. Large sites might also be required in gateway locations to settlements. Overall, this option therefore presents minor negative effects in these locations.
- 4.1.37 Growth in the medium villages would still be required, at a level that could generate minor negative effects.
- 4.1.38 In combination, potentially **significant negative effects** could occur from a district perspective. There is a degree of uncertainty though as discussed above.
- 4.1.39 **Option 3c** disperses growth more widely, and so the effects in the PUA ought to be avoidable. However, the potential for minor negative effects in the extended PUA remains.
- 4.1.40 The level of growth required in the medium villages and smaller villages could make it difficult to avoid sensitive locations and in some locations could lead to significant negative effects.
- 4.1.41 Overall, an uncertain **significant negative effect** is predicted for Option 3c largely reflecting the potential issues at the medium and small villages.
- 4.1.42 **Option 3d** would involve greater growth at the strategic sites, but several of the strategic site option locations are less sensitive. The effects are therefore minor negative.
- 4.1.43 Given the high overall scale of growth for options under scenario 3, there would also be a need to accommodate additional growth in the extended PUA and the medium villages. The level of growth involved though should allow for flexibility to avoid significant effects. Therefore, only uncertain minor negative effects are predicted for these locations.
- 4.1.44 Overall, this option is predicted to have **minor negative effects**. This relates to the potential loss of historic character in the countryside associated with the strategic site options. The potential for impacts on heritage assets at Whetstone Pastures is also a factor. Though effects elsewhere in the district are likely to be neutral or minor, in combination they contribute to a minor negative effect overall.
- 4.1.45 Option 3e by directing much of the additional growth to a new settlement, relieves pressure across the district, which is of benefit to several settlements. However the scale of growth required could lead to significant negative effects dependent upon the location of this growth.

4.1.46 Neither of the strategic site options are currently of sufficient scale and so more than one would be required to come forward, but not necessarily the full extent during the plan period. Therefore, the effects are likely to range between minor negative to significant. As a precaution, uncertain significant negative effects are predicted.

### Summary

4.1.47 For scenario 1, the effects are predicted to be neutral, as it is unlikely development would need to take place in sensitive locations. The scale of growth involved at different settlements would also be relatively low and therefore effects to heritage assets, overall character or built form would not be notable.

4.1.48 For scenario 2, it should still be possible to avoid significant negative effects regardless of the overall distribution strategy. However, there are some heritage assets that would be more likely to be affected. This gives potential for minor negative effects. For option 2c, the smaller size of the medium villages and small villages coupled with increased growth means that effects may be more difficult to avoid/mitigate. The effects at strategic sites are dependent upon the exact location and form of development.

4.1.49 For scenario 3, the flexibility to avoid sensitive areas reduces, and therefore potential significant negative effects could occur for all of the options apart from 3d (which would still only involve the strategic sites, rather than expanded development in other locations).

Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
0	?	?	-	?	-	--	--?	--?	-	--?

## 5. Minerals

### Overview

- 5.1.1 The District mainly contains resources of sand and gravel but also of igneous rock, with broad areas being identified for safeguarding in the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Though extensive areas of the district are identified as potentially containing minerals, this does not preclude appropriate development in those locations. A test would be applied to determine whether resources would be commercially extractable, whether they could be extracted prior to development, and a range of other exemptions apply. Therefore, it is unlikely that the presence of a minerals safeguarding area is a major constraint to most development opportunities. This is particularly likely in locations that are within or adjacent to built-up settlements, and so would be inappropriate for large scale mineral extraction anyway.
- 5.1.2 The only active minerals site in Blaby is Croft Quarry, which produces igneous rock and has permission for extraction over the plan period.

### Spatial Options Analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 5.1.3 At the scale of growth involved for **Option 1**, the extent of additional development required could be accommodated in areas that do not fall within mineral safeguarded areas. Even if development was proposed in such areas, the extent of effects would be minimal. Consequently, **neutral effects** are predicted.

#### Scenario 2

- 5.1.4 Each of the options at this scale of growth will require a greater release of land for housing development. There are locations across the whole settlement hierarchy that overlap with minerals safeguarding areas. However, the distribution of growth ought to allow for areas to be avoided for certain options.
- 5.1.5 For **Option 2a**, some additional growth in the PUA is involved, but there is limited overlap with minerals resources likely to occur. In the extended PUA, Whetstone and Blaby sites could overlap with minerals resources. However, effects would be anticipated to be minor. For the majority of medium villages, there is overlap at Croft, Cosby, Littlethorpe and Sapcote. The scale and nature of sites involved though would not be anticipated to cause significant effects with regards to mineral resources, and there is uncertainty whether the areas involved would be suitable for extraction anyway. As a result, **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted.

- 5.1.6 **Option 2b** involves a greater amount of growth in the extended PUA, and less in the medium villages (compared to 2a). This gives some greater flexibility in the medium villages, and reduces the potential for effects. In the extended PUA, at this scale of growth, there is likely to be some overlap with minerals safeguarded areas. However, the nature of effects would unlikely be significant, and there is uncertainty whether areas involved would be suitable for extraction. As a result, **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 5.1.7 Option 2c disperses growth so that the potential for overlap in particular locations is lower, and it ought to be possible to avoid areas of importance if necessary. There would still be likely to be small amounts of overlap in the medium and smaller villages, but effects are likely to be minor and uncertain because the scale of growth is low. As a result, **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 5.1.8 Option 2d involves additional growth at strategic sites. Depending on which strategic site options are involved, the effects could be neutral (for those where there is no overlap) or negative (the site at Blaby overlaps fully with minerals safeguarding areas). At this stage, **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 5.1.9 Option 2e involves one single strategic site, with both the larger strategic site options at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures not overlapping with mineral safeguarding areas. Therefore **neutral effects** are predicted.

### Scenario 3

- 5.1.10 Each option at this scale of growth involves more development, and this generally means that there is greater likelihood that sites would overlap with mineral resources. However, distribution plays a part.
- 5.1.11 For Option 3a, a large amount of additional growth is proposed in the PUA, and this is in locations that broadly avoid mineral resources. Additional growth across the extended PUA and medium villages could still overlap with resources, but the effects are similar to option 2c, which are **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 5.1.12 Option 3b involves more growth in the extended PUA compared to any other options, and this makes it more likely that there could be overlap with areas containing mineral resources. As such **minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 5.1.13 Option 3c involves higher levels of growth in the medium villages, where much of the land involved overlaps with mineral resources. The additional growth in the extended PUA and smaller villages is also relatively high and has potential to affect mineral resources. As such **minor negative effects** are predicted.

- 5.1.14 Option 3d would involve similar risks as option 2d with regards to the strategic site options. However, the higher scale of growth required might mean that the site at Blaby is more likely to be involved and which overlaps with minerals safeguarding areas. This option would also involve growth elsewhere in the district to meet the higher overall housing target, with some potential overlaps with mineral safeguarded areas. As such **minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 5.1.15 Option 3e also involves placing additional growth at strategic sites. Three of the four strategic site options including the larger sites are generally unaffected by minerals. Therefore, **neutral effects** are still predicted despite the higher overall level of growth involved.

### Summary

- 5.1.16 For option 1, the scale of growth is such that mineral resources would be unlikely to be affected. As the level of growth increases under scenario 2, the potential for development to overlap with mineral resource areas increases for Options 2b, 2c and 2d, but not so for Option 2a and 2e. For scenario 3, the level of growth is higher still, and therefore the potential for overlap with mineral resources is higher. The exception is option 3e, as the larger strategic site options do not overlap with mineral resources.
- 5.1.17 The effects are not likely to be significant as no specific minerals extraction sites are affected, and there would remain significant areas of mineral resources. It is also unlikely that many of the sites would be suitable for commercial minerals extraction, and if that were the case, there may still be potential to extract these prior to development.

Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
0	?	?	?	?	0	?	-	-	-	0

## 6. Waste

### Overview

- 6.1.1 There are legislative and policy drivers to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and to treat waste as a resource in a 'circular economy'.
- 6.1.2 Planning for waste has several components. Important aspects are the location of disposal and management facilities; which are dealt with through the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Other elements that are important from a Local Plan perspective are the location of development so as to ensure effective waste collection routes, specific design policies that seek to ensure effective management and collection of waste from households and businesses and to ensure the re-use and recycling of waste during construction. These latter elements are where the Local Plan has a greater influence. It is also important that waste facilities and infrastructure are safeguarded from land use changes that could have adverse effects.

### Scenario 1

- 6.1.3 The level of additional growth proposed is relatively limited, and therefore the amount of waste generated from construction activities and new homes would not be expected to be significant. The location of new development at the periphery of existing settlements is unlikely to be problematic from a waste collection perspective. As a result, **neutral effects** are predicted.

### Scenario 2

- 6.1.4 At a higher scale of growth, there will be an increase in waste generated from new developments (during construction and operation). Plan policies ought to ensure that waste can be collected and managed sufficiently, but the overall level of waste generated in the district is likely to be higher than would be the case compared to scenario 1. As a result, **minor negative effects** are predicted for each option. The distribution of development is unlikely to have an effect on the ability to collect and manage waste effectively (though a dispersed approach might be less likely to require entirely new collection rounds to be established to service new homes).

### Scenario 3

- 6.1.5 At a higher level of growth, the effects are likely to be more pronounced in terms of an overall increase in waste being generated in Blaby. However, this would likely lead to reductions in waste generation in Leicester, given that a large amount of unmet needs from the City would be accommodated in Blaby. Overall, the effects are predicted to be **minor negative**, as the overall trends for the district in relation to waste generation and recycling are unlikely to be significantly affected.

## Summary

6.1.6 The effects relating to waste are correlated to the amount of overall growth, with scenario 1 likely to have neutral effects, and the options under scenario 2 and 3 likely to have minor negative effects due to their increased level of construction and household waste generation.

Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## 7. Soil and Landscape

### Overview

#### Landscape

- 7.1.1 Within Blaby District there are several Local Character Areas which form the District's landscape. Though much of the district falls within the same broad landscape character areas, there are differences in natural features, building layout and design that provide distinction and a sense of place for each settlement.
- 7.1.2 It has been identified that across Blaby there are limited brownfield opportunities for growth, and that the consequences may mean loss of countryside and impacts on landscape and settlement pattern. Land contamination can also be an issue however opportunities to remediate sites could come from development.
- 7.1.3 The Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment 2020 suggests that in terms of landscape sensitivity, much of the district is of low moderate or moderate in the context of 2 – 3 storey residential housing and transport infrastructure. However the 'Soar Meadows' LCA is considered to be moderate – high sensitivity and forms part of Sharnford and Sapcote. More of the district is considered highly sensitive when it comes to commercial development, particularly large scale schemes.
- 7.1.4 The report found that landscape sensitivity is greater at the Smaller Villages such as Elmesthorpe, Aston Flamville, Wigston Parva, Sharnford, Cosby, parts of Countesthorpe and Kilby. Options that include growth around these particular areas may therefore be more likely to generate negative effects.
- 7.1.5 Future development is noted as a key pressure/ force of change to the Districts landscape and settlement character.

#### Agricultural land

- 7.1.6 With the exception of a small pocket of Grade 2 land, the agricultural land in the district is classified as Grade 3 according to the post 1988 land survey. Additional data outlines which of the Grade 3 land is most likely to be best and most versatile land. Locations identified as being more likely to contain BMV are pockets between Croft and Huncote, between Croft and Thurlaston, and running from Cosby towards Whetstone and Blaby. The remainder of Grade 3 land in the Borough is considered fairly likely to be BMV, but is not officially classified as such.

## Spatial Options Analysis

### Scenario 1

- 7.1.7 In the absence of additional growth, there will still be relatively large amounts of growth at the PUA, through the Lubbethorpe site and along the settlement edge of the Leicester Urban Area. The effects associated with such growth are not attributable to the Local Plan review and any associated development. However, it will change the context within which new development sits.
- 7.1.8 **Option 1a** will most likely have uncertain or neutral effects on the landscape and soil as it involves a very small level of additional growth across the district, or at any particular location. No additional growth is proposed for the PUA, so effects here are neutral. Whilst there is some growth in the extended PUA, it is fairly limited and could therefore be directed towards the areas of lesser sensitivity.
- 7.1.9 Growth in the medium villages would be very small, and therefore no effects are predicted in terms of landscape or soil.
- 7.1.10 There is a small amount of growth to be split between the smaller villages (less than 10 dwellings if split equally). These settlements are mostly of moderate sensitivity to housing growth, but Sharnford is part of the 'Soar Meadows' LCA which was considered to be of high sensitivity in terms of housing development. Whilst there are greater sensitivities in these locations in terms of landscape, the scale of growth is such that it ought to be possible to avoid and mitigate effects. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted with regards to landscape. Though some soil resources would likely be lost, this would be Grade 3, and in areas that are less certain to be best and most versatile. The loss would also be lower than 3ha in total. Therefore neutral effects are predicted.
- 7.1.11 Overall, this option is predicted to have **neutral effects** with regards to both landscape and soil.

### Scenario 2

- 7.1.12 **Option 2a** places the majority of additional development in urban areas close to Leicester (PUA and Extended PUA). Much of this growth is likely to be located on site options located within the Rothley Brook Fringe LCA, Thurlaston Rolling Farmland, Blaby, Countesthorpe and Whetstone Fringe LCA and the Lubbethorpe Agricultural Parkland LCA. There are several site options falling in areas of low-moderate sensitivity to housing development. At the scale involved, it should therefore be possible to avoid significant negative effects in this location in terms of landscape (neutral effects).

- 7.1.13 Much of the land is classified as Grade 3, with moderate potential for it to be best and most versatile. It is inevitable that some of this land would be lost permanently, which is a minor negative effect.
- 7.1.14 For the medium villages, there are risks associated with developing in the fringes between parishes. The landscape is of moderate sensitivity surrounding Croft, Cosby, Littlethorpe and Huncote. Therefore, growth here has potential to have minor negative effects. These locations are also more sensitive from an agricultural land perspective, as the Grade 3 land has been identified as being most likely to be best and most versatile.
- 7.1.15 Though some growth is proposed in the smaller villages, it is not of a scale thought likely to lead to negative effects in terms of landscape or soil resources.
- 7.1.16 Overall, this option is predicted to have a **minor negative effect** on both landscape and soil resources. The spread of growth is such that significant effects are unlikely to occur in any one location, or cumulatively. Some areas of moderate sensitivity could be affected, but there remains some flexibility in terms of site options to avoid such areas and the overall dispersal of growth means that cumulative effects are not anticipated to be notable.
- 7.1.17 **Option 2b** focusses additional growth on the Extended PUA to a greater extent. Most of the site options fall within areas of lesser landscape sensitivity. However, the greater amount of overall growth could lead to cumulative effects. The Blaby, Countesthorpe, and Whetstone Fringe LCA in particular has a role in separating Blaby, Countesthorpe, Cosby and Whetstone. Placing large amounts of growth within the Extended PUA has the potential to negatively affect the overall openness of the landscape. This is a minor negative effect. A considerable amount of agricultural land would also be lost, though this would not be in areas most likely to be best and most versatile land. The effects are therefore minor negative in respect of soil resources too.
- 7.1.18 For the medium villages, the scale of growth is lower than 2a, but there is still potential for some negative effects on landscape character and soil presuming that growth is distributed between the settlements. The lower scale of growth should allow for some avoidance of the most sensitive areas, and so the landscape effects are uncertain minor negatives. In terms of agricultural land, regardless of location, Grade 3 land will be lost. This is a minor negative effect. However, it may be slightly easier to avoid areas of BMV under this option compared to 2a.
- 7.1.19 Neutral effects are likely at the smaller villages given the relatively low levels of growth involved in any one location.

- 7.1.20 Overall, this option is predicted to have **minor negative effects** in terms of landscape and soil resources. Though the pressure on medium and small villages is lower, it creates greater cumulative negative effects in the extended PUA, particularly for landscape character.
- 7.1.21 **Option 2c** disperses the additional growth further, with greater concentrations in the medium villages and smaller villages. The character surrounding many of these settlements is more sensitive (with the exception of Sapcote and Stoney Stanton). For the smaller villages in particular, their scale also makes them more sensitive to larger developments. At the levels of growth proposed, minor negative effects are likely to occur for most settlements, and in some locations such as Sharnford, the effects could potentially be significant. In terms of agricultural land, most locations would be Grade 3, with moderate potential for this to be best and most versatile land.
- 7.1.22 Similar to option 2b, the effects at the PUA would also be minor negative in respect of landscape and agricultural land.
- 7.1.23 Overall, this option is predicted to have an uncertain **significant negative effect** in terms of landscape. The cumulative effect of multiple settlements suffering from negative landscape effects is the main issue, and growth in certain settlements in particular could be significantly negative in those locations alone.
- 7.1.24 A **minor negative effect** is predicted overall with regards to agricultural land.
- 7.1.25 **Options 2d** will concentrate additional development mostly within the strategic sites. The strategic site options are within Elmesthorpe Floodplain LCA, Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland LCA, Cosby and Whetstone Rolling Farmland LCA and Blaby, Countesthorpe and Whetstone Fringe LCA.
- 7.1.26 The strategic site options at Blaby and Stoney Stanton fall mostly within areas of lower sensitivity, but their large scale combined with proposed growth in the extended PUA and medium villages could still lead to some negative effects.
- 7.1.27 The strategic site options at Elmesthorpe and Whetstone Pastures fall within areas of moderate landscape sensitivity. Their large scale could lead to more prominent effects upon landscape (particularly if the development at Whetstone Pastures leads to partial coalescence with nearby urban areas such as Countesthorpe).
- 7.1.28 Elmesthorpe Floodplain LCA is a traditional floodplain however it has become fragmented due to transport infrastructure such as large arterial roads. Cosby and Whetstone Rolling Farmland LCA is a rural working agricultural landscape with a mix of arable and pastoral farmland.

- 7.1.29 Development in these areas may lead to declines in the existing rural character. There may be opportunities to develop these areas so that they are in alignment with the current character, this is particularly so at lower scales of growth under this option. Therefore, the effects are predicted to be minor negative at this stage with regards to landscape.
- 7.1.30 None of the strategic site options are within areas thought to be most likely to contain BMV. However, the scale of agricultural land affected is large. Therefore, minor negative effects are still predicted.
- 7.1.31 The lower level of growth in the medium villages ought to allow for the more sensitive landscapes and agricultural land to be avoided to a greater extent, and so only minor negative effects are predicted in this respect too, for both landscape and soil.
- 7.1.32 Overall, **minor negative effects** for the district are predicted for both soil and landscape for Option 2d.
- 7.1.33 **Option 2e** focuses all growth at a new settlement, which reduces pressure on other parts of the district.
- 7.1.34 The scale of growth that would be required would mean that impacts upon landscape at these locations would most likely be significant. Where growth was split between the strategic site options, it ought to be possible to avoid significant effects at Stoney Stanton, but the effects at Whetstone Pastures might be significantly negative, given that it is a more sensitive location. Placing all the growth at Stoney Stanton could too have **significant negative effects** in this location, despite the lower sensitivity, as it could dramatically reduce open countryside between Elmesthorpe, Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. Though the M69 currently separates these settlements, there would be a much reduced amount of greenfield land and an overall increase in built form between the two areas. A green infrastructure led approach with significant buffers and green corridors could help to mitigate such effects.
- 7.1.35 Overall, a **significant negative effect** is predicted in relation to landscape, but there are uncertainties as the exact location and configuration of growth is unknown. A **minor negative effect** is predicted in relation to soil from a district wide perspective.

### Scenario 3

- 7.1.36 **Option 3a** will place additional growth within the PUA in areas of mostly moderate sensitivity. When considered alongside existing committed development, the urban area of Leicester City will expand further, having a negative effect on the rural character of parts of Blaby District. Rothley Brook Fringe LCA adjoins the PUA settlement area and urban expansion there could lead to coalescence between built up areas. Potential significant negative effects could occur.

- 7.1.37 The soils affected would most likely be Grade 3, with moderate potential to be best and most versatile land. This is a minor negative effect.
- 7.1.38 Due to the overall increase in growth across the district, this option would also require additional growth in the extended PUA settlements, which (as discussed above), could bring about minor negative effects for landscape and soils.
- 7.1.39 Growth at the medium villages would also be fairly high, and for some locations negative effects could occur. As a result, minor negative effects are predicted in this respect also for soils and landscape (with some areas likely to be BMV).
- 7.1.40 The smaller villages would see much lower levels of growth, which should in the main be possible to avoid negative effects. However, more sensitive locations, exist that could be affected even at small scales of growth, such as Sharnford.
- 7.1.41 Overall, this option is likely to result in negative effects in multiple locations across the district. In the PUA, this could be significant, depending upon the nature of schemes and how they interact with one another. Cumulatively, a **significant negative effect** is predicted in terms of landscape.
- 7.1.42 The higher scale of growth means that a greater amount of agricultural land would be affected compared to scenarios 1 and 2. However, it is not clear whether much of this is likely to be BMV. Though the district does not contribute to the best quality land in the region, a loss of this magnitude could still be considered significant if the land is indeed BMV, and in the context of growing more food closer to end markets. Therefore, uncertain **significant negative effects** are predicted for all options in scenario 3 with regards to soil.
- 7.1.43 **Option 3b** focusses more additional growth on the Extended PUA, whilst still adding growth to the PUA beyond existing commitments.
- 7.1.44 Within the PUA the Thurlaston Rolling Farmland LCA and Rothley Brook Fringe LCA will be affected, and these are of moderate and low-moderate sensitivity respectively. The Thurlaston Rolling Farmland LCA contains farmland and has a strong sense of rural character. The scale of growth, for the PUA, is lower than option 3a and so the effects are less likely to be significant. At the extended PUA, the scale of growth would be higher and could lead to cumulative effects in terms of the loss of greenfield land. Though complete coalescence could most likely be avoided, the potential for significant negative effects is noted in terms of landscape character.
- 7.1.45 Option 3b would also be likely to have minor negative effects at the medium villages for the same reasons previously discussed. No effects would be generated at the smaller villages though.

- 7.1.46 Overall, this option is likely to lead to a large reduction in greenfield land throughout the settlements on the fringes of Leicester.
- 7.1.47 Cumulatively, this could lead to significant negative effects in terms of changing the open feel between the urban areas.
- 7.1.48 Conversely, the effects in the rest of the district would likely be minor or neutral. Nevertheless, uncertain **significant negative effects** are predicted.
- 7.1.49 **Option 3c** has similar effects to Option 3b, but the potential for significant negative effects across the PUA and extended PUA are somewhat reduced. On the flip side, increased growth at the medium villages could lead to negative effects in locations that are sensitive such as Huncote and Croft. This option would also see the greatest amount of growth directed to the smaller villages, which increases the likelihood that the scale of development at these locations would be higher and the flexibility in terms of site options to avoid sensitive locations lower. As a result, significant negative effects would be likely to occur, particularly in areas of higher sensitivity such as Sharnford.
- 7.1.50 Overall, option 3c is predicted to have **significant negative effects**. Whilst the cumulative effects in the PUA / extended PUA could potentially be mitigated and therefore be 'less than significant', the scale of growth is still high, and so uncertainty remains. It is also much more likely that significant negative effects would occur elsewhere in the district both at individual locations and cumulatively.
- 7.1.51 **Option 3d** is unlikely to have notable effects in the PUA or the smaller villages as additional growth is limited. The level of additional growth in the extended PUA settlements is also much lower, but the strategic site option at Blaby could potentially have cumulative negative effects if adjacent development is also involved. The relatively small overall scale of additional growth in the Extended PUA provides some flexibility to help ensure this is avoided though. Therefore, only minor negative effects are predicted in these locations.
- 7.1.52 As per option 2d, the strategic site options at Elmesthorpe and Whetstone Pastures contain more sensitive landscape parcels. Therefore, growth here is likely to lead to negative effects on areas with a rural character. The overall scale of growth is higher for option 3d, and so land take would either be greater or densities higher, both of which could be detrimental to character. The potential for significant negative effects is therefore slightly higher. The strategic site option at Stoney Stanton could accommodate some growth whilst still retaining open space, and so the effects would not be considered to be as problematic at this scale of growth. However, this would require growth at the other strategic sites to ensure housing needs and accompanying infrastructure is secured.

- 7.1.53 Overall, option 3d is predicted to have uncertain **significant negative effects**.
- 7.1.54 Whilst the pressures on the PUA and extended PUA are lesser, it still remains to an extent, and is impacted upon by the strategic site option at Blaby. Two of the strategic site options are also located in more sensitive locations, and there would still remain some minor negative effects in medium villages. The cumulative effects could be significant, but there is some flexibility in terms of site options and so uncertainty related to the precise locations involved.
- 7.1.55 **Option 3e** almost exclusively places all the additional growth at a new settlement. The potential location for this is one (or perhaps both) of the two larger strategic site options at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures. On the one hand, this is beneficial, because it protects the PUA and extended PUA from further urbanisation, whilst also protecting many settlements across the district from new development. However, given the scale of growth involved and the current size of the larger strategic site options means that both would need to be developed. Depending upon how much growth was involved at both locations, it is possible that **significant negative effects** could occur given the potential for loss of greenfield land and rural character.

## Summary

- 7.1.56 Given that scenario 1 involves very little additional growth, the picture is likely to be neutral for both soil and landscape.

## Landscape

- 7.1.57 The critical factor in terms of effects is related to overall levels of growth, with all of the higher growth options under scenario 3 being more likely to generate significant negative effects.
- 7.1.58 Distribution plays some part, particularly under scenario 2, with options 2c and 2e potentially being more detrimental to landscape character when considered against options 2a, 2b and 2d, which involve the same level of growth. It is important to note the uncertainties in the predictions, particularly for significant negative effects. This demonstrates that there is some potential for negative effects to be avoided and mitigated for most of the options, and the choice of sites and mitigation measures employed will play an important role.

## Soil

7.1.59 Virtually all of the sites involved for each option would contain agricultural land. This is mostly classed as Grade 3, with varying degrees of certainty that this would be best and most versatile land (Grade 3a) or not. In the main, the growth options avoid the area’s most likely to be BMV.

7.1.60 However, it would be advisable to avoid locations where quality appears more likely to be high such as to the east of Huncote and north of Cosby. Other than this, there is little to differentiate the options in this respect, other than the overall level of agricultural land likely to be lost. In this respect, options under scenario 2 are minor negative and those for scenario 3 are potentially significantly negative.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Landscape	0	-	-	-- ?	-	-- ?	-- ?	-- ?	--	-- ?	-- ?
Soil	0	-	-	-	-	-	-- ?	-- ?	-- ?	-- ?	-- ?

## 8. Environmental Protection

### Overview

- 8.1.1 The protection and enhancement of water and air quality are key objectives in numerous policy documents from national to the local level. New development can have effects upon these resources that need to be managed. This means that the planning system has an important role to play in environmental protection goals.
- 8.1.2 Effects on poor water and air quality can also lead to other factors being affected such as health and wellbeing and biodiversity.

### Water

- 8.1.3 Water quality measured within the district according to the 2016 Overall Water Framework Directive (WFD) Waterbody Status was either Moderate or Poor for watercourses. There is therefore a need to ensure further deterioration is avoided and improvements are made.

### Air

- 8.1.4 There are 5 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the district, all of which are located within the PUA or Extended PUA mostly associated with major traffic routes into Leicester and / or along motorways and junctions. The fifth AQMA is at a busy junction at Enderby. Many of the arterial routes in Leicester City itself are also within AQMAs.
- 8.1.5 There are two elements to growth that can be influential in terms of the impacts of air quality. One is whether new development is placed in areas of poor air quality (i.e. within or near to AQMAs and areas of concern). The other is the potential generation of traffic from new development and how likely this will lead to increased trips along routes that are already affected by high levels of air pollutants. A further element is the potential to use public transport and the likelihood of walking and cycling. Air quality modelling is required to predict an accurate picture of impacts. However, it is possible to make broad assumptions at this strategic level.
- 8.1.6 Generally speaking, large increases in development with access to busy traffic routes into Leicester are likely to worsen air quality, particularly if local services, jobs and public transport are lacking. Development at further distances will be away from areas of air pollution, but might still contribute if accessibility in those areas are poor and traffic is drawn to the City.
- 8.1.7 A complicating factor is the potential for mitigation, as certain measures could help to relieve pressure in areas of poor air quality. Without specific knowledge or detail of such factors, negative effects would be presumed.

- 8.1.8 Ideally, development should be placed in locations that are not exposed regularly to poorer air quality, have good accessibility and are supportive of clean air initiatives.

## Spatial Options Analysis

### Scenario 1

- 8.1.9 **Option 1a** will likely have limited implications for water and air quality as there is little additional growth proposed. The only areas where additional growth is proposed are the Extended PUA and Small Villages.
- 8.1.10 At the scale of growth involved, the demand on transport infrastructure is unlikely to be significantly different to the baseline situation, even though its location in the Extended PUA would be somewhat sensitive in terms of air quality.
- 8.1.11 In terms of water pollution, the key issues are related to pressure on wastewater and drainage networks. At the scale involved, it ought to be possible to manage growth with existing infrastructure, and any upgrades could be planned for accordingly. Impacts during construction could also cause pollution incidents, but it is presumed these would be managed through existing legal and policy requirements. Cumulative effects are unlikely to be notable at this scale of growth.
- 8.1.12 The small villages are of minimal concern in terms of air quality as the AQMA areas are well away from potential site options. However, travel behaviours may be a concern as smaller villages are not within adequate proximity to jobs, healthcare services or public transport, and therefore will need to travel to reach these locations. The scale of growth involved would generate few trips though, and not at a level that is likely to affect air quality in the PUA / Extended PUA and Leicester City itself.
- 8.1.13 Overall, a **neutral effect** is predicted, with regards to both air quality and water quality.

### Scenario 2

- 8.1.14 **Option 2a** focuses additional growth in the PUA and the Extended PUA. Given that there are several AQMAs located in locations where sites proposed for additional growth exist, there is likely to be some negative effects that come with this scale of growth in these locations. This could be due to some developments being close to areas of poor air quality, but more likely will be due to cumulative effects of growth and levels of traffic.
- 8.1.15 Employment growth is also planned in both PUA and Extended PUA with substantial development located at the Lubbethorpe SUE and surrounding areas.

- 8.1.16 This will add to traffic in the areas, but also helps to ensure that housing and employment growth are fairly well related, which has the opposite effect in terms of generating shorter trips and encouraging modal shift. This development is already committed, but could have cumulative effects when considered alongside additional growth in the PUA.
- 8.1.17 The overall effect is likely to be a minor negative effect in terms of air quality.
- 8.1.18 For water pollution, the level of growth in the urbanised areas is relatively low and ought to be possible to accommodate without significant effects on water quality. There will be a need to consider cumulative effects associated with committed development and any additional growth. Nevertheless, neutral effects are anticipated.
- 8.1.19 Additional growth at the Medium Villages is unlikely to place new housing in areas experiencing poor air quality. However, the likelihood of car travel remains high, despite these areas being serviced by public transport although to a variable frequency. The distance to key employment opportunities in the PUA, Extended PUA and Leicester itself could also make it attractive for car travel from the Medium Villages, adding to existing congestion issues (and associated air quality problems). At the scale of growth involved, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted with regards to air quality. In terms of water pollution, the dispersed nature of development should mean that waste water management infrastructure can accommodate growth in a planned and phased manner without periods of overwhelming the systems in the short term.
- 8.1.20 The scale of growth in the smaller villages is very small, and despite poorer connectivity, the increase in car trips would not be likely to be notable. Therefore neutral effects are predicted in terms of air quality. With regards to water quality, the small scale dispersed nature of development should also mean that impacts are avoidable during construction and also that wastewater infrastructure can accommodate development.
- 8.1.21 Overall, minor negative effects are predicted in terms of air quality. This relates to a focus of growth in the extended PUA, which contains several areas of concern in relation to air quality. Although growth elsewhere is away from areas of concern, it could add to traffic and air quality issues due to travel to those areas. There are potential mitigating factors, but **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted at this stage.
- 8.1.22 The effects upon water quality are predicted to be **neutral** overall. At the scale of growth involved it ought to be possible to accommodate growth and plan for additional development in a timely manner.
- 8.1.23 **Option 2b** focusses additional growth to the Extended PUA to a greater extent, and also includes growth at the Medium Villages.

- 8.1.24 This helps to reduce pressure on some locations suffering from poor air quality such as the M1 corridor near Leicester Forest East. However, it places development in areas within the extended PUA at greater risk of poor air quality, and also in contributing towards increased traffic along local roads suffering from poor air quality (such as Enderby, Narborough and Whetstone). As a result a minor negative effect is predicted.
- 8.1.25 The effects at the medium villages is likely to have similar effects to option 2a with regards to both water quality and air quality; given the scale of growth is similar. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.
- 8.1.26 Neutral effects are predicted with regards to the Smaller Villages given that no growth is involved.
- 8.1.27 Overall, a **minor negative effect** is predicted for option 2b with regards to air quality. A **neutral effect** is predicted for water pollution.
- 8.1.28 For **Option 2c**, there is still a notable amount of additional growth in the extended PUA, which could generate minor negative effects in terms of air quality (in terms of new development being in locations in close proximity to areas of air quality concern, and also in terms of increased traffic in areas of concern). Whilst the rest of the growth is located in locations with generally good air quality (the Smaller Villages and Medium Villages), the dispersed nature of development means that car travel might be more likely for a higher proportion of new homes. This too could contribute to poor air quality where it involve trips into the extended PUA, the PUA and Leicester. Overall, this amounts to a **minor negative effect** with regards to air quality for the district.
- 8.1.29 With regards to water quality, the dispersed nature of growth ought to help ensure that no particular area is overwhelmed; which are **neutral effects**. However, an increase in pressure in smaller villages could mean that local upgrades are required. This brings some element of uncertainty.
- 8.1.30 The strategic site options, particularly those at Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton, in **Option 2d/2e** are generally not within close proximity to existing urban areas within the District where there are air quality concerns. Development of these strategic site options would therefore be unlikely to place new communities in areas of poor air quality. However, a very large scale of growth in one location could generate increased car trips along already busy routes. Without supporting infrastructure to relieve pressure on such routes, negative effects could occur in locations that are already affected by air pollution. This would be dependent upon the sites involved, but the strategic site options at Blaby and Whetstone Pastures may result in increased traffic that affects areas of concern for air quality.

- 8.1.31 For option 2d, the effects will depend mostly on the location and the number of strategic site options involved and so the potential to dilute the impacts. This results in **minor negative effects**. However, for Option 2e, placing all growth in one location could potentially generate significant effects. With supporting infrastructure, there could be improvements by diverting traffic from busy roads. However, at this stage a potential **significant negative effect** is predicted for Option 2e.
- 8.1.32 Although there is some growth involved in the extended PUA and Medium villages with Option 2d, it is relatively low and is dispersed, so significant effects in terms of air quality are unlikely to arise.
- 8.1.33 With regards to water quality, development at strategic sites could have mixed effects. On the one hand, the large concentrated nature of development will mean that new infrastructure is required to support drainage and waste water. If not delivered in a timely manner, water management systems could be under pressure temporarily (leading to **minor negative effects**). Likewise, the large scale of growth in a limited number of locations could increase the potential for polluting and disturbing activities to watercourses. However, on the flip side, large sites generally provide better opportunities to mimic natural drainage patterns and to phase growth accordingly. Where there is a wholesale change of use from certain farming practices (which generate nitrates in run-off), there could also be longer term benefits to the water quality of connected watercourses (which are **minor positive effects**). However, these impacts are dependent upon the strategic site options chosen, the layout and design of development and the phasing. As a result, the effects regarding development are uncertain with regards to water quality for options 2d and 2e.

### Scenario 3

- 8.1.34 Regardless of distribution, the scale of growth outlined in **Options 3a – 3d** is likely to lead to a greater magnitude of impacts in terms of water and air quality. This is because the overall level of growth for the district is higher (and in particular locations), giving greater likelihood of car trips and pressure on water catchments and treatment networks. Distribution does play a role in determining whether the effects are more or less likely to be significant.
- 8.1.35 **Option 3a** places a large amount of additional growth in the PUA, and this could be in locations close to areas that are already under pressure and suffer poor air quality. In combination with the development already committed in the PUA, there is potential for this to generate a significant increase in traffic along key routes.

- 8.1.36 This is offset to an extent by the generally good access to services, public transport and employment in these areas. However, negative effects are likely without a radical change in travel behaviours.
- 8.1.37 This option also places additional growth into the extended PUA, which too involves areas that suffer from poor air quality. In combination with the growth in the PUA, this could generate significant negative effects in terms of an increase in traffic through currently affected areas.
- 8.1.38 Growth at the medium villages and smaller villages would also be in areas of less sensitivity, but would also be likely to contribute minor negative effects because trips from these areas could still contribute to air pollution along major routes.
- 8.1.39 Together, this creates the potential for **significant negative effects** with regards to air quality for Option 3a.
- 8.1.40 In terms of water quality, the scale of growth involved would put greater pressure on drainage and wastewater infrastructure in the Plan Period (though would take some pressure away from Leicester City). Unless carefully planned and phased, this could lead to **minor negative effects**.
- 8.1.41 For **option 3b** similar effects are predicted as per option 3a for air quality. However, the pressures would shift to the extended PUA more-so than the PUA. In combination though, **significant negative effects** could arise.
- 8.1.42 The situation is similar to option 3a with regards to water quality, with **minor negative effects** predicted for the same reasons.
- 8.1.43 **Option 3c** involves less growth overall in the PUA and Extended PUA when compared to options 3a and 3b. The pressures are therefore likely to be of a lower scale, and less growth would be placed in these sensitive locations. As a result, there is more uncertainty as to whether significant negative effects would arise.
- 8.1.44 Development at the Medium Villages and Smaller Villages would be in less sensitive locations in terms of air quality, which is positive in that respect. However, trips from these areas could still contribute to air pollution along major routes. The overall picture for the district could therefore still result in **significant negative effects**. However, the dispersed nature of development could mean that pressures are less focused, particularly in and around the PUA and Extended PUA. Therefore, a degree of uncertainty exists.
- 8.1.45 In terms of water quality, **minor negative effects** are predicted. Though dispersal ought to reduce pressures in any one location, the scale of growth involved at smaller settlements is relatively high, and there may be implications in certain locations as well as cumulatively across the district.

- 8.1.46 For **option 3d**, growth would need to be spread across more than one strategic site option given the number of dwellings involved. As per option 2d, this could bring negative effects as development would be likely to generate significant traffic. For the sites at Blaby and Whetstone Pastures, this would be near to areas that have poor air quality, and additional car trips could exacerbate the issues. Without infrastructure investment, there are uncertain **significant negative effects** that could arise in terms of air quality.
- 8.1.47 For **Option 3e**, placing all growth in one or two strategic sites could potentially generate significant effects due to the scale of growth involved. As per option 2e, the effects would be highly dependent upon the design, layout and supporting infrastructure involved. On one hand, the greater level of growth could exacerbate the number of trips and pressures on local road networks. However, the greater scale of growth could lend itself to more viable local services, onsite employment and perhaps strategic infrastructure improvements (such as link roads that divert traffic, new public transport links). With such measures in place, the implications in terms of air quality could be less negative, or even positive. At this stage a precautionary / 'mitigation-off' approach is taken and so uncertain **significant negative effects** are predicted.
- 8.1.48 With regards to water pollution, the effects for options 3d and 3e are mixed and uncertain, for the same reasons discussed above for options 2d and 2e.

## Summary

- 8.1.49 For Option 1, the scale of additional growth involved is limited, and so neutral effects are predicted.
- 8.1.50 With regards to air quality, Scenario 2 increases growth, and so negative effects arise. Option 2e is considered more likely to lead to significant negative effects, as it places a large amount of growth in new settlements, and without supporting infrastructure this could lead to a reliance in car travel.
- 8.1.51 For scenario 3, the potential for significant effects with regards to air quality increases in-line with the higher levels of development overall. As a result, significant negative effects are recorded regardless of distribution.
- 8.1.52 With regards to water, the additional pressures on water drainage and treatment networks should be possible to manage without significant negative effects arising. For scenario 3 though, the increased growth presents potential for minor negative effects occurring.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Air	0	?	-	-	-	--?	--	--	--	--	--?
Water: Nitrates	0	0	0	0	?	?	0	0	0	?	?
Water: Networks	0	0	0	0	?	?	-	-	-	?	?

## 9. Climate Change

### Overview

#### Flood Risk

- 9.1.1 Parts of Blaby District are within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and areas that are susceptible to fluvial flooding. There is an extensive flood plain of River Soar, River Sence, Whetstone Brook and Rothley Brook that covers settlements such as Croft, Narborough, Littlethorpe, Sharnford, Glen Parva, Blaby and Whetstone and there is potential for fluvial flood risks within these localities. This includes significant historic flood events along the River Soar in Narborough, Littlethorpe and Sharnford (in November 2012). Other locations also at risk from surface water flooding, generally but not always related to river flooding. Recent events at Stoney Stanton (2020). It is understood that a sequential approach will be applied in order to avoid allocating sites for development in the areas of highest flood risk. Housing that is proposed for flood prone areas of Zones 2 and 3 should be informed by appropriate and relevant flood risk modelling through a site specific flood risk assessment before being considered for development.
- 9.1.2 The severity and regularity of climate change events such as flooding and other natural hazards will be likely increase in the longer term. New development in the District must be planned for in a way that supports and prioritise peoples' safety and security. Therefore placing housing and additional growth outside of flood risk areas would be the most desired outcome in respect of flooding.
- 9.1.3 All parishes in the District contain some flooding risk with the exception of Leicester Forest East. Kirby Muxloe and Elmesthorpe have only minor flooding areas. Several promoted site options in Glenfield, Cosby, Littlethorpe and Narborough may have flooding issues. There are other large pockets of flooding around Blaby and Glen Parva. These two areas are part of the Extended PUA where development is restricted to some extent due to flooding.

#### Climate Change Mitigation

- 9.1.4 Previous trends have shown that overall CO2 emissions within Blaby have decreased. However new infrastructure, housing and employment growth are likely to influence the emission of greenhouse gases. There are a range of sources of greenhouse gas emissions, some of which the Local Plan Review has less potential to influence (for example, consumer behaviours and business practices). However, Planning has an important role to play in terms of reducing the environmental footprint of the built environment and transport in particular.

- 9.1.5 It is worth noting that emissions from transport sources have reduced slower than from domestic and industrial/commercial and it will be important to ensure that the Local Plan considers these issues.
- 9.1.6 The Local Plan has a role to plan in addressing low carbon developments, but this ought to be possible to achieve through site specific or thematic policies that deal with such matters. It should be acknowledged that national standards set the context and tone for what can be achieved.

## Spatial Options Analysis

### Scenario 1

- 9.1.7 **Option 1a** only involves limited additional growth above committed development. The bulk of the additional development would be placed in the Extended PUA and medium villages.
- 9.1.8 There are some locations such as Whetstone and Narborough where development opportunities are overlapped partially by flood zones 2 and 3. However, the small scale of growth would allow for such areas to be avoided and mitigation put into place. Therefore, neutral effects would be expected.
- 9.1.9 In the Medium Villages, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Cosby and Croft contain areas that are either partially in or adjoining flood risk zones. However, at the scale of growth involved it ought to be possible to avoid and / or mitigate negative effects. Therefore, a neutral effect is predicted.
- 9.1.10 Overall, **neutral effects** are predicted for this option in terms of flooding.
- 9.1.11 From a mitigation perspective, the level of growth involved is relatively low, and this ought to limit further use of resources to build new developments and supporting infrastructure. The current patterns of travel would be unlikely to be drastically affected either, so effects in terms of greenhouse gas emissions would likely be **neutral** for option 1a. Positive effects are not recorded, because there are limited opportunities to make proactive changes to the built environment through planned new development.

### Scenario 2

- 9.1.12 **Option 2a** potentially places a modest amount of additional growth in the PUA in locations with site options that would not be directly affected by flood risk. Though some surrounding areas are affected by flooding, the scale of growth involved and the nature of development sites would be unlikely to increase flood risk elsewhere provided that mitigation is applied in line with local plan policies. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted.

- 9.1.13 At the extended PUA, the scale of growth involved and the locations of the site options would allow flexibility to avoid sensitive areas and to implement mitigation such as natural SUDs. Therefore, the risk of flooding on new developments and downstream is considered to be neutral.
- 9.1.14 There are several settlements within the Medium Villages which are affected by flooding. However, there are a range of site options that mean new development would be unlikely to occur within the flood zones. The scale of growth should still provide some flexibility, but there are some sites that are partially overlapped where risks and mitigation would need to be explored. In light of this, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted.
- 9.1.15 In light of the above, the overall picture for the district is predicted to be **neutral**. The vast majority of development could be accommodated on land that is not at major risk of flooding. Though some locations give rise to potential negative effects, these would be minor and could probably be avoided.
- 9.1.16 With regards to climate change mitigation, the approach places most of the new development in areas that are relatively well connected in terms of services and public transport. Therefore, this should help to ensure that growth does not lead to a per capita increase in traffic emissions. This constitutes a **minor positive effect**, as in a more dispersed approach which might otherwise happen without a new plan in place could lead to longer and more frequent car trips. At the scale of growth involved at individual developments, it is unlikely that district energy schemes would be appropriate, therefore, neutral effects are predicted in this respect. The locations involved (close to existing settlements in urban areas) are also not likely to be particularly suitable for large scale wind, so sterilisation of opportunities is unlikely. The Local Plan has a role to plan in addressing low carbon developments, but this ought to be possible to achieve through site specific or thematic policies that deal with such matters. It should be acknowledged that national standards set the context and tone for what can be achieved though.
- 9.1.17 **Option 2b** involves increased growth for the extended PUA. Whilst most of the sites options promoted are not at risk of flooding, there would be greater cumulative loss of greenfield land close to areas that do suffer from flooding. This could potentially have negative implications in terms of flood risk elsewhere. However, the nature of the sites involved should allow for mitigation to be implemented. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are likely.
- 9.1.18 For this option, the slightly lower level of growth involved at the medium villages means the pressure for development of sites affected by flood risk in these locations is also likely to be low.

- 9.1.19 In light of the above, the overall picture for the district is predicted to be **neutral effects** in terms of flood risk. The vast majority of development could be accommodated on land that is not at major risk of flooding. Though some locations give rise to potential negative effects, these would be minor and could be avoided and / or mitigated.
- 9.1.20 From a climate change mitigation perspective, the effects are similar to 2a (**minor positive effects**), given that much of the growth is focused at the extended PUA in accessible locations and with potential to achieve higher quality design in new developments.
- 9.1.21 **Option 2c** involves a slightly lower level of growth at the extended PUA settlements, and so uncertain minor negative effects are predicted with regards to flood risk.
- 9.1.22 Increased dispersal to the medium and smaller villages is unlikely to lead to significant effects as the sites identified as potential development locations are predominately within flood zone 1. There are some overlaps in villages such as Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Cosby and Elmesthorpe. However, it ought to be possible to avoid areas of flooding, and to mitigate the risk of flooding elsewhere. The cumulative impacts are therefore uncertain minor negative effects.
- 9.1.23 At a district level, the combined effects for flood risk are **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 9.1.24 In terms of climate change mitigation, this approach draws more development into locations that are more reliant on car usage such as the medium and smaller villages. Therefore, a **minor negative effect** is predicted in relation to greenhouse gas emissions from a transportation perspective. Growth ought to provide opportunities to provide low carbon development, which could lead to improvements in other aspects such as the built environment. However, the extent to which the Plan influences this is uncertain at this stage.
- 9.1.25 For **options 2d/2e**, the strategic site options are affected to varying degrees by flood risk. Whetstone Pastures is intersected by a watercourse, and there is associated flood risk. The same is the case for the location at Elmesthorpe. The sites at Blaby and Stoney Stanton are not intersected by watercourses, but are adjacent.
- 9.1.26 For **option 2d**, each of the strategic site options would be affected by flood risk, but the scale of development and the relatively small proportion of land at risk of flooding (for Whetstone Pastures and Elmesthorpe) ought to allow these areas of flood risk to be avoided and measures could be implemented to ensure flood risk does not increase elsewhere or on site. Given that some risks are involved, an uncertain minor negative effect is predicted.

- 9.1.27 However, the strategic site options could provide potential for comprehensive green infrastructure that brings multiple benefits including flood risk mitigation.
- 9.1.28 For option 2d, growth at the extended PUA and medium villages would be much lower, and so neutral effects would be anticipated in that respect for flood risk.
- 9.1.29 From a district-wide perspective, for option 2d the effects are predicted to be **neutral for flood risk**, but there is an element of uncertainty relating to the strategic site options and whether or not effects can be avoided and mitigated.
- 9.1.30 In respect of climate change mitigation, **Option 2d** directs large amounts of growth to strategic sites. The strategic site options are currently poorly serviced by existing public transport and local services. Whilst such sites would include some improvements to infrastructure, development of the smaller strategic sites at Blaby and Elmesthorpe, would not necessarily be of a scale that radically alters the propensity for car travel. This is a potential negative effect in terms of carbon emissions. The larger strategic sites at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures could provide the infrastructure to support public transport, but there would still likely be an element of car travel.
- 9.1.31 Conversely, a large strategic site development could offer opportunities for district energy schemes, but only if there is sufficient demand from a range of sources. This is unlikely with residential only schemes. Overall, a **minor negative effect** is predicted, as this approach places growth in locations that do not benefit from existing infrastructure, and could lead to increased car trips. Though there is potential to secure low carbon design and construction, it is unknown the extent to which this would be achieved at this stage, so a precautionary approach is taken. This will be an important factor that the Local Plan Review considers though.
- 9.1.32 **Option 2e** places all growth at a single new settlement. Potential strategic site options include either the Stoney Stanton location or split between Whetstone Pastures and Stoney Stanton. The Stoney Stanton site is virtually all flood zone 1, and so development would be unlikely to be at significant risk of flooding. However, with a development of such scale, the potential for effects on surface water run-off and flooding elsewhere needs to be considered. A large scale scheme ought to be able to incorporate comprehensive SUDs, and to mimic natural drainage patterns. However, this is dependent upon good masterplanning and scheme design. Though there are areas of flood risk at the Whetstone Pastures location, it is likely that these would be avoided and buffered. However, the same issues with regards to wider changes in hydrology would also apply.

- 9.1.33 Given that areas of flood risk exist on site, the risk here may also be slightly greater compared to the Stoney Stanton location. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted at this early stage.
- 9.1.34 From a climate change mitigation perspective, placing all the growth at one or two of the strategic sites brings **uncertain effects** without knowing scheme details and importantly the accompanying infrastructure. The larger scale of the developments involved for Option 2e, should mean that more comprehensive infrastructure could be funded such as health facilities, a secondary school and expanded public transport hubs. This could help to create sustainable communities that reduce emissions through walking, cycling and reduced car travel. Conversely, the locations involved are currently isolated, and could encourage more car travel, which would not help to reduce emissions if the improvements above are not included. The open nature of the sites in the countryside could also make them suitable for renewable energy generation schemes such as solar farms. Development for housing would likely sterilise these opportunities permanently. Conversely, a development of high standards of energy and water efficiency, which incorporate renewable energy technology, green infrastructure and natural carbon sequestration, could lead to positive effects regarding climate change. At this early stage, it is difficult to accurately predict the effects without scheme details, particularly as growth could be split between the two larger strategic site options, or be located at just the strategic site option at Stoney Stanton. The design, layout and details will also play a huge part in determining how successful a scheme would be in achieving zero / low carbon status.

### Scenario 3

- 9.1.35 An overall increase in dwellings is involved for each option under this scenario. This is likely to increase overall greenhouse gas emissions for Blaby District. However, this could be accommodating some unmet needs from the City in accessible locations, which might be favourable from a regional perspective. With regards to the baseline position in Blaby though, a large increase in housing development would likely lead to greater emissions from construction, occupation and travel unless significant changes are made towards reducing carbon emissions in the design and construction of developments.
- 9.1.36 In terms of flood risk, a general increase in areas of urban hard standing could be expected to lead to negative effects in terms of wider flood management. However, this could be tempered by mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 9.1.37 **Option 3a** places the largest amount of additional growth within the PUA compared to any other option. The vast majority of the promoted site options for development fall within flood zone 1.

- 9.1.38 However, some site options at locations in Glenfield and Kirby Muxloe are adjacent to watercourses and accompanying flood zones. With buffer zones and SUDs in place, the likelihood of development in these areas being at risk of flooding is considered to be low. However, the overall increase in urbanisation in this area (combined with growth in the expanded PUA settlements) could lead to risks downstream. Again, this is dependent upon scheme details, and it ought to be possible to secure SUDs that mimic natural drainage given the greenfield nature of the sites. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are predicted for flood risk.
- 9.1.39 Increased growth is directed to the medium and smaller villages. It is unlikely to lead to significant effects as the site options are predominately within flood zone 1. There are some overlaps in villages such as Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Cosby and Elmesthorpe. However, given the range of site options, it ought to be possible to avoid areas of flooding, and to mitigate the risk of flooding elsewhere. The cumulative impacts are therefore uncertain minor negative effects.
- 9.1.40 From a district perspective, the majority of site options for new development would be in areas that are not at risk of flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere. However, there are some exceptions within the mentioned areas where negative effects could arise. With poorly implemented drainage strategies, the overall increase in hard standing across the urban areas could also lead to flood issues. Consequently, an **uncertain minor negative effect** is predicted overall for option 3a for flood risk. It is expected that the requirement for SUDs and a move towards environmental net gain will make negative effects less likely.
- 9.1.41 In terms of climate change mitigation, the effects are mixed. On one hand, the focus on the PUA means that the locations identified for growth are likely to encourage shorter trips, and enable access by public transport. However, an overall increase in emissions is likely due to the higher scale of growth involved unless there is a radical move towards zero carbon design and construction. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted overall when considering Blaby District in isolation. (Leicester might benefit from less emissions due to a proportion of its unmet housing need being met in Blaby for example).
- 9.1.42 **Option 3b** shifts growth to the expanded PUA rather than the PUA itself. As per option 3a, new development would be unlikely to be in areas at risk of immediate flooding. However, the same issues arise in terms of the overall increase of urban areas across the edge of Leicester (which is an area that contains areas at risk of flooding). As a result, an uncertain minor negative effect is predicted.
- 9.1.43 The situation is similar for the medium villages, where an uncertain minor negative effect is predicted too.

- 9.1.44 At a district scale, these flood risk issues translate the same and the cumulative effects are likely to be minor. There is uncertainty as mitigation and enhancement could occur. Overall, **uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted for flood risk.
- 9.1.45 In terms of climate change mitigation, the effects are mixed. On one hand, the focus on the PUA and Extended PUA means that locations identified for growth are likely to encourage shorter trips, and enable access by public transport. However, an overall increase in emissions is likely due to the higher scale of growth involved unless there is a move towards zero carbon design and construction. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted overall when considering Blaby District.
- 9.1.46 **Option 3c** eases pressure on the Leicester urban fringes somewhat, but growth in the expanded PUA could still lead to uncertain minor negative effects in terms of flood risk.
- 9.1.47 The increased growth in the medium villages and smaller villages will increase the likelihood that development in these locations overlaps with or is in close proximity to flood risk areas. Whilst new development is not likely to be directly in flood zones 2 or 3, an increase in densities and the number of sites required could make it more difficult to incorporate SUDs that mimic natural systems. As a result the cumulative effect could be a minor negative effect. In combination with growth across the district, a **minor negative effect** is predicted overall for option 3c with regards to flooding.
- 9.1.48 With regards to climate change mitigation, this approach would place a larger amount of development in Medium and Smaller villages with (broadly) poorer accessibility compared to those in the PUA and extended PUA villages. This could therefore lead to increases in emissions than might otherwise be the case. Coupled with the overall higher level of growth for scenario 3, this is a potential / uncertain **significant negative effect**.
- 9.1.49 **Option 3d/3e** have similar effects to both Options 2d/2e in that new development at strategic site options would likely be in Flood Zone 1 with scope to buffer areas of flood risk where they occur (For the Whetstone Pastures location for example). However, the density or extent of growth would be greater, and so the potential to implement a greater area of green infrastructure and SUDs might be lower where the site area is the same. Option 3d would also involve modest growth at the PUA, which ought to be possible to manage, but modest growth at the medium villages may result in some minor negative effects. Overall, the effects for Option 3d are unlikely to be significant. **Uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted.
- 9.1.50 For **option 3e**, the effects are still somewhat unknown.

- 9.1.51 To accommodate the level of growth it would be necessary for both large strategic sites to be involved, and this increases the potential for negative effects slightly as there may be less space to avoid areas of flooding and implement natural drainage systems. An **uncertain minor negative effect** is predicted though, as per option 2e.
- 9.1.52 With regards to climate change emissions, both Options 3d and 3e are difficult to accurately predict without scheme details. The locations could be somewhat isolated, and coupled with the scale of growth in Blaby District, potential **significant negative effects** are possible unless suitable infrastructure and facilities are incorporated into the development scheme and there is a radical move towards zero carbon design and construction.

## Summary

- 9.1.53 At a low level of growth (Scenario 1), neutral effects are predicted, as the baseline situation is unlikely to change.
- 9.1.54 For scenario 2, though there are some promoted site options that are located in areas that are adjacent to flood zones, there is sufficient flexibility to avoid significant effects for all of the distribution options. Option 2c and 2e are highlighted as having potential minor negative effects, because there are several site options that are overlapped by flood zones.
- 9.1.55 As the scale of growth increases (Scenario 3), the magnitude of effects could raise, but this would be related to an increase in urbanisation potentially affecting natural drainage patterns, rather than new development being in areas directly at risk of flooding.
- 9.1.56 In terms of climate change mitigation, the options that place growth in the more accessible locations are most favourable in terms of transport emissions. However, at the highest scales of growth, this is offset somewhat by the increase in emissions that more development would bring (during construction and throughout their life). The effects are difficult to predict for options 3d and 3e, as they involve strategic sites, but scheme details and the exact locations of growth are not defined. Without infrastructure upgrades negative effects are likely, as car travel would be probable. However, the larger strategic site options could be more self-sufficient, create compact communities with walkable neighbourhoods and access to services and new public transport routes. The scale of growth required to support such features is often very large and there are thresholds for different types of infrastructure.
- 9.1.57 In terms of zero carbon development, standards are governed mainly through national standards, but local policies can also have a role to play in terms of promoting high quality design and site specific features.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Flooding	0	0	0	?	0?	?	?	?	-	?	?
Mitigation	0	+	+	-	-	--?	0	0	--?	--?	--?

## 10. Economy and employment

### Overview

- 10.1.1 Currently within Blaby, the local economy is relatively healthy and people are economically active. The retail landscape is changing and the industries are experiencing changes in trends that are strongly influenced by technology. The role of the town centre is significantly changing due to these trends. The current economic downturn and implications of COVID19 and Brexit could lead to changes in the economic conditions within the district and surrounding areas too. However, at this stage it is too early to predict the effects of these.
- 10.1.2 This District's main economic strengths are in the retail, finance, professional, scientific and technical services industries. There are also strengths in the energy and public admin and defence sectors.
- 10.1.3 The majority of existing and planned key employment sites are located within the PUA and Extended PUA.
- 10.1.4 The neighbouring City of Leicester contains areas that are within the top 10% most deprived in England (for example the Wards of Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Eyres Monsell and Elston Fields), and so development within Blaby could have effects on such areas in terms of housing provision and employment. Nearby communities, located outside the District, may also benefit from access to services within Blaby, so improvements (or a decline) in services could have wider consequences.
- 10.1.5 Growth should be placed in areas where work is accessible to a wide range of communities, ideally by sustainable modes of transport.

### Spatial Options Analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 10.1.6 **Option 1a** promotes limited additional housing growth on top of committed developments.
- 10.1.7 Most of the additional growth is located in the Extended PUA and this ought to be positive with regards to providing homes with good access to employment opportunities. This includes existing employment sites and economic activity in the extended PUA itself, and also accessible in Leicester.
- 10.1.8 Directing new homes to the Extended PUA will also provide accommodation for economically active communities, and bring increased spending into local economies in these locations (during construction for example). These are minor positive effects.

10.1.9 Additional growth in the rest of the district would be limited, and therefore the potential to support local spending in a range of settlements would be low.

10.1.10 Overall, Option 1a is likely to have **minor positive effects** on the economic environment as it would neither contribute significantly, nor hinder the progression of the District's economy. It does bring some additional investment into the extended PUA, and these are locations that are well related to employment opportunities.

## Scenario 2

10.1.11 Each of the options at this higher scale of growth is likely to bring increased benefits for the economy in Blaby. This relates to direct investment and spending on new homes, as well as creating accommodation to support employment growth in the district and surrounding areas.

10.1.12 The distribution of growth has some bearing on the nature and extent of the effects.

10.1.13 **Option 2a** distributes most of the additional growth in areas that are well related to employment opportunities and retail centres. This is likely to have some benefits as it supplies future housing in areas where there is demand and appetite to expand in jobs and employment (PUA and Extended PUA). It also locates homes where there are better opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport to access jobs, leisure and retail.

10.1.14 Other areas involving additional growth such as the Medium Villages and Smaller Villages may not have the appetite to significantly change or be able to accommodate larger employment opportunities, and so the relationship between housing and employment locations would be weaker. At the scale of growth involved in these settlements, the amount of increased local spending and investment would be limited, but could bring minor benefits for settlements where growth occurs.

10.1.15 Overall, a **significant positive effect** is predicted for Option 2a. This is due to higher levels of growth being delivered across the district, helping to meet demand for housing (which in turn supports a workforce, increases local spending in Blaby itself and could attract additional investment). Given that the locations involved are well related to existing and planned employment opportunities, the benefits ought to be significant.

10.1.16 Option 2b is predicted to have similar effects to Option 2a (**Significant positive effects**). Much of the growth is located in the Extended PUA, which as discussed above, ought to bring benefits in terms of employment and economic growth. There is still some growth in the medium villages, of a slightly lower scale, and so effects here would still be minor.

- 10.1.17 Option 2b gives a much greater focus on locating development in the Extended PUA (Blaby, Countesthorpe, Enderby, Narborough and Whetstone). Several key economic sites are within these localities such as industrial/business parks at Cambridge Road, Rose Business Park, Enderby Road and Grange Business Park, Blaby Industrial Estate, Carlton Park, Coventry Road Industrial Estate and various others closer to the PUA. There is a large employment allocation at Enderby and also some smaller employment commitment sites within Enderby and Narborough parishes. Concentrating housing in these settlements may create opportunities to expand existing active travel and transport infrastructure and could also improve deprivation along the Blaby Leicester boundary.
- 10.1.18 **Option 2c** still involves additional growth in the extended PUA, but shifts further additional growth to the medium and smaller villages. In one respect, increased development in the smaller villages is positive as it helps to improve the vitality of local centres and create demand for services and infrastructure. However, several of these locations are not ideally located with regards to employment opportunities that are accessible by sustainable modes.
- 10.1.19 Overall, **significant positive effects** are predicted. Whilst a lesser proportion of new development would be in locations that are well located for jobs and services, this option spreads the benefits of development across the district, ensuring that there are some local economic boosts to the smaller settlements.
- 10.1.20 **Option 2d** directs the majority of additional growth at strategic sites. There are a number of strategic site options (of at least 1000 dwellings) that could be involved to accommodate the 3150 dwellings involved for this scenario. It is likely that two or more of the site options would be involved. These would include supporting local services and infrastructure. The location of the strategic sites would be important in terms of how well located they are for employment opportunities.
- 10.1.21 The strategic site options at Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton are quite a distance away from existing local employment. However, it may well be possible to incorporate new employment into such strategic sites (which could be significantly positive). The strategic site options at Whetstone Pastures and Blaby could perhaps be better related to existing employment opportunities given their proximity to economic growth locations in the PUA, Extended PUA and Leicester City. However, without infrastructure improvements, this might lead to a reliance on commuting by car. Dispersing development to several of the strategic site options will mean that the scale is unlikely to support significant infrastructure upgrades or to support new economic growth hubs.

- 10.1.22 As the strategic site options are mostly in more isolated locations, this could create pressure on existing infrastructure, and does less to support existing settlements. This is a minor negative effect.
- 10.1.23 This option also involves some growth in the extended PUA and Medium villages. This ought to bring minor positive effects for these locations.
- 10.1.24 Overall there is some uncertainty about whether a reliance on several smaller strategic sites would deliver economic value to the District. The scale of growth involved is positive, and ought to provide positive effects with regards to workforce accommodation and increased local spending (at least during construction). Whether the long term effects would be **significantly positive** are uncertain though. There are also **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 10.1.25 **Option 2e** only involves strategic sites to accommodate the additional growth. Given the scale of development required, this would either need to be at either one or two of the larger strategic site options (at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures).
- 10.1.26 The much larger scale of growth involved in each location is likely to be more conducive to sustainable self-sufficient settlements. Therefore, new local centres, services and infrastructure upgrades should be more feasible. This brings an economic boost. There could also be potential for mixed use development with elements of employment and retail at these larger developments. In this respect, the development of large new settlements could have potentially significant positive effects. However, there is uncertainty about whether such employment opportunities would be generated, and whether new settlements would create a culture of commuting (particularly at the Stoney Stanton site, which is somewhat distant from the majority of the existing economic activity in the district and surrounding authorities).
- 10.1.27 This option brings no additional growth to any existing settlements in the District, which means that they are unlikely to benefit from a local boost in economic activity. Limiting development choice to one or two very large sites could also mean that the positive effects associated with housing growth are not assured, and may not be realised until the later periods of the Plan period.
- 10.1.28 Overall, this option is predicted to have uncertain **significant positive effects**, alongside **minor negative effects**.

### Scenario 3

- 10.1.29 Each option under this scenario involves further growth still when compared to scenarios 1 and 2.

- 10.1.30 Broadly speaking, this brings with it increased spending in terms of construction, increased local council tax, investment in infrastructure, and local spending. It also creates accommodation for working people, which is attractive to employers and prospective investors. Depending upon the distribution and concentration of growth, this scale of growth could put pressure on services and infrastructure and increase traffic congestion, making it less attractive and efficient for businesses to operate.
- 10.1.31 **Option 3a** focuses the additional growth on the PUA, and to a lesser extent, the Extended PUA. The majority of existing key economic activity and employment locations fall within these settlement areas, and thus housing growth here is suitable in terms of matching employment opportunities and accommodation. Given the much larger amount of housing in this area, it might be more likely that the housing supports those with employment further afield (particularly in Leicester City). However, access to those jobs and economic centres ought to be good given the proximity of public transport. The heavy focus on the PUA could have cumulative effects / synergies when considered alongside the large amounts of committed development. For example, housing near to planned SUEs ought to benefit from the local services, and potentially employment being provided in association with those sites.
- 10.1.32 The large amount of development in the PUA / Extended PUA would likely put some pressure on infrastructure in these locations though, and this could make the area less attractive (for example, higher traffic congestion). This is a potential minor negative effect in terms of attracting further economic activity. However, the dominant effects would be significantly positive.
- 10.1.33 This option still involves some growth at the medium villages and smaller villages (to a lesser extent), which would be less well located in relation to job opportunities (compared to the PUA / extended PUA). However, the scale of growth involved in the medium villages ought to bring some minor positive effects in terms of supporting the vitality of those local communities and centres.
- 10.1.34 Overall there are **significant positive effects** for this option. **Uncertain minor negative effects** are also recorded to reflect the potential for economic disruption should densification in the PUA / Extended PUA put pressure on infrastructure that has negative implications for business activities (such as more traffic).
- 10.1.35 **Option 3b** is a hierarchal approach focussing the additional growth on the PUA, Extended PUA and the Medium Villages. The effects are likely to be similar to option 3a in terms of the focus of growth close to Leicester where the bulk of employment opportunities and economic activity occurs.

- 10.1.36 The shift towards the extended PUA (rather than the PUA) still encompasses areas of economic activity and opportunity such as Blaby, Enderby and Narborough, and employment locations on the edge of settlements (for example, Fosse Park, Meridian Business Park and Grove Park). As a result, significant positive effects are predicted.
- 10.1.37 The potential for minor negative effects is also an issue should there be undue pressure on infrastructure, or should the increase in accommodation increase competition for local jobs.
- 10.1.38 The distribution of homes to the Medium Villages is predicted to have minor positive effects, for the same reasons discussed under option 3a.
- 10.1.39 Overall, option 3b is predicted to have a **significant positive effect**, alongside **uncertain minor negative effects**.
- 10.1.40 **Option 3c** still involves substantial amounts of additional growth across the extended PUA. This brings the same benefits as described for options 3a and 3b. Though this is to a lesser extent, significant positive effects are still likely to occur.
- 10.1.41 This option involves the highest level of growth in the medium villages and smaller villages, which are generally less well connected (compared to the PUA and extended PUA). However, at the scale involved, it could help to support local spending and boost the economies of a wider range of settlements across the district. This approach could be more likely to lead to longer commuting distances, but the changing face of employment due to COVID19, could make this less of an issue if new homes are built that provide adequate home-work space.
- 10.1.42 Overall, a **significant positive effect** is predicted for option 3c. Though the scale of growth in the extended PUA is lower than for options 3a and 3b, there may still be additional pressures on infrastructure that cause disruption for certain businesses and economic activity. This is an **uncertain minor negative effect**.
- 10.1.43 The nature of the effects for **Option 3d** are predicted to be the same as for Option 2d, but to a slightly greater extent. There is still a focus on one or more strategic site options, and though the amount of growth is slightly higher, the effects are unlikely to be notably different. The growth in the extended PUA and Medium Villages would be slightly higher too, but the effects in those locations are still likely to only be minor positives.
- 10.1.44 Therefore, overall, **significant positive effects** are predicted, but there is uncertainty. There is also potential for some **minor negative effects**.

- 10.1.45 **Option 3e** is likely to have similar effects to Option 2e, but it would require both of the larger strategic site options to come forward to meet the higher level of growth involved. The nature of effects remain the same at each site, and so significant positive effects could occur, related to construction, provision of accommodation and potentially new services, and other uses on site such as local employment and retail. The infrastructure requirements still remain a potential issue at both sites, and there is also still a reliance on two strategic sites to meet the needs of Blaby and unmet needs from Leicester. There is some risk involved, and therefore uncertainty about whether significant effects would be generated throughout the plan period.
- 10.1.46 This option brings no additional growth to any existing settlements in the District, which means that they are unlikely to benefit from a local boost in economic activity. Limiting development choice to one or two strategic sites could also mean that the positive effects associated with housing growth are not assured, and may not be realised until the later periods of the Plan period.
- 10.1.47 Overall, this option is predicted to have uncertain **significant positive effects**, alongside **minor negative effects**.

## Summary

- 10.1.48 Broadly speaking, the scenarios involving higher levels of growth are more positive when compared to the lower growth scenarios. This is primarily related to the benefits that increased house building brings in terms of; accommodating a workforce, providing jobs during construction, attracting investment in new services, and potentially improvements to infrastructure. Each option has benefits, regardless of distribution. However, those options that locate growth in the PUA and Extended PUA are considered to be more suitable with regards to matching new housing with areas involving an economic growth and activity. This should help to attract investment into areas that need it, as well as supporting sustainable modes of travel and shorter commuting distances to access jobs.
- 10.1.49 Those options that involve some growth in the Medium Villages and Small Villages are also likely to bring benefits with regards to boosting the local economy in those locations.
- 10.1.50 The options that involve strategic development sites could also bring about significant positive effects, but this is more reliant upon supporting infrastructure being delivered to ensure benefits arise. Such an approach also means that the benefits of economic growth would be spread less evenly across the district, and there would be a greater reliance on a lower number of large sites.

10.1.51 At the higher scales of growth involved (Scenario 2 and Scenario 3 in particular), there are some potential minor negative effects. These could arise if concentrated growth puts pressure on existing infrastructure and / or leads to disruption to some businesses.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Economy: Growth potential	+	++	++	++	++?	++?	++	++	++	++?	++?
Economy: Pressures	0	0	0	0	?	-	?	?	?	-	-

## 11. Accessibility

### Overview

- 11.1.1 It is important to ensure that additional growth is located in areas that are served by infrastructure that meets the needs of the local population, supports sustainable modes of travel and reduces carbon emissions.
- 11.1.2 The district is served by public transport and strategic road networks that connect settlements within the district and to the wider region. The public transport network includes Narborough Train Station and regular bus services to Leicester from Glenfield, Leicester Forest East, Braunstone, Glen Parva, Blaby, Countesthorpe, Whetstone, Narborough and Enderby.
- 11.1.3 In comparison to regional and national averages, people in Blaby are driving to work more often, and significantly less people travel via train than the national averages.
- 11.1.4 It is probable that additional new development will add congestion to roads unless there are transport strategies to alleviate the pressures growth may bring. Parking of vehicles may also be an area of concern when supplying new housing.
- 11.1.5 Most of the committed development sites are close to major roads and the rail station in Narborough (though this does not attract significant local journeys due to its relatively infrequent services to Leicester, and car parking facilities are limited). However, local scale public transport is an issue as bus services are infrequent and need to be strengthened in several settlements.
- 11.1.6 Many Medium Villages and Smaller Villages have access to hourly serviced bus routes. However, some of these settlements only have access to services that run every two or three hours.

### Spatial options analysis

#### Scenario 1

- 11.1.7 **Option 1a** involves only a small amount of additional growth across the district. This is mostly directed to the Extended PUA, with only very small additional growth likely to be involved at the Medium Villages and Small Villages.
- 11.1.8 This scale of additional growth involved is relatively low, and is in locations that have generally good access to public transport, jobs and a range of services. This is positive, but unlikely to lead to significant positive effects, as further investment in strategic transport infrastructure (roads and public transport) is unlikely to be involved.

11.1.9 Though additional development adds pressure to the existing network, it ought to be possible manage growth without having negative effects in terms of traffic congestion. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted.

## Scenario 2

11.1.10 Each of the options under this scenario will bring more growth to the district. Broadly speaking, this is likely to lead to an increased number of car trips, which could lead to greater congestion on local road networks. However, the nature and extent of the effects is dependent upon how development is distributed. The scale and nature of growth could also bring opportunities with regards to infrastructure improvements, and / or the creation of new facilities.

11.1.11 **Option 2a** places additional growth mainly within the PUA, Expanded PUA and Medium Villages with a small amount of growth in the smaller villages.

11.1.12 Access to public transport and road networks is relatively good in the PUA and Expanded PUA settlements, and therefore, development should be in locations that support sustainable modes of travel. In this respect, minor positive effects are likely. However, some site options on the urban periphery are not within close proximity to buses or public transport and could be more likely to involve car travel to reach employment and other services (albeit the length of trips might be relatively short). This could put some pressure on road networks in these locations. At the scale of growth involved only minor negative effects would be predicted in this regard.

11.1.13 Sites within Medium Villages (Cosby, Croft, Littlethorpe, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton) are less well served by high frequency bus/rail services and also are not as well served by a range of locally accessible local services. Growth in these locations therefore has potential to have minor negative effects overall with regards to encouraging sustainable modes of transport.

11.1.14 Overall, this option is predicted to have **mixed effects**. On the one hand, it places a large proportion of the additional growth in the extended PUA, which generally is well served by public transport and local services. These are **minor positive effects**. However, other locations for growth could lead to increased car trips, and congestion on existing routes, which are **minor negative effects**.

11.1.15 **Option 2b** focuses the majority of additional growth within the Extended PUA, with the remainder at Medium Villages. This is a minor positive effect in terms of locating growth in broadly accessible locations. The focused scale of growth in the Extended PUA and Medium Villages is more likely to lead to increased traffic congestion on key routes in these areas (and other key destinations) though.

- 11.1.16 It is presumed that junction improvements and other traffic measures would need to be secured to support such growth, and so significant negative effects ought to be possible to avoid. As a result only minor negative effects are predicted.
- 11.1.17 Growth at the medium villages would be of a lesser scale for this option, and so the effects here are predicted to be neutral.
- 11.1.18 There are opportunities to improve public transport connections between the Extended PUA, Medium Villages, key business parks, the wider District and region, but these would most likely be bus-related, rather than rail.
- 11.1.19 Overall, this option is predicted to have **mixed effects**. With regards to accessibility, much of the growth is focused in the Extended PUA, which are **minor positive effects**. However, growth in this area could create pressure on local road networks in the area and more widely particularly where public transport is not improved, which are **minor negative effects**.
- 11.1.20 A higher proportion of the additional development in Option 2c is located in the Smaller Villages and Medium Villages. Access to local facilities and frequent public transport is more limited in these locations, and the scale of growth would be insufficient to support entirely new facilities. As such, this pattern of growth may be more likely to lead to an increase in car trips, which is a minor negative effect. In these villages, it would be important to introduce schemes to improve local walking and cycling networks and bus services.
- 11.1.21 Option 2c also still involves an element of additional growth in the extended PUA, which brings minor positive effects.
- 11.1.22 Overall, Option 2c is predicted to have **minor negative effects** as a proportion of growth will be located in areas that currently offer fewer opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport to access the full range of local services and employment opportunities.
- 11.1.23 However, growth in the Extended PUA should bring better opportunities for sustainable travel, which overall are **minor positive effects**.
- 11.1.24 The larger strategic site options at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures involved for **Option 2d** may trigger new and improved transport connections. However, this is less likely for the smaller strategic site options at Blaby and Elmesthorpe. The strategic site options are currently in relatively remote areas that present connectivity challenges in terms of sustainable travel. It is likely that some local facilities would be secured, which would support walking and cycling and reduced car trips, which are **minor positive effects**. However, depending on the scale of the strategic site options, access to healthcare, secondary schools, jobs and other higher order services may be located at nearby settlements.

- 11.1.25 Without access to new public transport services, this could potentially lead to increased car travel and pressure on road networks. These are uncertain significant negative effects.
- 11.1.26 For **Option 2e**, additional growth would be focused at one or two of the larger strategic site options at Whetstone Pastures and/or Stoney Stanton (which have greater capacity for larger scale schemes). These larger site options would be more likely to generate the need for and economies of scale to support a wider range of local services, which could help to create sustainable, walkable communities. New and improved local services and public transport could also help existing communities in nearby settlements, which could be a **significant positive effect**. However, the increased growth in these locations could lead to pressure on road junctions, and there would be a need to connect new public transport routes to the strategic sites to ensure that significant increases in car travel are not encouraged. Development of such a large scale would need to be supported by the appropriate infrastructure upgrades, or uncertain significant negative effects could occur with regards to traffic congestion.

### Scenario 3

- 11.1.27 **Option 3a** will place most additional growth in the PUA and Extended PUA where transport connectivity is relatively good by public transport and roads (though congestion is an issue at peak times).
- 11.1.28 Placing growth in these localities could have significant positive effects as new communities ought to have good connections to the City of Leicester, including through frequent public transport (provided that peripheral locations are linked to existing or new bus routes). There are also a range of employment, businesses, recreational facilities, health care provisions and other important amenities within close proximity.
- 11.1.29 Access to local services and facilities on foot will depend upon the exact locations involved, as well as the form of development and whether new facilities are supported.
- 11.1.30 Conversely, placing a large amount of growth at the urban fringes of Leicester could lead to increased traffic congestion on orbital routes and arterial routes within the area. Several development locations would be in close proximity to major road networks and could therefore exacerbate traffic congestion in these areas. Without substantial investment in infrastructure and / or a significant modal shift, this could lead to significant negative effects in terms of traffic congestion.
- 11.1.31 This option also places additional growth at the medium villages, some of which would be likely to encourage longer trips, more than likely by car, to access employment and services.

- 11.1.32 Overall, an uncertain **significant positive effect** is predicted, as the option provides the potential for growth to be delivered in broadly sustainable locations where the distance to travel to access services should be relatively short. There is also good access to a range of jobs and services. However, focusing substantial growth in these locations could have **significant negative effects** in terms of traffic congestion on the road network. This highlights the importance of enhanced public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure if high levels of growth are to be placed in the PUA and extended PUA.
- 11.1.33 **Option 3b** also places the majority of additional development in close proximity to the Leicester Urban Area, but with a focus on the extended PUA rather than the PUA itself. The settlements involved in this location have broadly good access to services and employment, and in the case of Narborough is served by a train station (though services and potential for improvements are limited). Therefore, the potential for new development to support sustainable modes of travel and shorter car trips exists; which is an uncertain **significant positive effect** (i.e. it is dependent upon public transport being made accessible to new developments and encouraging the use of alternative modes of travel). Conversely, a large amount of development in this location could lead to increased traffic locally as well as attracting vehicular movement on the M1 and the M69 (given the close proximity of Junction 21). This is an uncertain **significant negative effect**.
- 11.1.34 **Option 3c** is less likely to generate localised traffic pressures on particular settlements as growth is dispersed more evenly across the district. In this respect, only minor negative effects are predicted. However, a greater focus on Medium and Smaller Villages will mean that a higher proportion of additional new development is in locations that have poorer access to frequent public transport and is not within proximity of certain local services.
- 11.1.35 A proportion of additional growth would still be located in extended PUA, which brings some significant positive effects to this part of the district (in terms of supporting more sustainable travel). However, the scale of growth in the extended PUA also presents some potential for traffic congestion in an already busy location.
- 11.1.36 Overall, **mixed effects** are predicted, with uncertain **significant positive effects** being identified and uncertain **significant negative effects**.
- 11.1.37 **Options 3d/3e** have similar effects to Options 2d/2e in that there could be **significant negative** and **significant positive effects** depending upon supporting infrastructure and on site facilities being secured.

## Summary

11.1.38 With the exception of Option 1, which only involves limited additional growth, there is the potential for each option to have mixed effects in terms of accessibility and transport.

11.1.39 For scenario 2, the effects are minor for options 2a – 2c. Growth in the PUA and extended PUA ought to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel and good links between employment, new homes and local services. However, it could create local traffic congestion issues. Where growth is concentrated in the Medium Villages, such congestion issues are likely, because access to local services and employment is poorer.

11.1.40 For the strategic site options, the potential for significant effects exists given the higher concentration of growth in specific locations. Again this could be either positive or negative, depending upon the nature of development and supporting infrastructure provided will improve access to local services, employment and public transport.

11.1.41 At a higher level of growth under scenario 3 the effects are exacerbated, which creates greater potential for significant effects (both positive and negative) regardless of distribution.

11.1.42 It is clear that regardless of the strategy, there is a need to ensure that new development is supported by public transport improvements, enhancements to local services, and enhancement of local transport networks. For the strategic site options, there may also be a need for strategic road infrastructure, without which, significant effects may be more likely to occur.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 2d	Option 2e	Option 3a	Option 3b	Option 3c	Option 3d	Option 3e
Accessibility Sustainable travel	0	+	+	+	+	++?	++?	++?	++?	++?	++?
Accessibility Congestion	0	-	-	-	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?	--?

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# Appendix D: Site Appraisal Methodology/Framework

## Biodiversity

### Proximity to SSSI

- More than 1km = **Dark Green**
- Adjacent or overlapping = **Dark Red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

### Proximity to Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

- More than 1km = **Dark Green**
- Adjacent or overlapping = **Dark Red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

### Ancient Woodland

- More than 400m = **Dark Green**
- Adjacent or overlapping = **Dark red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

### Local Wildlife Site

- More than 400m = **Dark Green**
- Adjacent or overlapping = **Dark red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

## Air Quality

### Proximity to Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

- Within 400m = **Dark Green**
- Within an AQMA = **Dark red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

## Landscape and Soil

### Agricultural Land

- 100% overlap = **Dark Green**
- Up to 50% overlap = **Light green**
- 50-99% overlap = **Amber**
- 100% overlap = **Dark Red**

## Cultural Heritage

### Scheduled Monument

### Listed Building Grade 1

### Listed Building Grade 2

### Listed Building Grade 2\*

- Heritage asset more than 400m away = **Dark Green**
- Adjacent or overlapping with site = **Dark red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

## Climate Change and Flooding

### Flood Zone 2

### Flood Zone 3

### Surface Water 1 in 30

### Surface Water 1 in 100

### Surface Water 1 in 1000

- 100% of the site outside of zone = **Dark Green**
- 100% of site within zone = **Dark red**
- Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.

## Minerals

### Minerals safeguarding zones

- No Overlap = **Dark Green**
- 100% overlap = **Dark Red**
- Partial overlap = **Amber**

## Accessibility and Transport

### Distance to a bus stop

**Dark Red** = More than 1.5km  **Dark Green** = Closest (within 50m)

*Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.*

### Distance to employment site

**Dark Red** = More than 5km  **Dark Green** = Within 400m

*Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.*

Distance to healthcare facility

**Dark Red** = More than 3km  **Dark Green** = Within 400m

*Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.*

Distance to primary school

**Dark Red** = More than 2km  **Dark Green** = Within 400m

*Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.*

Distance to secondary school

**Dark Red** = More than 4km  **Dark Green** = Within 800m

*Conditional formatting for all values in-between these absolute values.*

## Landscape

Sensitivity to development

Site overlaps with low-medium only = **Dark Green**

Site overlaps with both low medium and medium = **Light amber**

Site overlaps with medium = **Amber**

Site overlaps with medium – high = **Light red**

Site overlaps with medium high and high- **Red**

Site overlaps with high – **Dark red**

No overlap with any areas = **Grey**

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# Appendix E: Site Appraisal Matrix

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)
AECOM001	SAP019	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM002	HUN013	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Orange	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
AECOM003	KIL002	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Orange	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM004	BLA030	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
AECOM005	STO009	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM006	COU038	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM007	GLE030	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM008	BLA032	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM009	BLA033	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM010	COS009	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM011	ECOS001	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM012	COS013	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM013	COU042	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM014	CRO006	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM015	GLE031	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM016	GLE032	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM017	KMU025	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM018	LFE020	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
AECOM019	LIT022	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM020	LIT023																										
AECOM021	SHA008																										
AECOM022	SAP025																										
AECOM023	THU004																										
AECOM024	THU005																										
AECOM025	WHE026																										
AECOM026	WHE031																										
AECOM027	BLA035																										
AECOM028	WHE027																										
AECOM029	KMU026																										
AECOM030	COU047																										
AECOM031	CRO009																										
AECOM032	HUN019																										
AECOM033	ELM011																										
AECOM035	BLA038																										
AECOM036	SAP035																										
AECOM037	EAST001																										
AECOM038	EBLA002																										
AECOM039	EBLA004																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM040	SAP029																										
AECOM041	EWHE001																										
AECOM042	STO025																										
AECOM043	ELUB002																										
AECOM044	NAR022																										
AECOM045	EBLA003																										
AECOM046	BLA007																										
AECOM047	STO019																										
AECOM048	COU022																										
AECOM049	CRO003																										
AECOM050	END017																										
AECOM051	KMU009																										
AECOM052	LIT008																										
AECOM053	LIT009																										
AECOM054	NAR002																										
AECOM055	SAP013																										
AECOM056	END022																										
AECOM057	STO016																										
AECOM058	COU037																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM059	BLA031																										
AECOM060	COS012																										
AECOM061	COU045																										
AECOM062	HUN017																										
AECOM063	LUB002																										
AECOM064	NAR018																										
AECOM065	NAR020																										
AECOM066	SAP024																										
AECOM067	STO023																										
AECOM068	STO024																										
AECOM069	SAP031																										
AECOM070	WHE032																										
AECOM071	COS014																										
AECOM072	GPA025																										
AECOM073	GPA026																										
AECOM074	THU008																										
AECOM075	SHA009																										
AECOM076	THU009																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM077	COU49																										
AECOM078	SAP034																										
AECOM079	COU051																										
AECOM080	HUN021																										
AECOM081	COU050																										
AECOM082	SHA010																										
AECOM083	COS015																										
AECOM084	COU052																										
AECOM085	GPA0XX																										
AECOM086	ELM008																										
AECOM087	ETHU001																										
AECOM088	ELM001																										
AECOM089	ESHA001																										
AECOM090	THU003																										
AECOM091	COU025																										
AECOM092	EELM001																										
AECOM093	END009																										
AECOM094	GPA010																										
AECOM095	KIL006																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)
AECOM096	LIT003	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM097	STO002	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM098	WHE004	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM099	WHE019	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM100	LFE018	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM101	SAP023	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM102	KIL008	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM103	COS011	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM104	KMU023	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM105	COU044	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM106	END023	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM107	KMU020	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM108	GPA023	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM109	KMU021	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM110	KMU022	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM111	KMU024	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM112	SAP026	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM113	LFE021	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM114	LUB003	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM115	WHE030																										
AECOM116	SAP028																										
AECOM117	THU006																										
AECOM118	STO028																										
AECOM119	GPA024																										
AECOM120	CRO007																										
AECOM121	LIT024																										
AECOM122	KMU027																										
AECOM123	END025																										
AECOM124	END026																										
AECOM125	END027																										
AECOM126	THU007																										
AECOM127	COU048																										
AECOM128	GPA027																										
AECOM129	BRA001																										
AECOM130	LUB004																										
AECOM131	CRO008																										
AECOM132	LUB001																										
AECOM133	COS016																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM134	THU010																										
AECOM135	LUB005																										
AECOM136	THU012																										
AECOM137	LIT014 (Redeveloped)																										
AECOM138	NAR021																										
AECOM139	THU011																										
AECOM140	ELM009																										
AECOM141	ELM010																										
AECOM142	END024																										
AECOM143	HUN016																										
AECOM144	HUN018																										
AECOM145	HUN020																										
AECOM146	NAR019																										
AECOM147	BLA037																										
AECOM148	BLA036																										
AECOM149	COU024																										
AECOM150	COU046																										
AECOM151	ECRO002																										

AECOMID	site_ref	SSSI	LNR	Ancient Woodland	AQMA	ALC	Scheduled Monument	Listed Building Grade 1	Listed Building Grade 2	Listed Building Grade 2*	Flood Zone 2	Flood Zone 3	Surface Water 1 in 30	Surface Water 1in100	Surface Water 1in1000	Bus Stop Distance (m)	Employment Sites Distance (m)	Healthcare Facility Distance (m)	Landscape Study Housing sensitivity	Landscape Large Commercial	Landscape small scale commercial	Local Wildlife Site	Mineral Zones	Primary School Distance (m)	Secondary School Distance (m)	TPO Distance (m)	
AECOM152	END028	Orange			Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM153	NAR008	Red			Red	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM154	NAR016	Orange			Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM155	EKMU002	Green			Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM156	COU043	Green			Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM157	SAP032	Green			Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM158	BLA040	Green			Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM159	BLA039	Green			Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM160	COS010	Green			Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM161	END029	Green			Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM162	STO026	Green			Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM163	BLA034	Green			Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
AECOM164	LFE017	Green			Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green



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# **Appendix F: Strategic Housing Options Appraisal (Pre-Submission)**

## Health and wellbeing

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

In terms of access to healthcare facilities, only 32% of the sites that comprise Option 1 are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, given that all but one of the sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, residents should still be able to access a healthcare facility without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle. It is also noted that the two strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes, of which around 585 would be in the plan period) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes, of which around 420 would be in the plan period) – have the potential to deliver new healthcare facilities in the longer-term to accommodate the large increase in residents in these locations.<sup>19 20</sup> If delivered, this would help relieve pressure on existing healthcare facilities.

With regard to proximity to schools, almost all (82%) of the sites that comprise Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school. The two largest sites under this option have the potential to deliver new primary schools to accommodate the large increase in residents in these locations.<sup>21</sup> If delivered this would help relieve pressure on existing schools. However, only 39% of the sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school, reflecting the fact there are only 3 secondary schools in the District. While access by public transport is possible—since nearly all sites are within walking distance of a bus stop—this still represents a notable shortfall in direct proximity. Moreover, secondary school provision is less likely to be delivered through the strategic sites under this option, raising concerns over whether there is sufficient capacity in existing schools to accommodate additional pupils. This presents a potential negative effect, particularly for families without access to a private vehicle, or those with accessibility issues.

All sites that comprise Option 1 are within walking distance of an open space. As such, development under this option supports access to the local green infrastructure network, which will positively impact the physical and mental health of residents in Blaby. However, it is recognised that three of these sites overlap – to varying degrees – with open space. These sites are:

- **Land off Lutterworth Road (BLA030)** – 54% overlap with open space
- **Land south of Carlton Park, Hayes Meadow (NAR022)** – approx. 46% overlap with open space
- **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – 3% overlap with open space

In this respect, these sites have the potential to lead to the loss of open space, which – if not provided elsewhere – will negatively impact the health and wellbeing of residents in these locations. However, there is potential for some or all green space to be retained and enhanced as part of the new development. Further, it is noted that given only 3% of **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** overlaps with open space, the potential loss of open space under this site is not considered significant (especially if it can be retained and enhanced).

<sup>19</sup> This is based on 1,800 people per one full-time General Practice (GP), which is considered standard by the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU), based on guidance by the Royal College of GPs. Source: UK Government (2023): [Fact Sheet 4: New homes and healthcare facilities](#)

<sup>20</sup> And reflected in the policies for both sites which require the provision of healthcare facilities on site

<sup>21</sup> This is based on one average sized primary school per 1,104 new homes, and one average sized secondary school per 8,107 new homes, based on the Department for Education's national average pupil yields and 2022/23 average school sizes for England. Source: UK Government (2023): [Fact Sheet 5: New homes and school places](#).

The two strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – are larger than the existing settlements which they relate to. Due to this, they have the potential to significantly alter the sense of place in Stoney Stanton (and to a lesser extent Sapcote) and Countesthorpe respectively, which could adversely impact the wellbeing of residents in these locations. There is also a risk (in terms of community cohesion) that these strategic sites could become self-contained communities, particularly if they deliver a broad range of services and facilities and are poorly integrated with the existing communities in the settlements they adjoin. However, it is noted that there is potential for positive effects if these sites are appropriately designed and masterplanned, for example, through supporting green infrastructure enhancements and improved accessibility, which will in turn encourage social interaction and benefit existing and new communities.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential significant positive effects** because it delivers new growth in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible by public transport to healthcare facilities, schools, and open spaces. The strategic sites under this option also have the potential to deliver new healthcare facilities and primary schools, which could relieve pressure on existing services and facilities in these locations. However, it is recognised that two of the sites under this option have the potential to lead to the loss of open space if not retained (with improved access where appropriate) or provided elsewhere. In addition, the strategic sites have the potential to significantly alter the sense of place of the settlements they form extensions to if not designed effectively, which could adversely impact the wellbeing of residents in these locations. Hence, uncertainty is noted under this option.

## **Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), only 50% of the sites are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, given that all of these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, residents should still be able to access a healthcare facility without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle. None of the additional sites under Option 2 are considered large enough to facilitate the delivery of new healthcare facilities but will need to contribute towards the expansion or improvement to existing facilities.

67% of the additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school, and only 33% of the sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school. Nevertheless, as noted above, given that all of these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, children should still be able to travel to school without having to rely on lifts using the private vehicle. None of the additional sites under Option 2 are considered large enough to facilitate the delivery of new schools although a number could contribute to the delivery of new or expansion of existing schools.

All additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance of an open space. As such, development under this option supports access to the local green infrastructure network, which will positively impact the physical and mental health of residents in Blaby. However, it is recognised that three of these sites overlap – to varying degrees – with open space. These sites are:

- **Land at Kingstand Golf Course (LFE020)** – 100% overlap with open space
- **Western Park Golf Course (GLE031)** – 85% overlap with open space

- **Land East of Lutterworth Road (A426) (Blaby) (BLA038)** – 16% overlap with open space

It is noted that the two golf courses have been closed for a decade therefore repurposing the sites could revitalise the spaces, increasing their vibrancy particularly if positively masterplanned. However, their redevelopment would inevitably be a loss of open, green space that is utilised by local residents despite the course being shut, for example for dog walking and wider recreational activities. It is considered that this loss will negatively impact the health and wellbeing of residents in these locations, particularly if a similarly sized area of open space is not provided elsewhere. **Land East of Lutterworth Road (A426) (Blaby) (BLA038)** also overlaps with open space, however only a relatively small amount. As such, the potential loss of open space as a result of the development of this site is not considered as significant as under the other two sites discussed above (especially if it can be retained).

None of the additional sites under Option 2 form large extensions to existing settlements. However, a number of the sites, combined with the sites already included under Option 1, would result in a significant increase in the size of the affected settlements. This includes Croft, Huncote, and Cosby, which would increase the growth proposed by around 50% as a result of the additional sites included under Option 2. This could significantly alter the sense of place residents associate with these settlements.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **significant positive effects** because it delivers new growth in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible by public transport to community infrastructure such as healthcare facilities and schools. In terms of green space, it is recognised that the loss of two closed golf courses could impact upon access to open space positively and/ or negatively, with a level of uncertainty at this stage depending on the nature of losses and the efforts made to enhance accessibility of retained amenity areas.

Whilst there are no additional strategic sites under this option, those carried over from Option 1 have the potential to deliver new healthcare facilities and primary schools, which could relieve pressure on existing services and facilities. The greater amount of housing delivered would also go further towards addressing affordable housing issues compared to option 1. However, it is recognised that two of the additional sites under this option have the potential to lead to the loss of open space if not retained, enhanced, or provided elsewhere. In addition, it is noted that the strategic sites – alongside a number of the smaller sites under this option in combination with smaller sites carried over from Option 1 – have the potential to significantly alter the sense of place of the affected settlements if not designed effectively. Due to this, a degree of uncertainty is noted under this option.

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), only 50% of the sites under Option 3 are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, given that all of these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, residents should still be able to access a healthcare facility without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle. This option delivers a cluster of sites which together form an additional strategic site – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)**.

Only 67% of the additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school, although it is noted that the remaining two sites are within 900m of a primary school (and therefore likely still walkable for most children). The additional strategic site under this option has the potential to deliver a new primary school to accommodate the large increase in residents in this location.

Again, if delivered this would help relieve pressure on existing schools. Almost all (83%), of the additional sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school, and all of these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop. Access to schools is therefore considered very good overall.

All additional sites under Option 3 are within walking distance of an open space. As such, development under Option 3 supports access to the green infrastructure network, which will positively impact the physical and mental health of residents in Blaby. Whilst it is recognised that two of these sites – **Land north of Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA031)** and **Land at Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA034)** – overlap with open space, this is only by 5% and 1% respectively. Hence, the potential loss of open space from development of these sites is not considered significant (especially if they can be retained or enhanced).

The additional strategic site under Option 3 – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)** has the potential to significantly alter the sense of place in Blaby town (and South Wigston, as the site partially bridges the existing gap between these settlements). There is also a risk that this strategic site could be poorly integrated with the existing community in Blaby given it is separated by open green space. However, as noted above under Option 1, this is largely dependent on masterplanning.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential significant positive effects** due to the delivery of growth in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible by public transport to healthcare facilities, schools, and open spaces. The additional strategic site under this option also has the potential to contribute towards healthcare facilities and/or primary school provision, which could relieve pressure on existing services and facilities in this location. However, it is recognised that this strategic site has the potential to significantly alter the sense of place of Blaby village if not designed effectively. Due to this, uncertainty is noted under this option.

## Conclusion

Option 1 focuses some growth within two large strategic sites, which present opportunities to deliver new community infrastructure (such as health and education facilities), helping to meet the needs of new and existing residents. Options 2 and 3 build upon Option 1 in this respect, delivering additional growth on smaller sites which will rely more heavily on existing infrastructure provision. Option 3 also introduces an additional strategic site at Hospital Lane, which, reflective of its strategic nature, could also deliver a level of new infrastructure to support growth. All three options are considered likely to bring about significant positive effects in terms of access to health, through housing provision and social infrastructure enhancement. It is reasonable to suggest that planning for higher levels of growth are most preferable in this regard (provided that growth brings investment in services, rather than putting pressure on them).

With regards to open space, amenity and issues on 'community', all three options involve growth that could negatively impact on the amenity and community use of open space for some residents. This is greater for Options 2 and 3, given that they increase the scale of several settlements and will result in a greater loss of existing open space. Conversely, Options 2 and 3 bring the ability to achieve an overall higher amount of development contributions that could be used for social infrastructure enhancement. There would also be further opportunity to introduce new open space and recreational facilities as part of additional development sites. Though there are some mixed negative and positive effects in this regard for each option, it is considered that the overall outcomes on health for Blaby ought to be positive.

On balance, the negative effects discussed above that only arise for options 2 and 3 are balanced by the greater benefits to health and wellbeing that social infrastructure and housing enhancements would bring.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Facilities / accessibility	++ <sup>?</sup>	++	++
Rank	3	2	1
Amenity and open space	+	+	+
Rank	-	-	-

## Population and Housing

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

By delivering the lowest level of growth, Option 1 is less likely to meet the housing needs of the district, including the need for affordable housing and specialist housing (e.g. adaptable homes for older people and people with disabilities), as well as pitches for gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople. This option also focuses growth across fewer settlements in the district, meaning the benefits associated with growth – such as new community infrastructure – will be delivered to fewer communities in Blaby. However, it is recognised that growth under this option delivers two strategic sites – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – it is assumed that this level of growth will deliver a range of community infrastructure, albeit not all the homes or infrastructure will be delivered in the plan period. In addition, affordable homes are more likely to be well integrated with market homes through these strategic sites as they will entail the delivery of new settlement expansions.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **significant positive effects**. This option delivers significant housing growth which exceeds the identified need calculated using the standard method (10,184 homes).

### Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Option 2 delivers a higher level of growth compared to Option 1 and will therefore better meet the housing needs of the district, although it does not perform as well as Option 3 in this respect. As this option focuses growth across more settlements in the district when compared to Option 1, the benefits associated with growth will be delivered to more communities in Blaby, but fewer than under Option 3. None of the additional sites under this option are considered strategic due to their size. Due to this, additional community infrastructure under this option (when compared to Option 1) will be limited, which could result in some additional pressure on existing services and facilities although all development will be expected to contribute towards expanding or enhancing local services and facilities.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to likely **significant positive effects** as it delivers a level of growth which exceeds the identified need calculated using the standard method.

### Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

By delivering the highest level of growth, Option 3 will best meet the housing needs of the district. This option also delivers new homes across the widest area, bringing the benefits associated with growth – such as new community infrastructure – to the largest number of communities within Blaby. As growth under Option 3 delivers a cluster of sites which together form an additional strategic site – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)** – opportunities to deliver new community infrastructure will likely be greatest under this option. As noted above under Option 1, affordable homes are more likely to be well integrated with market homes through strategic sites.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **significant positive effects** as it delivers a level of growth which significantly exceeds the identified need calculated using the standard method and the unmet need in Leicestershire (including Leicester) combined. This will provide the greatest flexibility and likelihood of meeting identified needs within the Plan period, and is also most likely to contribute towards longer term needs. It will also bring forward the broadest range of benefits to local communities, including new homes (including affordable housing, specialist housing, and pitches for gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople) and associated infrastructure.

### Conclusion

All options will deliver significant positive effects in relation to the population and housing SA objective, meeting local housing needs through the delivery of a mix of high-quality homes including affordable homes. However, whilst Option 1 meets and slightly exceeds the housing need within Blaby district, Option 2 surpasses this, and provides for the unmet need of Leicestershire including Leicester. Option 3 would deliver the highest level of growth, giving greater flexibility towards meeting the district's need and Leicestershire's unmet need. This option could also provide an increased range of types of housing to meet the needs of different groups. In this regard, Option 3 performs the most favourable in terms of the population and housing topic, whilst Option 1 is the least favourable.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Population and housing	++	++	++
Rank	1	2	3

## Biodiversity and geodiversity

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

There are no internationally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity within or within proximity to Blaby. Regarding nationally and locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity, there are relatively few within the district and surrounding areas. There are two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within Elmesthorpe and Glen Parva and several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), identified for their biodiversity and geodiversity value, scattered across the district at Narborough, Huncote, Croft, Enderby, and Aston Flamville. Two of these SSSIs (Croft & Huncote Quarry, and Enderby Warren Quarry) are designated primarily for geodiversity reasons.

Therefore, development through Option 1 is relatively unconstrained in terms of biodiversity and geodiversity designations, suggesting good potential for biodiversity net gain (BNG) to be delivered on-site or nearby, particularly through integration with wider green infrastructure and habitat enhancements. The strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – provide opportunities to embed multifunctional green infrastructure into site design, which could contribute to strengthening local ecological networks and habitat connectivity. However, it is noted that a level of uncertainty exists at this stage in this respect.

However, there are some proposed sites that are in proximity to nationally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity, which may give rise to potential adverse impacts if not carefully managed. Notably these include **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)**, which is located within 200m of Croft and Huncote Quarry SSSI as well as within proximity to multiple other SSSIs (e.g. Croft Pasture, and Croft Hill). Development of this site has the potential to lead to significant negatively effects in relation to these designated sites, particularly Croft and Huncote Quarry SSSI. Impacts could be both direct and indirect (e.g. dust, noise, pollution, hydrological changes) and would require mitigation to prevent deterioration of designated features.

In terms of other sites in proximity to designation biodiversity and geodiversity sites, there are six sites proposed through Option 1 that are within 1km of an SSSI. These are:

**Land south of Carlton Park, Hayes Meadow (NAR022)** – c. 390m from Narborough Bog

**Croft Lodge Farm (Croft) (CRO009)** – c. 540m from Croft Pasture

**Land at Poplars Farm (CRO006)** – c. 555m from Croft Pasture

**Steeple Chase Farm, Main Street, Kilby (KIL002)** – c. 620m from Kilby – Foxtan Canal

**Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – c. 640m from Burbage Wood and Aston Firs

**Land south of Warwick Road and east of Cosby Road (LIT022)** – c. 830m from Narborough Bog

Early discussions with Natural England indicate that an enhanced SUDS system will be required on land south of Carlton Park to ensure surface water from the site is subject to appropriate 'treatment' prior to discharge from the site give the sites upstream location and connectivity to the Narborough Bogs site through existing watercourses. Water treatment will be required during the construction and operational phases.

In respect of the land west of Stoney Stanton site, the scale of this development could place greater recreational pressure on Burbage Wood and Aston Firs. It is likely that the provision of significant on site green infrastructure could reduce this pressure. In any case the proximity of these sites to these SSSIs introduces the risk of increased recreational pressure on these sites, therefore further consultation with Natural England will be necessary. In terms of priority habitat, these habitats are of high biodiversity value and would likely require retention and buffering within the site layout. This may limit the developable area and require ecological mitigation and enhancement strategies to avoid net loss. Priority habitat is generally limited across proposed sites under Option 1, with small areas of deciduous woodland at sites such as **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** and **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)**, which may be more easily retained and integrated into ecological corridors.

At a local level, only one site is in proximity to an LNR, **Land rear of County Hall (GLE030)**, which is located c. 150m from Goss Meadows. This could lead to potential indirect effects, such as increased visitor pressure or lighting impacts, which would need to be carefully considered through site design to avoid undermining the integrity of the reserve. Further,

Option 1 provides scope to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity at the site and district scales, however this is reliant upon appropriate mitigation methods to protect biodiversity and geodiversity designations within the area. This option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects** in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity, as most proposed sites are not heavily constrained by designated habitats, offering good potential for on-site BNG and integration with wider green infrastructure. However, several sites are located in close proximity to nationally important designations such as SSSIs, where development could result in adverse direct and indirect impacts if not properly mitigated. The overall effect will therefore depend on the effective avoidance, mitigation, and enhancement strategies secured through the design and implementation of individual schemes, although initial consideration of potential impacts and dialogue with Natural England has already taken place. As above, uncertainty is therefore predicted at this stage.

### **Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)**

Option 2 includes all sites under Option 1 and therefore shares the biodiversity and geodiversity constraints already identified above. In comparison to Option 1, Option 2 delivers a higher level of growth overall and includes six additional sites. While the majority of these new sites are not tightly constrained in biodiversity terms, one of the additional allocations, **Western Park Golf Course (GLE031)**, lies adjacent to Kirby Firth LNR (which is also comprised of deciduous woodland) on the southern border. This site, whilst being considered for allocation will not include any housing development in Blaby but will make provision for a new road access to facilitate the delivery of the Western Park (Policy SL02), which is allocated for around 412 houses and 9.74ha of employment land within the City of Leicester's administrative boundary. The development of this access could have both direct and indirect ecological impacts, including increased recreational pressure (by facilitating growth in the City), light and noise disturbance, and potential edge effects on habitats within the LNR. Mitigation measures such as appropriate lighting, the incorporation of an appropriate drainage system, the incorporation of green buffers and habitat screening and on site biodiversity enhancements, will be important to ensure that the integrity and ecological function of the LNR is not compromised. Further, attention should also be given to the design of pedestrian and cycling routes in order to avoid funnelling recreational pressure into sensitive areas.

Wider consideration is also given to the role of Golf Courses as biodiverse landscapes, which play a significant role in urban ecology. Despite the site being closed, these areas can enhance biodiversity, providing habitats for animals in urban settings. The loss of this and other golf courses to housing development could lead to negative effects on local biodiversity and connectivity of the sites with the wider ecological network if not suitably managed and mitigated (as discussed above). It is also noted that Golf Course sites provide opportunity for environmental enhancement if appropriately managed.

Considering the above, it is recognised that the higher scale of development proposed under Option 2 may result in cumulative pressures on biodiversity, increasing the overall demand for habitat re-creation, enhanced green spaces, and ecological connectivity. However, without mitigation, higher growth under Option 2 could lead to greater adverse effects on the environment than Option 1.

Despite the increase in overall development quantum, Option 2 remains relatively unconstrained at a district scale, with the majority of additional sites avoiding the most sensitive biodiversity designations.

This option could support the creation and enhancement of ecological networks through a landscape-scale approach, embedding accessible green space, protection of priority habitats, and wildlife corridors within and between development sites. The larger scale of development

means that there are more opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity assets in the area.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects**, as the greater scale of development introduces increased pressure on designated sites, priority habitats, and wider ecological networks (for example through the loss of two defunct Golf Courses). While most additional sites are not tightly constrained, **Western Park Golf Course (GLE031)** is notably located adjacent to Kirby Firth LNR which heightens the potential for localised impacts and would require careful mitigation. However, restricting development to a road access only to serve development in Leicester City will go some way to reducing the potential impacts of allocating land for development on this site. However, the scale of proposed development (within Leicester) also provides opportunities to enhance biodiversity through strategic green infrastructure, on-site habitat creation, and improved connectivity across the district. Uncertainty is therefore also considered for this option, particularly in relation to the strategic sites and how these will deliver in terms of green infrastructure and BNG.

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

Option 3 includes all sites under Option 2, as well as a further six sites which focus growth mainly in the Blaby town area. The additional sites introduced through this option are generally located away from nationally and locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity, with limited overlap with priority habitats, suggesting that the potential for significant direct biodiversity impacts is low. This creates an opportunity for development to incorporate BNG measures and contribute to wider ecological enhancements, particularly through the delivery of new green infrastructure, habitat corridors, and urban greening.

However, given the higher overall scale of growth proposed through Option 3, there is greater potential for cumulative pressures on biodiversity and geodiversity across the district. These may arise through increased recreational use of natural spaces, disturbance to habitats, and habitat fragmentation if ecological connectivity is not protected. While the additional sites under this option are generally less constrained, delivering net gain at this scale will depend on robust ecological mitigation and investment in multifunctional green infrastructure networks.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects** as the scale of growth increases cumulative pressure on local biodiversity, though the location of sites away from sensitive designations and the opportunity for strategic enhancements may help avoid significant adverse impacts. It is also considered that uncertainty is present through this option in terms of the strategic sites and how these will deliver in terms of green infrastructure and BNG.

### **Conclusion**

Option 1 presents the least biodiversity and geodiversity constraint overall, with most sites located away from sensitive designations and offering good potential for on-site biodiversity net gain. In comparison, Option 2 introduces a higher level of growth and includes additional sites, most notably two former Golf Courses which could be of high biodiversity value. Western Park Golf Course also lies adjacent to a Local Nature Reserve, thereby increasing the risk of localised ecological impacts that require mitigation. Option 3 builds on the previous options with even more growth focused on Blaby town, but its additional sites are generally less constrained by sensitive habitats; however, the cumulative scale of development under this option increases pressure on ecological networks.

However, development and mitigation will be informed by the preparation of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy<sup>22</sup> and a Blue Green Infrastructure Study for Blaby<sup>23</sup> will help guide strategic mitigation to address potential effects of growth associated with all options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	-	-	-
Rank	1	2	2

## Cultural heritage

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

Across the district there are three Grade I listed buildings, eight Grade II\*, and 184 Grade II, with a number of scheduled monuments and conservation areas, all of which contribute significantly to the area's historic character and cultural identity. These assets form an important part of local distinctiveness and community value, and their protection is a key consideration.

While the majority of sites proposed through Option 1 are not located within conservation areas, several sites are either adjacent to or in close proximity to sensitive heritage features. One of the strategic sites under this option, **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (800 homes in the plan period), contains a Grade II listed building, Whetstone Pastures Residential Home, and is directly adjacent to the Willoughby Waterleys Conservation Area. As the listed building is located within the site boundary, large-scale development here has the potential to affect not only its setting but also its physical fabric. Similarly, development could impact the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area. Given the strategic nature of the site, minor negative effects on the historic environment are predicted, provided that mitigation is embedded at the masterplanning stage, and a holistic landscape-led approach to the design and layout of development is taken. In particular, suitable landscaping, green buffers, and retention of historic field boundaries should be incorporated into the design to conserve the setting of these assets and reinforce local heritage character.

In terms of scheduled monuments, there are three sites that are within 400m of these assets, introducing the potential for effects on their setting and significance. These are:

- **Land south of Hinckley Road (SAP019/025/035)** – c. 9m from Sapcote Castle and Moat
- **Church Farm Station Road (ELM011)** – c. 40m from Elmesthorpe church, ruined nave and west tower
- **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – c. 380m from Sapcote Castle and Moat

While direct physical impacts are unlikely, development at these sites could introduce visual, noise, or access-related changes that detract from the appreciation or understanding of the scheduled monuments, and careful site layout and heritage impact assessments will be required.

<sup>22</sup> [LLR-Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy.pdf](#), Leicestershire County Council, 2025

<sup>23</sup> Blaby Blue Green Infrastructure Study, LUC, February 2025

Further, there are four sites within 400m of Grade II\* listed buildings. These are:

- **Land east of Croft Road (THU005)** – c. 130m from Church of All Saints
- **Nursery, Hill View Nurseries (THU004)** – c. 200m from Church of All Saints
- **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** – c. 225m from Church of St Mary
- **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – c. 255m from Church of St Michael

In these cases, the potential for adverse effects on the settings of high-grade heritage assets may arise depending on local topography, visibility, and proposed development form. Heritage-led design will be important to inform appropriate mitigation.

There are also 17 sites that are within 400m of Grade II listed buildings, with seven of these within 200m of the assets (including WHE027) discussed above which has the Grade II listed building within the area). These are:

- **Steeple Chase Farm, Main Street, Kilby (KIL002)** – c. 40m from The Dog and Gun Public House
- **Church Farm Station Road (ELM011)** – c. 60m from Church of St Mary
- **Land west of Coventry Road (SHA008)** – c. 125m from Pipalipen House and Adjoining Former Cottages, Cart Shed and Barn
- **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – c. 150m from Tudor Cottage and Adjoining House
- **Land north of Hinckley Road (SW of The Oaks Farm) (KMU025)** – c. 170m from Oaks Farmhouse
- **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)** – c. 180m from The Thatched Cottage

Finally, none of the sites within Option 1 sit within conservation areas, however some are located adjacent or in proximity to conservation areas. These are:

- **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** – directly adjacent to Willoughby Waterleys Conservation Area
- **Land south of Carlton Park, Hayes Meadow (NAR022)** – c. 50m from the Narborough Conservation Area

Development at these locations may affect the character and appearance of adjacent conservation areas and would need to be assessed for potential indirect impacts. Mitigation such as graduated building heights, appropriate materials, and the integration of green space into site edges can help to preserve local character and reduce the potential for harm. Where available, consideration will need to be given to character area appraisals and design guidance.

Overall, Option 1 is likely to result in **minor negative effects** on the historic environment. While the strategic site contains a listed building, no others are directly constrained. Some sites are however located in close proximity to listed buildings, as well as scheduled monuments, and conservation areas, raising concerns around impacts on setting and local character. These effects can likely be minimised through heritage-led mitigation and landscaping, though some residual harm to the setting of designated assets may still occur. There may also be opportunities to integrate heritage assets into green infrastructure, improve local historic character, or enhance access to cultural features, especially through the strategic sites.

## Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Within Option 2, it is expected that the impacts within Option 1 shall be replicated, as Option 2 comprises of the same sites. Option 2 also includes a number of additional sites; however, these additional sites are relatively unconstrained with regards to cultural assets. It is anticipated that the overall level of impact on the historic and cultural environment would likely remain relatively minor, provided that appropriate assessment and mitigation are undertaken at the site level.

Two of the additional sites within Option 2 are within 200m of Grade II listed buildings (**Land west of Broughton Road, Cosby (COS005)** c. 115m from 4, Chapel Lane, and **Land East of Lutterworth Road (A426) (Blaby) (BLA038)** c. 175m from Boilerhouse and Water Tower). There are a further two sites within 400m. While these sites are not within designated conservation areas or directly adjoining heritage assets, their proximity means there is potential for development to affect the setting of listed buildings, particularly through changes in views, scale, and landscape context. As such, site-specific heritage assessments will be required to determine the extent of potential harm and to inform sensitive site design that conserves the character and significance of nearby assets.

The higher scale of development proposed under Option 2 may also increase the likelihood of encountering previously unrecorded archaeological remains, especially on edge-of-settlement or greenfield sites. It will be important that archaeological potential is identified through early desk-based assessments and field evaluations, with appropriate recording or preservation in situ where necessary.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects**, as additional development slightly increases the risk to the historic environment, particularly in relation to the setting of nearby listed buildings and unknown archaeological remains. However, impacts are likely to be effectively mitigated through site-specific assessments and sensitive design.

## Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

The higher level of growth proposed under Option 3 increases the potential for negative effects on cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets, particularly where development intensifies within or adjacent to areas of established historic character. The concentration of new development in and around Blaby town brings several site-specific sensitivities, particularly where proposed allocations are located in close proximity to Grade I and II listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas.

In terms of site-specific constraints, much of the additional development through Option 3 is located in proximity to Blaby town, which has a rich historic character with a number of cultural assets. **Land north of Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA031)** is located c. 120m from Grade I listed building Church of All Saints, and only c. 20m from Grade II listed building Ice House 150 Metres South East of Blaby Hall. It is also located c. 305m from the Moat and hut circle at Glen Parva scheduled monument. The site is also adjacent, on the northwest boundary, to the Blaby Conservation Area. Development through this site could potentially impact negatively upon the setting of these historical assets if it is not appropriately mitigated through landscaping and other mitigation methods.

**Land off Peatling Road, Countesthorpe (COU046)** is also noteworthy, being located c. 95m from Grade II listed building 17, Main Street, and directly adjacent to the Countesthorpe Conservation Area **Mill Lane (BLA040)** is located c. 395m from the Moat and hut circle at Glen Parva scheduled monument, and **Land at Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA034)** is located directly adjacent to the South Wigston Conservation Area.

As these sites are located near listed buildings, conservation areas, or scheduled monuments, there is a higher likelihood of adverse impacts on the historic environment if not appropriately mitigated. Nevertheless, with appropriate mitigation, there may be opportunities to integrate these historic features into the wider development context, for example through enhanced public access and incorporation of heritage assets into green infrastructure networks.

Overall, it is considered likely that this option will lead to **minor negative effects** on cultural, built, and archaeological heritage assets, particularly due to the concentration of development in and around Blaby town which is rich in listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas. Without appropriate mitigation, the proximity of several proposed sites to sensitive historic features increases the risk of harm to the area’s historic character. However, there are opportunities to enhance the setting and accessibility of these assets that may also be realised, therefore uncertainty is also noted under all options.

**Conclusion**

Option 1 is considered unlikely to lead to minor negative effects on the historic environment as most sites avoid direct overlap with designated assets. However, some sites, such as Whetstone Pastures, contain or adjoin listed buildings and conservation areas, requiring careful heritage-led design and masterplanning to avoid harm. Option 2 introduces additional sites but does not significantly increase overall constraint, as these new allocations are generally located further from heritage assets. However, the higher development quantum slightly raises the risk of cumulative impacts and the discovery of unrecorded archaeological remains (hence this option ranking second). Option 3 focuses further growth around Blaby town, an area with a higher density of heritage features, including a Grade I listed church, scheduled monuments, and multiple conservation areas, meaning the potential for adverse impacts is notably greater (hence this option ranking third). However, this option also presents opportunity for strategic mitigation, taking a holistic approach to development. This could in turn enhance the setting of, and access to/ understanding of, assets present in and around the town centre. Uncertainty is predicted at this stage under all options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Cultural Heritage	-?	-?	-?
Rank	1	2	3

## Waste

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

Waste generation is an inevitable consequence of growth and is relevant to every stage of the development lifecycle, including design, construction, operation, and eventually demolition or reuse. At the operation stage this includes the storage, collection, and disposal of household waste. The management of waste, including minimisation, re-use, recycling, and recovery, is governed by national policy and legislation and is implemented at the site-level through planning conditions and developer waste strategies, which are considered during the masterplanning stage of development. Due to this, significant negative effects are unlikely to arise under any growth option. In this context, it is reasonable to assume that the level of waste generated will correspond to the quantum of development. A greater number of households is also likely to generate more waste compared to the same population being housed in fewer homes. The same is also generally true for larger homes versus smaller homes provided that recycling facilities are equal.

In light of the above, by delivering the lowest level of new homes, Option 1 will ultimately lead to the lowest generation of waste. Focusing on waste generated during the operation stage of development, the smaller sites in proximity to existing settlements will likely be included in existing (or expanded) waste collection rounds for these settlements. However, for the strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,000 homes – 620 in plan period for this option) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes, (620 in plan period in this option) – entirely new waste collection rounds will likely be required. It is also recognised that strategic sites can present an opportunity to incorporate innovative waste management practices and technologies. The level of growth proposed under this option could also trigger the need for a new waste handling facility (or increased capacity at existing facilities).

Overall, **neutral effects** are anticipated under Option 1 with regard to waste generation as it proposes the lowest level of growth, thereby minimising additional pressure on waste management systems. The distribution of growth towards the higher order settlements is also likely to be efficient from a collection perspective and will not significantly increase collection round mileage. As some impacts are largely dependent on site-level measures, as well as integration with existing collection services (which may or may not be at capacity), there is a degree of uncertainty at this stage.

### Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Option 2 would result in a higher level of waste generation when compared to Option 1, reflecting the additional sites proposed under this option. However, as the additional sites are mostly small- to medium-scale sites (and distributed to higher order settlements), they will likely be integrated into existing waste collection rounds in an effective way. Given the higher level of growth proposed under this option, the demand for waste management services will increase and there will be greater pressure on waste management facilities (compared to option 1). However, these effects are unlikely to be significant and are uncertain at this stage.

Overall, **neutral effects** are anticipated under Option 2 with regard to waste generation. Whilst it delivers a higher level of growth than Option 1, the nature of the additional sites under this option means that additional waste generation will likely be integrated into existing waste collection rounds and the differences are not significant. As noted above, as impacts are largely dependent on site-level measures, as well as integration with existing collection services, there is a degree of uncertainty at this stage.

### Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

As the highest growth scenario, Option 3 will likely result in the greatest level of waste generation. This includes a higher quantity of construction waste, increased household and green waste, and greater pressure on existing waste handling facilities. In addition to the two strategic sites included under the other two options, Option 3 introduces a further strategic site: **Hospital Lane sites in Blaby (BLA031/034/039/040)**. This strategic site could require a new waste collection round, although given the number of homes proposed under this site is not as high as under the other two strategic sites, this is uncertain. Given the higher level of growth proposed under this option overall, it is more likely to put greater pressure on waste handling / transfer / treatment facilities compared to Option 2, however this is still uncertain at this stage. Whilst higher waste volumes pose greater environmental and logistical challenges, the scale of growth proposed is still considered unlikely to have significant impacts given the low proportion of total waste generated that growth would account for.

Overall, **neutral effects** are anticipated under Option 3 with regard to waste generation. Whilst this option delivers the highest level of growth, and therefore the most waste, it also has the greatest potential to deliver improvements to existing waste management infrastructure. As noted above, as impacts are largely dependent on site-level measures, as well as integration with existing collection services, there is a degree of uncertainty at this stage.

### Conclusion

All three options are considered likely to result in neutral effects with regard to waste, as impacts are primarily dependent on site-level waste management strategies and integration with existing collection systems. Option 1 performs best in terms of minimising additional waste due to its lower housing target, while Option 2 introduces moderate additional waste without significantly altering collection needs. Option 3, although generating the most waste, is still unlikely to put significant pressure on waste management facilities. Uncertainty remains across all options due to reliance on future site-specific measures and the fact that waste is managed at the County scale.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Waste	0 <sup>?</sup>	0 <sup>?</sup>	0 <sup>?</sup>
Rank	1	2	3

## Minerals

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

A total of 11 of the sites under Option 1 overlap with mineral zones, which are:

- **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)** – 100% overlap with igneous rock, sand and gravel
- **Land west of Cosby (COS013)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land west of Coventry Road (SHA008)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Church Farm Station Road (ELM011)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land south of Hinckley Road (SAP019/025/035)** – approx. 96% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Steeple Chase Farm, Main Street, Kilby (KIL002)** – 58% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land south of Carlton Park, Hayes Meadow (NAR022)** – 51% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land south of Warwick Road and east of Cosby Road (LIT022)** – 45% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land east of Croft Road (THU005)** – 13% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Croft Lodge Farm (Croft) (CRO009)** – 12% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land west of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** – 7% overlap with sand and gravel

Hence, growth under Option 1 could lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources if they cannot be extracted prior to development. A degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect, and therefore **uncertain minor negative effects** are anticipated at this stage. However, it is recognised that mineral zones cover a large part of the district, including the undeveloped areas, and therefore the potential sterilisation of resources is largely unavoidable if Blaby is to meet its identified housing need. It is also acknowledged that workable minerals may not be present in all safeguarded zones, and there are measures that can be taken to mitigate effects.

### Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), three (or 50%) of the sites overlap with mineral zones, which are:

- **Land west of Broughton Road, Cosby (COS009)** – 77% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land at Poplars Farm (CRO006)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Springfield Farm Forest Road (HUN019)** – 24% overlap with igneous rock

Hence, growth under Option 2 could lead to the sterilisation of further mineral resources (when compared to Option 1) if they cannot be extracted prior to development. A degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect, and therefore **uncertain minor negative effects** are anticipated at this stage. However, as noted above, it is recognised that mineral zones cover a large part of the district, including the undeveloped areas, and therefore this is largely unavoidable if Blaby is to meet its identified housing need. Whilst it is recognised that a greater supply of building materials will be required under this option due to the higher level of growth it proposes to deliver, as Option 2 meets the combined need for Blaby and unmet need to Leicestershire (including Leicester), this is not considered significant.

### Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), five (or 83%) of the sites overlap with mineral zones, which are:

- **Land off Oak Road (LIT023)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Mill Lane (BLA040)** – 100% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land north of Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA031)** – 88% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land north of Hospital Lane (east site) (BLA039)** – 77% overlap with sand and gravel
- **Land at Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA034)** – 75% overlap with sand and gravel

Hence, growth under Option 3 could lead to the sterilisation of further mineral resources (when compared to Option 2) if they cannot be avoided or extracted prior to development. However, as noted above, it is recognised that mineral zones cover a large part of the district, including the undeveloped areas, and therefore this is largely unavoidable if Blaby is to meet its identified housing need. Option 3 will require the greatest supply of building materials as it proposes to deliver the highest level of growth, which is above the combined need for Blaby and unmet need to Leicestershire (including Leicester). **Minor negative effects** are therefore anticipated overall, with a degree of uncertainty.

## Conclusion

Option 1 performs marginally better than the other options in relation to minerals, as it overlaps with fewer sites in mineral zones and requires the lowest level of growth, thereby reducing the potential sterilisation of mineral resources and demand for construction materials. Option 2 introduces limited additional overlap and is considered to have a similar level of uncertain minor negative effects, largely due to the widespread coverage of mineral zones across the district. Option 3 performs least favourably, with most of its additional sites overlapping with mineral zones and the highest overall demand for building materials, increasing the potential for resource sterilisation and associated impacts.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Minerals	?	?	-?
Rank	1	2	3

## Landscape and soil

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

With regard to landscape sensitivity to residential development<sup>24</sup>, 43% of the sites that comprise Option 1 are concluded as having a “medium” sensitivity, whilst the remaining 57% are identified as having a “low-medium” sensitivity. Whilst mitigation will be required to minimise impacts on landscape character – particularly with respect to the “medium” sensitivity sites – given that none of the sites are considered to have a “high” sensitivity to residential development, impacts on landscape character are less likely to be significant. Nevertheless, it is noted that impacts on landscape (and townscape/villagescape) character are partly dependent on the design and layout of development, which is uncertain at this stage.

<sup>24</sup> Blaby District Council (2020): Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, available to access via [this link](#)

The two strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes, of which 585 in the plan period) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes, of which 420 in the plan period) fall within the category of “low-medium”, and “medium” landscape sensitivity respectively. Given their scale and prominence relative to existing settlements, development of these sites is likely to result in a significant change to the local landscape character. Masterplanning will be essential to avoid or minimise harm, including the use of green buffers, retention of existing landscape features, and sensitive edge treatments to ensure integration with the surrounding countryside and settlement form. Without such mitigation, there is potential for more pronounced negative effects on local landscape character.

The two strategic sites under this option have the potential to significantly change the villagescape character of Stoney Stanton (and to a lesser extent Sapcote) and Countesthorpe and Willoughby Waterleys respectively. This is given both sites are larger than the existing settlements which they form extensions to or located near to. These sites could also significantly reduce the existing ‘green gaps’ between the settlements they form extensions to and nearby settlements, and more broadly, will likely alter the landscape character in these locations, including views to/from settlements in these areas.

In addition to the above, two of the sites contain a tree preservation order (TPO), whilst a further six are within 100m of one. It will be important that TPOs are retained where they fall within site boundaries and protected from the impacts of construction where they fall outside of site boundaries. In terms of soil resources, and with a focus on agricultural land classification (ALC), all but one of the sites under Option 1 is predominantly (>50%) underlain by grades 1-3 agricultural land. Therefore, development under Option 1 will likely lead to some loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. However, it is noted that it is not currently possible to determine whether this grade 3 agricultural land is 3a (BMV) or 3b (poorer quality), and a degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect. In addition, it is recognised that the availability of brownfield land in the district is limited. Therefore, while the loss of agricultural land may be largely unavoidable in order to meet housing need, it will nonetheless result in the significant permanent loss of this natural resource. As such, the option performs negatively in relation to the SA objective.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential significant negative effects** with regard to landscape. Whilst none of the sites are deemed through the Character Assessment to have a high sensitivity to residential development, the level of growth proposed will inevitably alter landscape, townscape, and villagescape character across the District. This is particularly true of the two strategic sites included under this option. Nevertheless, it is recognised that this is dependent on masterplanning, including detailed landscaping, which is uncertain at this stage.

With regard to soil resources, **significant negative effects** are anticipated. While it is recognised there is a need to deliver housing to meet local needs, development under Option 1 will ultimately lead to a notable loss of greenfield land, much of which is of high agricultural value.

## Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), and with regard to landscape sensitivity to residential development, 50% of the sites have been assessed as being of “medium” sensitivity, whilst the remaining 50% have a “low-medium” sensitivity<sup>25</sup>.

Focusing growth on “low-medium” and “medium” sensitive sites should help avoid significant long-term negative effects on the local landscape, character and town/ villagescape. Nevertheless, it is noted that impacts are partly dependent on the design and layout of development, which is uncertain at this stage.

In addition to the above, one of the additional sites under Option 2 contains a TPO. It will be important that this TPO is retained through the development of the site.

None of the additional sites under Option 2 form large extensions to existing settlements. However, a number of the sites, combined with the sites already included under Option 1, would result in a significant increase in the size and character of the affected settlements. This includes Croft, Huncote, and Cosby, which would see almost 50% more homes compared to the sites included under Option 1. This has the potential to significantly change the villagescape character in these settlements. However, it is recognised that there is a quarry between Huncote and Croft, which somewhat detracts from the landscape character in this location.

In terms of soil resources, and with a focus on ALC, all of the additional sites under Option 2 are underlain by grades 1-3 agricultural land. Therefore, development under Option 2 will also likely lead to the loss of BMV agricultural land. However, as noted above, it is not currently possible to determine whether grade 3 agricultural land is 3a (BMV) or 3b (poorer quality), and therefore uncertainty is concluded in this respect. In addition, it is recognised that the availability of brownfield land in the district is limited. Therefore, while the loss of greenfield land may be largely unavoidable in order to meet housing need, it will nonetheless result in the significant permanent loss of this natural resource. As such, the option performs negatively in relation to the SA objective.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential significant negative effects** with regard to landscape. The level of growth proposed through Option 2 will inevitably alter landscape, townscape, and villagescape character across the district, and new sites within this option are concluded as having “low-medium” and “medium” sensitivity to residential development, the. As noted above, it is recognised that residual effects will be largely dependent on development design and masterplanning, which is unknown at this stage.

With regard to soil resources, **significant negative effects** are anticipated. While it is recognised there is a need to deliver housing to meet local needs, development under Option 2 will ultimately lead to a large loss of greenfield land, much of which is of high agricultural value.

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<sup>25</sup> Blaby District Council (2020): Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, available to access via [this link](#)

### Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), and with regard to landscape sensitivity to residential development, only one site (or 17%) is identified as having “medium” sensitivity, whilst the remaining 83% are concluded as “low-medium” sensitivity<sup>26</sup>.

As noted above, focusing growth on “low-medium” and “medium” sensitive sites should help avoid significant long term negative effects on the local landscape, character and town/villagescape. Nevertheless, it is noted that impacts are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, which is uncertain at this stage.

Given the additional strategic site included under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/40)** is a large urban extension, it is considered that development would lead to significant effects on the local landscape, and has the potential to significantly change the villagescape character of Blaby. This development would extend Blaby significantly to the east. This site could also close the existing ‘green gap’ between Blaby and South Wigston, which forms the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area. In addition, the strategic site will more widely alter the landscape character in this location, including views to/from settlements in this area.

Whilst none of the sites contain any TPOs, 33% are within 100m of one. It will be important that these TPOs are protected from the impacts of construction. In terms of soil resources, and with a focus on ALC, all but one of the additional sites under Option 3 are underlain (ranging from 62% to 100%) by grades 1-3 agricultural land. Therefore, development under Option 2 will also likely lead to the loss of BMV agricultural land. However, as noted above, it is not currently possible to determine whether grade 3 agricultural land is 3a (BMV) or 3b (poorer quality), and there is a degree of uncertainty in this respect. It is recognised that brownfield land is limited in the district, and therefore the loss of agricultural land is largely unavoidable if the district is to meet its identified housing need.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **significant negative effects** with regard to landscape. Whilst none of the additional sites are deemed to have a high sensitivity to residential development, the level of growth proposed through Option 3 will inevitably alter landscape, townscape, and villagescape character across the district. Nevertheless, as noted above, it is recognised that this is largely dependent on masterplanning, including detailed landscaping, which is unknown at this stage.

With regard to soil resources, **significant negative effects** are anticipated. While it is recognised there is a need to deliver housing to meet local needs, development under Option 3 will ultimately lead to a large loss of greenfield land, much of which is of high agricultural value.

### Conclusion

All options could potentially lead to **significant negative effects** on the landscape, reflective of the strategic growth proposed under all options in areas of “medium” landscape sensitivity. It is considered that as the scale of growth increases so does the potential for adverse residual effects, including impact upon settlement identity and the character of local landscapes, village

<sup>26</sup> Blaby District Council (2020): Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, available to access via [this link](#)

and townscapes. Option 3 notably includes an additional strategic site at Blaby which will impact upon the green gap and could lead to coalescence with Leicester.

All options will deliver **significant negative effects** in relation to the soil resource, reflective of the strategic loss of greenfield land which will include a significant level of high-quality agricultural land. As above, as the scale of growth increases so does the predicted residual adverse effect.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Landscape	--?	--?	--
Rank	1	2	3
Soil	--	--	--
Rank	1	2	3

## Environmental protection: Water

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

By delivering the lowest level of growth, Option 1 will require the smallest increase in drinking water provision compared to the other options. It will also lead to the lowest level of additional stress on existing – and need for new – wastewater treatment plants. In terms of the location of growth under this option, the smaller sites in proximity to existing settlements will likely be covered by existing wastewater treatment plants (where there is existing capacity) for these settlements. However, for the strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – new waste water treatment plants or capacity improvements to existing plants will likely be required. This may result in a longer lead-in time for delivery and would require engagement with water utility providers to ensure phasing aligns with available infrastructure capacity.

Blaby lies within the River Soar catchment, and many of the sites included under Option 1 interact directly with watercourses and surface water features, presenting potential risks to water quality if not managed appropriately. Several of the sites under Option 1 intersect with watercourses, which are:

- **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** – Whetstone Brook runs directly through the centre of the site
- **Land south of Whetstone (WHE031)** – intersects with Whetstone Brook
- **Land south of Abbott Way (WHE026)** – intersects with Whetstone Brook
- **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)** – intersects with Thurlaston Brook

Development at these sites therefore comes with an increased risk of pollution to these watercourses. As such, appropriate buffer zones and drainage systems, including the use of enhanced SuDS, will be necessary to safeguard water quality by reducing surface water runoff. It is also noted that none of the sites under Option 1 fall within Source Protection Zones (SPZs).

It is also worth noting that a number of the sites, especially in the vicinity of Narborough and Enderby are located within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for Narborough Bogs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

It is comprised of upland fens, upland neutral grassland and wet woodland and includes Leicestershire's only area of peat bog. It is identified as being in unfavourable condition partly due to changes in hydraulic conditions. Eutrophication, changes to land drainage and diffuse pollution all have the potential to affect site integrity. In bringing forward development which is hydrologically connected with Narborough Bogs care will be needed to ensure development includes appropriate design measures and mitigation to protect the site. Development in the vicinity of Narborough and Enderby including NAR028 (Hayes Gardens) has potential to adversely affect the SSSI given its location 400m upstream of the SSSI and being connected by a network of watercourses to the site. Again the use of enhanced SuDS as well as Construction and Environment Management Plans (to control construction phase impacts) could ensure surface water discharges from this site are controlled and treated prior to release to local watercourses.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential minor negative effects** with regard to water quality. Whilst Option 1 delivers the lowest level of growth, resulting in the smallest increase in drinking water provision and lowest level of additional stress on existing – and need for new – waste water treatment plants, growth will inevitably place increasing pressure on these resources. In addition, Option 1 contains sites which could impact the water quality of waterbodies in Blaby including a strategic site within the IRZ of Narborough Bogs SSSI.

### **Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)**

Option 2 would require a larger increase in drinking water provision compared to Option 1 due to the additional growth delivered under this option. This will place additional stress on existing water supply infrastructure and may increase the need for local network upgrades, though it is not anticipated to result in regionally significant water resource challenges. Similarly, Option 2 will result in a higher level of stress on existing wastewater treatment plants and therefore increases the likelihood of capacity upgrades. As none of the additional sites are strategic in nature, it is unlikely that Option 2 would require further new waste water treatment plants beyond those already identified under Option 1, although additional growth could necessitate further localised enhancements to the sewerage network.

In terms of interactions with the water environment, none of the additional sites introduced under Option 2 intersect with watercourses. However, two sites are located directly adjacent to main watercourses, potentially increasing the risk of pollution to these watercourses. As such, appropriate buffer zones and drainage systems, including the use of SuDS, will be necessary to safeguard water quality by reducing surface water runoff and ensuring 'treatment' of water prior to discharge. None of the additional sites under Option 2 fall within SPZs or will impact on Narborough Bogs SSSI

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potential minor negative effects** with regard to water quality. Whilst Option 2 does not introduce significant new water-related constraints compared to Option 1, the additional growth proposed through this option will intensify existing pressure on drinking water resources and wastewater treatment capacity. In addition, as with Option 1, this option contains sites which could impact the water quality of waterbodies in Blaby if not carefully mitigated.

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

By delivering the highest level of growth, Option 3 will ultimately lead to the largest increase in drinking water provision compared to the other options. It will also lead to the highest level

of additional stress on existing – and need for new – wastewater treatment plants. As noted above, the smaller sites in proximity to existing settlements will likely be covered by existing wastewater treatment plants (where there is existing capacity) for these settlements.

However, for the additional strategic site under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/40)** –the expansion of existing waste-water treatment plants may be required (or an increase in permitted discharges).

Notably, the **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)** intersect with the River Sence and therefore comes with an increased risk of pollution to this watercourse. Development in this location will require a robust hydrological assessment and the implementation of appropriate buffer zones and drainage systems, including the use of nature-based SuDS to safeguard water quality by reducing surface water runoff. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) could also be considered to control surface water treatment during site construction. None of the additional sites under Option 3 fall within SPZs.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **potentially significant negative effects** with regards to water quality. The additional growth proposed through this option will intensify existing pressure on drinking water resources and wastewater treatment capacity. In addition, as with Options 1 and 2, this option contains sites which could impact the water quality of waterbodies in Blaby. This includes the additional strategic site included under this option, which intersects with a river.

**Conclusion**

Option 1 performs best in terms of water protection, as it delivers the lowest level of growth and therefore places the least pressure on drinking water resources and wastewater treatment infrastructure. Option 2 introduces slightly greater pressure but avoids additional strategic sites, meaning existing water infrastructure is more likely to accommodate the increase. Option 3 performs least favourably, as it results in the highest water demand and infrastructure stress and includes a strategic site intersecting with a key watercourse, increasing the risk of cumulative effects upon water quality. All options present some risk to waterbodies, but the scale of potential impact increases with the level of growth proposed.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Water quality	-?	-?	--?
Rank	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

## Environmental protection: Air quality

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

There are currently two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) designated within Blaby: AQMA 6 in Enderby, which covers the B582 (Mill Hill), and AQMA 7 in Braunstone Town, which covers a section of Narborough Road South. These AQMAs have been declared due to elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in these locations, largely associated with road traffic emissions.

None of the sites under Option 1 are within 500m of an AQMA. However, **Land at Desford Road / Beggar's Lane (LUB002)** is located c. 530m from AQMA 6 in Enderby and **Land south of Carlton Park, Hayes Meadow (NAR022)** is located c. 555m from AQMA 6. Hence, development in these locations could generate increased vehicular traffic, particularly along the B582 corridor, potentially contributing to exacerbated air quality issues within the AQMA. The B582 already experiences congestion, and additional vehicle movements from development at these sites, especially during peak hours, could compound existing NO<sub>2</sub> levels. In this respect, growth under Option 1 has the potential to worsen air quality at this AQMA. Nevertheless, both sites benefit from relatively strong public transport connectivity. Each site is within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop, and Narborough Train Station is also located nearby, providing regular services to Leicester and other destinations. This offers an opportunity to encourage modal shift away from the private vehicle and reduce traffic-related emissions. However, the effectiveness of this will depend on factors such as frequency, reliability, affordability, and the design of walking/cycling links between homes and transport nodes.

More broadly, all sites under Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. As such, development under this option is well-positioned to support sustainable travel, helping to reduce reliance on the private vehicle. This is likely to generate positive secondary effects on air quality, especially if complemented by investments in infrastructure for active travel, such as new cycleways and pedestrian footpaths.

The strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – are likely to be required to deliver a level of transport infrastructure that supports the scale of these sites, which could include new active travel infrastructure such as cycleways and mobility hubs and bus stops in addition to on-site services and facilities. In this respect, these sites will support both sustainable modes of transport to access the wider district and Leicester, as well as a degree of self-containment.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **uncertain minor negative effects** with regard to air quality. This is because the majority of sites included under this option are located away from AQMAs in the district and are generally well-served by public transport. Nevertheless, growth will ultimately lead to an increase in trips made by private vehicle both within and outside of the district, with associated increases in traffic and congestion and subsequent impacts on air quality.

### Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), none of the sites are located within 500m of an AQMA. As such, direct impacts on designated air quality hotspots are unlikely to arise solely because of additional growth through Option 2. However, indirect impacts may still occur through cumulative increases in road traffic, particularly on key routes already facing poor air quality, such as the B582 and Narborough Road South.

All additional sites under this option are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under Option 2 supports sustainable modes of transport, which will contribute positively towards air quality by reducing the number of trips taken by private vehicle. By offering viable alternatives to vehicle travel, the location of these sites has the potential to mitigate traffic and associated emissions, contributing positively to the district's broader air quality management objectives.

However, the additional sites under Option 2 are all small- to medium-scale and are therefore unlikely to deliver new or enhanced public transport infrastructure on their own, such as dedicated transport corridors, new bus routes, or mobility hubs. Therefore, additional growth under Option 2 is likely to be more dependent on existing transport networks and will need to ensure that these can accommodate increased demand without undermining service quality or air quality outcomes.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **uncertain minor negative effects** with regard to air quality. Whilst Option 2 delivers a higher level of growth than Option 1, with an associated increase in trips by private vehicle and associated traffic and congestion and emissions, this is not considered significant. This is because the additional sites included under this option are located away from AQMAs in the district and are generally well-served by public transport. However, it is recognised that additional strategic infrastructure improvements (in addition to those possible under Option 1) are less likely under this option as it does not deliver any additional strategic sites.

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), none are located within 500m of an AQMA. As such, direct impacts on designated air quality hotspots are unlikely to arise solely as a result of additional growth through Option 2. However, with the overall quantum of growth highest under this option, there is an increased likelihood of cumulative pressure on the local and strategic road networks, with associated risks of worsening air quality in areas of existing concern, such as Enderby and Braunstone Town.

All additional sites under this option are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under Option 3 supports sustainable modes of transport, which will contribute positively towards air quality by reducing the number of trips taken by private vehicle.

As noted above, strategic sites – with the additional strategic site under this option being **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/40)** (– having the greatest potential to deliver new transport infrastructure. In this respect, these sites will support both sustainable modes of transport to access the wider district and Leicester, as well as a degree of self-containment. However, it is also acknowledged that a higher level of growth is accompanied by a higher likelihood of increased trips by private vehicles and associated increase in traffic and congestion and worsening air quality.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects** with regard to air quality. Whilst Option 3 delivers the highest level of growth, with an associated increase in trips by private vehicle and associated traffic and congestion and emissions, this is not considered significant. This is because the additional sites included under this option are located away from AQMAs in the district and are generally well-served by public transport. In addition, additional strategic infrastructure improvements (in addition to those possible under Option 1) are more likely under this option as it proposes to deliver an additional strategic site.

## Conclusion

All options are considered likely to lead to minor negative effects with regards to air quality. Options are not focused in close proximity to AQMAs, and are delivering growth of a scale that could be accompanied by transport infrastructure interventions/ improvements. Furthermore, options are well served by sustainable transport infrastructure. A level of uncertainty is also concluded at this stage for option 1 and 2, reflecting the absence of detailed design and masterplanning, particularly in relation to infrastructure delivery and accessibility (which could potentially mitigate effects). For Option 3 there is a greater degree of certainty relating to effects, as cumulative pressures could be more difficult to mitigate (hence this option being ranked the worst in this respect). However, whilst growth could lead to a slight worsening of air quality, a significant mitigating factor is an increasing take up of electric vehicles and cleaner internal combustion engine vehicles. Air quality modelling also suggests that changes in pollutant concentrations will be small, not result in exceedances of air quality objectives and will not represent a significant risk to human health.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Air quality	-?	-?	-
Rank	1	2	3

## Climate change

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

One of the most notable impacts of climate change in the UK is an increased occurrence in flood events. With regard to fluvial flood risk, six (or just under a quarter of the sites included under Option 1 overlap with Flood Zone 2 and/or 3, which are:

- **Land south of Abbott Way (WHE026)** – 41% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 27% overlap with Flood Zone 3
- **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)** – 32% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 25% overlap with Flood Zone 3
- **Land west of Cosby (COS013)** – 12% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 7% overlap with Flood Zone 3
- **Land south of Warwick Road and east of Cosby Road (LIT022)** – 10% overlap with Flood Zone 2
- **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** – 6% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 5% overlap with Flood Zone 3
- **Land south of Whetstone (WHE031)** – 4% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 3% overlap with Flood Zone 3

With regard to surface water flood risk, all but one of the sites under Option 1 overlap with areas at risk of surface water flooding. However, only three sites contain areas at risk of surface water flooding that make up 25% or more of the site area, which are:

- **Land south of Abbott Way (WHE026)** – 38% of the site is at risk of surface water flooding
- **Land south of Broughton Road (STO025)** – 27% of the site is at risk of surface water flooding
- **Land south of Narborough Road (HUN013)** – 25% of the site is at risk of surface water flooding

Whilst the sites at risk of surface water flooding can utilise measures such as SuDS to minimise this risk, the sites at risk of fluvial flooding are more constrained.

Growth through Option 1 has the potential to support climate resilience more broadly through strengthening the local green infrastructure network, which will improve the district's resilience to heatwaves as well as flash flood events. However, it is noted that this is largely dependent on the detailed design of development, particularly landscaping, which is unknown at this stage.

In terms of climate change mitigation, it is recognised that growth through this option will inevitably lead to an increase in net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the district. However, this is largely unavoidable if the district is to meet its identified housing need (and would arguably be delivered in a less sustainable way if development was ad hoc). In addition, the strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – could (viability dependant) have the potential to deliver more strongly in terms of the decarbonisation agenda (given economies of scale and on site potential). They are also likely to deliver on-site services and facilities, as well as new active travel and public transport infrastructure, which will further contribute to reducing GHG emissions related to transport. More broadly, all of the sites under Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under this option supports sustainable modes of transport, which will support a reduction in GHG emissions per capita associated with new development areas.

In light of the above, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor positive effects** with regard to climate change mitigation, and **minor negative effects** with regard to flooding. This is because both the integration of climate change mitigation measures, such as on-site decarbonisation measures, and flood risk mitigation measures, such as SuDS, are largely dependent on the incorporation of these elements into the design of development, which is unknown at this stage (and influenced by viability to some extent).

## **Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), and with regard to fluvial flood risk, two (or 34%) of the sites overlaps with Flood Zone 2 and/or 3; these are **Land west of Broughton Road, Cosby (COS009)**, which has a 2% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and a 1% overlap with Flood Zone 3 and **Land at Poplars Farm (CRO006)** – 19% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and 16% overlap with Flood Zone 3

Given this is only a very minor overlap, fluvial flood risk is not considered a significant constraint to development in this location. Nevertheless, the sequential and exception tests should still be carried out in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

With regards to surface water flood risk, all additional sites under Option 2 overlap with areas at risk of surface water flooding. However, none of these sites contain areas at risk of surface water flooding that make up 25% or more of the site area.

In this respect, an appropriate site design and layout that avoids these areas of surface water flood risk, in addition to the use of SuDS, will likely minimise the risk of development in these locations exacerbating existing surface water flood risk.

Growth through Option 2 has the potential to support climate resilience more broadly through strengthening the local green infrastructure network, which will improve the district's resilience to heatwaves as well as flash flood events. However, it is noted that this is largely dependent on the detailed design of development, particularly landscaping, which is unknown at this stage.

In terms of climate change mitigation, it is recognised that growth through this option will inevitably lead to an increase in net GHG emissions in the district. However, this is largely unavoidable if the district is to meet its identified housing need. None of the additional sites under this option are considered large enough to deliver on-site renewable energy generation or new services and facilities and public transport infrastructure (in addition to the two strategic sites outlined under Option 1). However, they likely still have the potential to deliver active travel infrastructure, which will support a reduction in GHG emissions. In addition, all the additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under this option supports sustainable modes of transport, which will support a reduction in GHG emissions per capita associated with transport from new development areas.

In light of the above, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor positive effects** with regards to climate change mitigation, and **minor negative effects** with regard to flooding. This is because both the integration of climate change mitigation measures, such as on-site renewable energy, and flood risk mitigation measures, such as SuDS, are largely dependent on the incorporation of these elements into the design of development, which is unknown at this stage. Whilst this option delivers a higher level of growth than Option 1, and therefore an increase in net GHG emissions, it also meets the unmet need of Leicestershire (including Leicester) (which Option 1 does not).

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), and with regard to fluvial flood risk, only two (or 33%) of the sites overlaps with Flood Zone 2 and/or 3. However, only one of these sites – **Land at Hospital Lane, Blaby (BLA034)** – has a significant overlap with these zones, with a 20% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and a 20% overlap with Flood Zone 3. This site will be subject to the sequential and exception tests in line with the requirements of the NPPF. The other site – **Land off Oak Road (LIT023)** – only has a 3% overlap with Flood Zone 2 and a 1% overlap with Flood Zone 3. Given this is only a very minor overlap, fluvial flood risk is not considered a significant constraint to development in this location.

With regard to surface water flood risk, all but one of the additional sites under Option 3 overlap with areas at risk of surface water flooding. However, only one of these sites contains areas at risk of surface water flooding that make up 25% or more of the site area; this is **Land North of Hospital Lane (east site) (BLA039)**, where 25% of the site is at risk of surface water flooding. In this respect, an appropriate site design and layout, including the use of SuDS, will be needed to mitigate this risk.

Growth through Option 3 has the potential to support climate resilience more broadly through strengthening the local green infrastructure network, which will improve the district's resilience to heatwaves as well as flash flood events.

However, it is noted that this is largely dependent on the detailed design of development, particularly landscaping, which is unknown at this stage.

In terms of climate change mitigation, it is recognised that growth through this option will inevitably lead to an increase in net GHG emissions in the district. However, this is largely unavoidable if the district is to meet its identified housing need. In addition, the additional strategic site under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)**, may have potential to achieve more challenging decarbonisation targets due to economies of scale (though this will depend on viability and other development ‘asks’). It also has the potential to deliver on-site services and facilities, as well as new active travel and public transport infrastructure, which will further contribute to reducing GHG emissions. More broadly, all additional sites under Option 3 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under this option supports sustainable modes of transport, which will support a reduction in GHG emissions per capita associated with transport from new development areas.

In light of the above, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor positive effects** with regards to climate change mitigation, and **minor negative effects** with regard to flooding. There is a degree of uncertainty, because both the integration of climate change mitigation measures and flood risk mitigation measures, are dependent on the incorporation of these elements into the design of development, which is unknown at this stage. This option delivers the highest level of growth, and ultimately the highest increase in net GHG emissions, going beyond the combined identified need for Blaby and unmet need for Leicestershire (including Leicester). However, this option also offers opportunities to futureproof the district with regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation by delivering additional infrastructure alongside development. It is also important to acknowledge that in the absence of a planned strategy for Blaby housing would likely be delivered in a less coordinated way, potentially is less accessible locations, and this would be less positive in terms of climate change.

## Conclusion

Option 3 delivers the highest level of growth and therefore results in the greatest increase in greenhouse gas emissions; however, it also offers the most potential to support climate change mitigation through the delivery of strategic-scale infrastructure, including renewable energy, active travel, and public transport. Option 2 performs similarly to Option 1 in relation to flood risk, as the additional sites are not at significant risk of flooding. Option 3 adds sites that present a greater risk of flooding, and hence this is ranked least favourable (but avoidance and mitigation should still be possible to avoid significant effects).

Overall, all three options present potential minor positive effects for climate change mitigation and minor negative effects for flood risk, though this is dependent on site-specific design and the incorporation of mitigation measures.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Mitigation	+?	+?	+?
Rank	1	2	3
Flooding	-?	-?	-?
Rank	1	1	2

## Economy:

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

The unemployment rate in Blaby is low, with estimates placing it at 3% as of December 2023. While this reflects a rise from 1.7% in the year ending December 2022, the local economy remains relatively strong, with a high proportion of economically active residents. However, sustaining this performance requires ensuring that sufficient and appropriate land is available to support both existing businesses and emerging economic sectors. Structural changes in the retail industry also need to be recognised, particularly those driven by technological advancement and changing consumer habits, which are having significant implications for the role and viability of traditional town centres.

In light of the above, supporting economic vitality across the settlement hierarchy is considered critical. Growth across settlements can help maintain and enhance access to employment, services, and facilities, while also ensuring that service provision grows in line with new population demands.

Under Option 1, only 39% of the proposed sites are located within walking distance (<800m) of an existing employment area, which are mostly concentrated near the centre of the district, particularly south of Braunstone Town. Spatially, sites within Option 1 are concentrated in the periphery of the district, particularly the strategic sites: **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes). Given the scale of these sites, it is very likely that they will be brought forward as mixed-use developments, incorporating employment land, local services, and social infrastructure alongside housing. This presents a valuable opportunity to support local job creation, reduce the need to travel for work, and encourage more self-contained communities.

All sites under Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, residents should still be able to access employment opportunities within (and beyond) the district without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle (which some residents may not have access to). This will support access to employment opportunities for all members of the community, including those in more deprived areas.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **significant positive effects** on the economy by delivering housing growth alongside mixed-use development on larger strategic sites, supporting local jobs and services. While fewer sites are close to existing employment areas, good public transport access helps maintain connectivity to jobs across the district. The focus on peripheral sites also offers opportunities to create more self-contained, economically resilient communities.

### Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), only 1 (17%) of the sites are within walking distance (<800m) of an employment site Land South of Blaby is to the immediate south of Rose Way Business Park). Although the remaining additional sites are not in immediate proximity to existing employment areas, all are within walking distance of a bus stop (<800m), ensuring continued access to employment opportunities elsewhere within and beyond the district for those without access to a private vehicle. The location of these sites supports sustainable transport use and helps to mitigate potential increases in vehicle dependency that could otherwise undermine economic accessibility.

The increased level of growth proposed through Option 2 may also enhance the viability of local services and facilities, providing a larger customer and labour base that can help sustain town centres and local businesses amidst structural changes in the retail and employment landscape. In this way, the option presents opportunities to align housing and economic growth, while continuing to promote sustainable patterns of travel and development.

Overall, Option 2 is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** on the local economy by supporting job creation, sustaining local services, and enhancing the viability of town centres through a moderate increase in population and workforce. While a smaller proportion of the additional sites are located within walking distance of existing employment areas, all benefit from good access to public transport, helping to maintain connectivity to jobs both within and beyond the district. The inclusion of mixed-use sites presents opportunities to deliver housing alongside employment land and community infrastructure, supporting more self-contained and sustainable communities.

### **Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), only 33% of the sites are within walking distance (<800m) of an employment site. However, all of sites are within walking distance of a bus stop. In this respect, residents should still be able to access employment opportunities within (and beyond) the district without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle.

Option 3 proposes the highest level of growth and the additional strategic sites under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)** – is located in close proximity to Blaby town, an established employment area with a wide range of services, facilities, and public transport links. This offers strong opportunities to support the vitality and economic resilience of Blaby village by increasing the local workforce and strengthening demand for shops, services, and community infrastructure.

Overall, Option 3 is likely to generate **significant positive effects** for the economy by focusing further growth near Blaby village where there is good access to employment areas, services and facilities, and public transport, supporting sustainable travel and strengthening the local centre's vitality. The additional strategic site under this option creates opportunities for mixed-use schemes and local job creation, helping to sustain economic activity and foster more self-contained, resilient communities.

### **Conclusion**

Option 3 is considered to perform most strongly in economic terms, as it delivers the highest level of growth and directs additional development near Blaby village, an established employment area with good public transport links, supporting local centre vitality and opportunities for mixed-use development. Option 2 also performs well, providing a moderate increase in new homes that can help sustain services and employment.

Option 1 delivers economic benefits through large strategic sites likely to include employment land, though fewer sites are close to existing employment areas, meaning growth, and its associated benefits, is less evenly distributed across the district (bringing an element of uncertainty with regards to the predicted significant effects).

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Economy	++?	++	++
Rank	3	2	1

## Accessibility

### Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

All sites under Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under Option 1 supports access to the public transport network, allowing residents to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities. However, it is noted that the frequency and quality of services is also important in the uptake of public transport, and this is variable.

In terms of access to healthcare facilities, roughly one third of the sites that comprise Option 1 are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, all but one of the sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, and therefore almost all residents should have access to local facilities via sustainable transport. It is also noted that the two strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,165 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – are likely to deliver new healthcare facilities (in the longer term) to accommodate the large increase in residents in these locations.<sup>27</sup>

With regard to proximity to schools, almost all of the sites that comprise Option 1 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school. However, approximately one third of the sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school. Nevertheless, as noted above, given that all but one of the sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, children may still be able to travel to school without having to rely on lifts using the private vehicle. Similarly, the two largest sites under this option have the potential to deliver new primary and secondary schools to accommodate the large increase in residents in these locations, which could relieve pressure on existing schools.<sup>28</sup>

More broadly, almost all sites under Option 1 are on the edge of existing settlements and the option performs well in this respect. However, the sites in proximity to the smaller settlements (e.g., Elmesthorpe, Kilby, Sharnford, and Thurlaston) have direct access to limited services and facilities, and are less well connected to Leicester, which means residents likely rely on to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and further educational facilities.

Nevertheless, the strategic sites under this option – **Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026)** (5,000 homes) and **Whetstone Pastures (WHE027)** (4,500 homes) – have the greatest potential to deliver new services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities on-site, contributing positively to accessibility and a degree of self-containment.

<sup>27</sup> This is based on 1,800 people per one full-time General Practice (GP), which is considered standard by the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU), based on guidance by the Royal College of GPs. Source: UK Government (2023): [Fact Sheet 4: New homes and healthcare facilities](#)

<sup>28</sup> This is based on one average sized primary school per 1,104 new homes, and one average sized secondary school per 8,107 new homes, based on the Department for Education's national average pupil yields and 2022/23 average school sizes for England. Source: UK Government (2023): [Fact Sheet 5: New homes and school places](#).

These sites also have the potential to reduce the need to travel through potential creation of walking and cycling routes being created through strategic growth.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to potential **minor negative effects** with regard to congestion. Whilst the sites included under Option 1 are largely located in accessible locations, some residents may still opt to use the private vehicle, and a degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect.

In terms of accessibility, **significant positive effects** are considered likely as the sites included under Option 1 are largely located in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible via public transport to services and facilities and amenities, and the strategic sites have the potential to deliver infrastructure and enhance connectivity.

## **Option 2 (Standard Method and LCiC, 12,000)**

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 1), all sites are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under Option 2 may continue to support access to the public transport network, allowing residents to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities.

Only 50% of the additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, given that all these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, residents should still be able to access a healthcare facility without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle (which some residents may not have access to). None of the additional sites under Option 2 are considered large enough (in isolation) to facilitate the delivery of new healthcare facilities.

Only 67% of the additional sites under Option 2 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school, and only 33% of the additional sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school. Nevertheless, as noted above, given that all these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, children may still be able to travel to school without having to rely on lifts using the private vehicle. None of the additional sites under Option 2 are considered large enough (in isolation) to facilitate the delivery of a new school.

More broadly, all additional sites under Option 2 are on the edge of existing settlements and the option performs well in this respect. However, the sites in proximity to the smaller settlements have direct access to fewer services and facilities, and are less well connected to Leicester in terms of public transport, which many residents likely rely on to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects** with regard to congestion. This option delivers a higher level of growth than Option 1, which will likely be associated with an increase in trips on an already congested network. However, sites included under Option 2 are largely located in accessible locations, and the strategic sites have the potential to deliver infrastructure and enhance connectivity, therefore significant adverse effects ought to be avoidable, but there is a degree of uncertainty. Some residents may still opt to use the private vehicle, and a further degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect.

In terms of accessibility, **significant positive effects** are considered likely as the sites included under Option 2 are largely located in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible via public transport to services and facilities and amenities.

### Option 3 (Higher unmet need, 13,500)

Focusing only on the six additional sites included under this option (when compared to Option 2), all sites are within walking distance (<800m) of a bus stop. In this respect, development under Option 3 may support access to the public transport network, allowing residents to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities.

In terms of access to healthcare facilities, only 50% of the additional sites under Option 3 are within walking distance of a healthcare facility. However, given that all these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, residents should still be able to access a healthcare facility without having to rely on the use of the private vehicle. The additional strategic site under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)**– has the potential to deliver a new healthcare facility to accommodate the large increase in residents in this location.

With regard to proximity to schools, only 67% of the additional sites under Option 3 are within walking distance (<800m) of a primary school, although it is noted that the remaining two sites are within 900m of a primary school. In addition, 83% of the additional sites are within walking distance (<1.6km) of a secondary school. Nevertheless, as noted above, given that all these sites are within walking distance of a bus stop, children should still be able to travel to school without having to rely on lifts using the private vehicle. Similarly, the additional strategic site under this option has the potential to deliver a new primary school to accommodate the large increase in residents in this location.

All additional sites under Option 3 are within walking distance of an open space. As such, development under Option 3 supports access to the green infrastructure network, which will positively impact the physical and mental health of residents in Blaby. Whilst it is recognised that two of these sites overlap with open space, this is only by 5% and 1% respectively. Therefore, the additional sites under this option are unlikely to adversely impact accessibility to existing open spaces.

More broadly, all the additional sites under Option 3 are on the edge of existing settlements and the option performs well in this respect. However, the sites in proximity to the smaller settlements have direct access to fewer services and facilities, and are less well connected to Leicester, which many residents likely rely on to access wider services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities. Nevertheless, the strategic site only included under this option – **Hospital Lane Sites (BLA031/034/039/040)**– has the greatest potential to deliver community infrastructure such as new services and facilities, employment opportunities, and educational facilities on-site. In this respect, this site performs well from an accessibility standpoint.

Overall, this option is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects** with regard to congestion. Whilst this option delivers the highest level of growth, which will likely be associated with an increase in trips, the sites included under Option 3 are largely located in accessible locations, and the strategic sites have the potential to deliver infrastructure and enhance connectivity. Therefore, the level of significance is not expected to be notably different from Option 2. However, some residents may still opt to use the private vehicle, and a degree of uncertainty is noted in this respect.

In terms of accessibility, **significant positive effects** are considered likely as the sites included under Option 3 are largely located in accessible locations, either within walking distance or accessible via public transport to services and facilities and amenities.

In addition, this option delivers the most strategic sites and therefore has the greatest potential to improve accessibility across the district by delivering new services and facilities,

employment opportunities, educational facilities, and/or other community infrastructure, such as open spaces and active travel and public transport infrastructure.

**Conclusion**

Option 3 performs most strongly in terms of accessibility, as it delivers the greatest number of strategic sites with the highest potential to provide new services, facilities, and infrastructure, thereby enhancing accessibility across the district. While Options 1 and 2 also score positively, largely due to good public transport access and proximity to existing services, Option 3 offers the most opportunity to improve long-term access through on-site provision. All three options are likely to lead to significant positive effects overall, although reliance on private vehicles remains a potential risk due to uncertainty around delivery and usage of sustainable transport modes.

	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>
Congestion	-?	-?	-?
Rank	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Sustainable travel	++	++	++
Rank	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

# **Appendix G: Strategic Employment Options Appraisal (Pre-Submission)**

# 1. Health and Wellbeing

## Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Although access to healthcare is less critical for employment sites than for residential development, the employment site involved in this option is located close to Glenfield Surgery, allowing local employees to access healthcare services before, during or after working hours if required. This proximity offers a modest health benefit, particularly for shift workers and those with ongoing health needs.

Option 1 locates employment development immediately adjacent to the existing settlement of Glenfield, close to the Leicester urban area and provides for around 20ha of local employment land. This location provides good access to a large and diverse labour market, including communities that experience varying levels of deprivation, allowing employment opportunities to contribute positively to economic inclusion and wider health outcomes.

The site is also located near existing open spaces and green infrastructure, including the Old Railway Line Nature Area. This provides opportunities for informal recreation, active travel and improved mental wellbeing during breaks or commuting. The potential to integrate green infrastructure within the site further supports positive health outcomes by improving environmental quality and providing healthier working environments.

It is anticipated that there will be **minor positive effects** through this option with some level of access to employment and contribution to reducing health inequalities through job provision, supporting positive health outcomes, as well as proximity to greenspace.

With regards to amenity and safety aspects, the proposed site is adjacent to an existing employment area and unlikely to have any direct effects upon residential or other sensitive uses. There could be an increase in HGV traffic and general trips along Kirby Road which could affect amenity for some residents in this area, but the effects are not considered to be significant given that there is a degree of screening between the closest residential areas and most traffic has direct access from the strategic road network to the employment areas. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted in this respect.

## Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 distributes employment development across several settlements, including Glenfield, Stoney Stanton and Whetstone and makes provision for around 39ha of new local employment land, providing employment opportunities closer to where a wider range of people live. This pattern can reduce commuting distances for some workers, supporting work-life balance and potentially lowering stress associated with longer journeys. Access to healthcare facilities varies between sites but is generally within 1-2 km, allowing employees reasonable access to services around working hours. While this is not a critical factor for employment uses, it offers a modest benefit in supporting workforce wellbeing.

Several sites are located close to existing open spaces and areas of green infrastructure, particularly around Stoney Stanton and Whetstone. These areas provide opportunities for walking, informal recreation and improved mental wellbeing.

However, the dispersed nature of development means that the quality and consistency of access to greenspace varies between locations. It is also worth noting that mixed use developments would likely come forward at strategic locations in Stoney Stanton and Whetstone, which would bring people closer to job opportunities, and would also likely involve green infrastructure enhancement (which could benefit those at nearby employment uses).

By spreading employment across multiple settlements, Option 2 supports local job creation and can help address health inequalities by improving access to employment in smaller communities.

Overall, there are **potentially significant positive effects** on health and wellbeing through this option, with localised benefits from job creation and access to greenspace and health facilities.

With regards to amenity, the new areas of employment land are not located close to existing residential areas or other sensitive land uses. Therefore, significant negative effects are unlikely to arise in this respect. The new employment areas will be part of mixed-use strategic developments, so there is potential for layout and design features to ensure that the employment elements are not intrusive. Therefore, **potential / uncertain minor negative effects** are predicted at this stage.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 builds on the pattern of employment development established under Option 2 by introducing additional strategic employment sites, including the strategic B8 site west of M69 Junction 2 (36ha) and the larger strategic element at Whetstone Pastures around 80ha). These additions extend employment growth beyond local settlement edges into more strategic, transport-oriented locations.

The increased scale of employment delivery has the potential to generate substantial additional job opportunities, which could contribute positively to income, economic security and wider health outcomes across a broader labour market. In this respect, Option 3 has the potential to further support the reduction of health inequalities by increasing access to employment, particularly for those able to access strategic locations by car. However, compared to Option 2, the additional strategic sites are generally less closely related to existing settlements and healthcare facilities. While access to healthcare is not a primary consideration for employment development, this reduced proximity limits opportunities for employees to access services before or after work, representing a small adverse change relative to Option 2. It is worth noting though that strategic housing growth could come forward at these locations, which would better link new homes and jobs in this regard for some people.

The strategic sites also introduce a greater potential for environmental pressures, including increased traffic, noise and air quality effects associated with large-scale B8 uses. These factors could negatively affect workforce wellbeing and the surrounding environment if not effectively mitigated. While there may be opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure within these sites, the overall working environment is likely to be more industrial in character than the local employment sites included under Option 2. Therefore, a mix of effects are predicted. **Minor negative effects** are predicted with regards to amenity and safety issues, and **significant positive effects** with regards to likely improved health outcomes.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Facilities / accessibility	+	++?	++
Amenity	?	?	-

## 2. Population and Housing

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 includes a single employment-only site located adjacent to the existing settlement of Glenfield. The scale of development is limited at around 20ha and does not include any housing provision. As a result, the option has no direct role in meeting housing needs or influencing population growth. While the provision of employment may indirectly support the existing population, the absence of residential development means impacts on population and housing are minimal. Overall, **neutral effects** are expected.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 increases the scale of development and introduces employment sites alongside planned housing growth at Stoney Stanton and Whetstone, in addition to the employment-only site at Glenfield. This represents a shift from purely employment-focused development towards a more mixed-use approach in some locations.

The inclusion of employment alongside housing for three of the sites (accounting for around half of the total employment land supply) has the potential to support local population needs and provide opportunities for people to live closer to where they work. However, it is not anticipated that the increase in employment land provision would drive significant changes in population or housing demand locally over the plan-period. Therefore, **neutral effects** are expected.

As the mixed-use sites provide housing, but not at a scale that materially influences population change or housing delivery overall in the plan period,

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 builds on Option 2 through the inclusion of strategic B8 employment-only sites, increasing the overall quantum of employment land but not introducing any additional housing beyond that already identified. As these additional sites are employment-only (And longer term prospects), they do not significantly alter the housing or population implications established under Option 2. The balance between housing and employment remains largely unchanged, albeit with a stronger emphasis on strategic employment. Whilst there could be some attraction for labour for surrounding areas, it is unlikely to significantly drive housing growth further than projected needs. Therefore, effects are anticipated to be **neutral** for population and housing.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Population and housing	0	0	0

### 3. Biodiversity and Geodiversity

#### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 focuses employment development on a single site located north of Glenfield. The site is not subject to statutory biodiversity designations and does not overlap with Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs), SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites. The nearest SSSI (Sheet Hedges Wood) is located over 1.4 km away, indicating a degree of separation from nationally designated biodiversity assets (and limited direct pathways for impacts such as recreational pressure or disturbance).

The site, however, contains Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), such as Meadow at Glenfield and is in close proximity to others such as Rothley Brook, as well as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) especially along the north boundary of the site, mature trees, and hedgerows. These features suggest that the site has existing biodiversity value at a local level, particularly in terms of linear habitats and connectivity. Employment development would have the potential to affect these features if not sensitively designed, particularly through land take and increased disturbance.

As a previously undeveloped site, there is potential for biodiversity loss at a local scale. However, the relatively limited scale of development under Option 1 means impacts would be spatially contained. There is also clear potential to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows, alongside the creation of new green infrastructure within the site.

It is anticipated that, due to the existing value of the site in terms of biodiversity and the potential impacts of employment development in the area, that there will be potential / uncertain **minor negative effects**. Whilst mitigation should allow for significant effects to be avoided, there is likely to be permanent loss of biodiversity, which has integrated into the urban areas.

#### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 introduces employment development across multiple sites, increasing the overall land area affected and the potential for impacts on biodiversity. None of the sites directly overlap with statutory biodiversity designations, and distances to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites are generally substantial, reducing the likelihood of direct effects on designated sites.

The sites that are included beyond Option 1 are less constrained than the first site, however Whetstone Pastures contains a number of LWS, notably the Dismantled Railway & Whetstone Gorse, as well as Willoughby Waterleys Meadow, and others including mature trees. However, it is acknowledged that the lower level of employment land, on large strategic sites, means that there is room to avoid effects.

There are hedgerows, trees, and watercourses that go through some of the sites, indicating a moderate local biodiversity value, with potential impacts arising from habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance associated with employment uses. The cumulative effect of development across multiple sites increases the risk of incremental loss of locally important habitats.

The dispersed nature of development also makes consistent biodiversity enhancement more challenging. While individual sites offer opportunities for BNG through landscape buffers, retained hedgerows and green infrastructure, the overall increase in land take compared to Option 1 means that biodiversity pressures are greater, even with mitigation in place.

Overall, it is anticipated that there will be **minor negative impacts**, due to increased cumulative impacts on local biodiversity assets, however it is noted that there are opportunities for BNG, but a greater overall loss of existing habitat.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 builds on Option 2 through the inclusion of additional strategic employment sites, including the strategic B8 site southwest of M69 Junction 2 and the strategic B8 element at Whetstone Pastures. These sites represent a notable increase in scale and introduce development in locations closer to sensitive biodiversity assets.

The site southwest of M69 Junction 2 is located very close to Burbage Common and Woods SSSI and adjacent to a number of LWS, increasing the potential risk of indirect effects such as disturbance, air quality impacts and habitat fragmentation. The industrial nature of B8 development, including large-scale built form and HGV activity, heightens the potential pressure on nearby biodiversity receptors compared to smaller local employment sites.

The expansion of employment development at Whetstone Pastures further increases cumulative impacts on LWS, hedgerows and green corridors identified in the area. While these larger sites may offer scope to incorporate significant areas of green infrastructure and deliver BNG in quantitative terms, this potential must be balanced against the higher baseline biodiversity value and proximity to sensitive receptors. The site is large, and so the potential for enhancement elsewhere could be a possibility, but this becomes more problematic if housing is also proposed, as the overall area of development would need to increase. Therefore, minor negative effects are predicted at this stage.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	?	-	-

## 4. Cultural Heritage

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 focuses employment development on land north of Glenfield. The site does not overlap with any designated heritage assets and is not located within a conservation area. The nearest heritage assets are a Scheduled Monument, the moated site and garden enclosure at Glenfield and Conservation Area both of which are located around 65 metres to the south of the site, indicating a close spatial relationship that could give rise to setting effects.

There are several listed buildings in the surrounding area, including Grade II listed buildings within Glenfield, although no listed buildings are located within the site itself. The proximity of these assets means that development could affect their setting, particularly through changes in land use and the introduction of large-scale employment buildings. However, the relatively limited scale of development under Option 1 reduces the extent of potential impacts.

There are no direct overlaps with Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens. Given the site's relationship with existing urban development, the historic environment in this location is already influenced by modern land uses, which limits the sensitivity of the wider setting. It is predicted that there are uncertain **minor negative effects** on cultural heritage due to potential impacts on nearby heritage assets, however no direct impacts or loss of designated assets are likely.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 introduces employment development across several sites, increasing the number of heritage assets potentially affected. None of the sites directly overlap with designated heritage assets, and no Scheduled Monuments or Registered Parks and Gardens are located within site boundaries. However, Whetstone Pastures does contain a Grade II Listed Building in the north of the site, but the site is large in proportion to the level of employment land being allocated so development could hypothetically avoid this.

Several sites are located in proximity to Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings, particularly around Stoney Stanton and Whetstone, where historic village cores contain multiple designated assets. Whetstone Pastures in particular is adjacent to Willoughby Waterleys Conservation Area, which may affect the character and appearance of the designated area. Development at the edge of these settlements has the potential to affect the setting of heritage assets, especially where large-scale employment buildings contrast with historic settlement character.

Overall, it is anticipated that **minor negative effects** are more likely (compared to option 1) due to the increased potential for development to affect multiple heritage assets across several settlements.

## Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 extends Option 2 through the inclusion of strategic employment sites, notably the site west of M69 Junction 2 and the strategic element at Whetstone Pastures. These additions represent a substantial increase in scale and introduce employment development in areas with different heritage sensitivities.

The site west of M69 Junction 2 is located within the wider setting of several designated heritage assets, including nearby listed buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens at a greater distance. While there is no direct overlap with heritage assets, the scale and industrial nature of B8 development increases the potential for longer-distance setting effects, particularly on rural heritage assets whose significance derives in part from their landscape context.

The inclusion of strategic B8 development at Whetstone Pastures further increases the cumulative pressure on the historic setting of Whetstone and surrounding heritage assets. Compared to Option 2, Option 3 introduces a greater risk of harm arising from scale and visibility, even where individual sites avoid direct impacts. However, whilst greater than Option 2, it is not anticipated that development through Option 3 would have major significant effects on cultural heritage, therefore **minor negative effects** are still predicted.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Cultural Heritage	?	-	

## 5. Waste

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 delivers a limited scale of employment development on a single site. Employment uses would generate commercial and industrial waste, the majority of which would be managed through established waste collection and disposal systems. The site's proximity to the Leicester urban area means that existing waste management infrastructure is readily accessible, reducing the need for long-distance transport of waste.

The concentration of development at one location allows waste management to be planned in a coordinated manner, supporting efficient segregation and storage and collection of waste. The limited scale of development also constrains the overall quantity of waste generated. Overall, it is anticipated that there will be broadly **neutral effects**, with a relatively low level of growth in an area that is already primarily used for industry, having a relatively negligible impact on waste

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 increases the overall quantity of waste generated through the development of multiple employment sites across several settlements. This might place a greater demand on waste collection and management services, particularly where sites are more dispersed.

The spatial distribution of development reduces opportunities for shared waste facilities and may lead to less efficient collection arrangements compared to Option 1. However, all sites are located within areas that are served by existing municipal and commercial waste infrastructure. Overall, it is expected that there might be increased waste generation and greater demands on collection regimes due to dispersion, but broadly manageable, therefore **neutral effects** are expected.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 extends Option 2 through the inclusion of large-scale strategic employment sites, particularly B8 uses. These sites are likely to generate higher volumes of commercial and industrial waste, including packaging and operational waste associated with logistics activities.

The scale of development increases waste arisings compared to Option 2, and may require enhanced on-site waste management facilities and more frequent collection. While strategic sites may allow for efficient, purpose-built waste handling infrastructure, the overall pressure on waste management systems could be greater. Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Waste	0	0	-

## 6. Minerals

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 directs employment development to a single site north of Glenfield. Based on the available evidence, the site is not located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area and does not overlap with known mineral resources of strategic importance. As a result, employment development under Option 1 is unlikely to lead to the damage of mineral resources or constrain future mineral extraction. The limited scale and focused nature of development further reduces the risk of indirect impacts on mineral supply. Therefore, effects are likely to be broadly **neutral**.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 introduces employment development across several sites, including Land West of Stoney Stanton, where part of the south-east corner of the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for sand and gravel. Development of permanent employment uses in this location has the potential to sterilise safeguarded mineral resources, particularly where prior extraction has not occurred.

While not all of the site is affected, the presence of the MSA represents a constraint and introduces a risk that mineral resources could be lost to future supply. The remaining sites under Option 2 are not identified as being within MSAs, limiting the extent of impacts elsewhere. Overall, Option 2 presents an increase in mineral sterilisation risk compared to Option 1, driven primarily by the Stoney Stanton site.

Therefore, there are **uncertain minor negative effects** anticipated, with the potential for damage to safeguarded mineral resources.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 builds upon Option 2 through the inclusion of additional employment land. However, no new Mineral Safeguarding Areas are introduced, and the key minerals constraint remains confined to Land West of Stoney Stanton, which is already included under Option 2.

As such, Option 3 does not materially alter the nature or magnitude of minerals effects identified for Option 2, therefore **uncertain minor negative effects** are anticipated.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Minerals	0	?	?

## 7. Landscape and Soil

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 includes one employment site at Land North of Glenfield. This site is located on the edge of an existing settlements and within landscapes that have been identified as having low to medium landscape sensitivity in the Landscape Study. As a result, the potential for significant adverse effects on landscape character is relatively limited.

In terms of soils, the proposed site includes areas of agricultural land, potentially including best and most versatile (BMV) land (Grades 1–3a). However, given there is only a single site under this option, the overall loss of agricultural soil resource would be low. With appropriate soil management measures, including soil handling and reuse, impacts on soil quality are likely to be minor.

The scale of development proposed under Option 1 is modest, reducing the risk of widespread landscape change or intrusion into open countryside. While some localised effects on landscape character and visual amenity are likely, particularly where development extends beyond existing built form, these impacts are expected to be minor and capable of mitigation through sensitive siting, landscape buffers and appropriate design. Overall, Option 1 is likely to result in a **minor adverse effect** on landscape, representing the lowest level of landscape impact across the three options.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 introduces additional employment sites, including Land West of Stoney Stanton, Whetstone Pastures, and Land South of Whetstone. Several of these sites are located within landscapes assessed as having medium sensitivity, with some areas displaying features of local importance such as open farmland, settlement separation and valued rural views.

The increased number of sites under Option 2 also results in a greater loss of agricultural land, including potential areas of best and most versatile soils. While the scale of loss remains relatively modest, the cumulative effect across multiple sites could be more noticeable. Nevertheless, impacts on soils could be reduced through careful site design and layout, minimisation of land take and good soil management practices. Overall, impacts are predicted to be minor.

The increased number and spread of sites under Option 2 heightens the potential for cumulative landscape effects, particularly where development occurs within the same character areas as other development. The introduction of larger employment buildings may affect the rural setting of settlements and alter local landscape character if not carefully designed. Nevertheless, the scale of growth remains moderate and largely focused close to existing settlements. With appropriate landscape-led masterplanning, retention of key features and other landscape mitigation methods, the landscape impacts of Option 2 are considered to be likely but manageable, resulting in **minor negative effects** overall.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 includes all sites identified under Option 2 and additionally includes large strategic employment land at Whetstone Pastures (80ha) and Land West of Stoney Stanton (M69 Junction 2 36ha). These strategic sites are located within open countryside and affect larger tracts of landscape, including areas identified in the Landscape Study as having medium to high sensitivity, particularly in relation to scale and openness.

The scale and massing of development under Option 3 significantly increases the potential for substantial changes to landscape character and visual amenity, including increased prominence of large buildings, loss of openness and erosion of rural character. The concentration of development on strategic sites also increases the risk of long-term and cumulative landscape impacts, particularly where development is visible from key routes and nearby settlements.

The scale of development under Option 3 also results in the greatest loss of agricultural land, including likely losses of best and most versatile soils. The large, contiguous nature of the strategic sites limits opportunities to avoid soil loss, and impacts on soil resources are therefore more difficult to mitigate. While soil management and reuse could reduce harm, the overall magnitude of soil loss would be greatest under this option. Overall, **significant negative effects** are predicted in this regard.

While mitigation measures such as structural landscaping, green infrastructure corridors and careful building design could reduce impacts, the effectiveness of mitigation would be critical. Overall, Option 3 is likely to result in moderate to potentially significant adverse effects on landscape, representing the greatest landscape impact of the three options.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Landscape	-	-	--?
Soil	-	-	--

## 8. Environmental Protection: Water

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

The scale of development under Option 1 is relatively limited, allowing flood risk to be addressed through site-specific design measures such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and careful layout. Managing flood risk is important for the protection of water quality, as flood events can affect water in a number of negative ways.

Concentrating development on one site also reduces the cumulative risk of increasing surface water runoff across multiple catchments. There is no evidence of direct impacts on designated water bodies or groundwater sources.

With appropriate mitigation, the potential for adverse effects on water quality and hydrology is limited. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted, with some flood risk constraints – however impacts are localised and manageable through mitigation.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 increases the scale and geographic spread of employment development, affecting multiple sites with varying levels of flood risk. The additional sites show overlaps with surface water flood risk zones, and some are located within or close to Flood Zones 2 and 3, increasing the complexity of managing flood risk.

The dispersed pattern of development raises the potential for cumulative impacts on surface water runoff across different catchments, particularly where multiple sites require engineered drainage solutions. While all sites can be designed to incorporate SuDS, the need to manage water quality and flow across several locations increases the risk of residual effects. No direct impacts on designated water bodies or groundwater sources are identified. However, compared to Option 1, Option 2 presents a higher overall level of water-related constraint due to its scale and distribution. It is also the case that additional employment land provision will increase the use of water and the discharge of wastewater, which puts some additional strain on these systems. Therefore, uncertain **minor negative effects** are predicted for the water theme.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 extends Option 2 through the inclusion of additional strategic employment land. However, the additional sites do not introduce significantly greater flood risk or water quality constraints than those already present under Option 2. As a result, while the overall scale of development increases, the nature and severity of water-related constraints remain broadly unchanged compared to Option 2. Therefore, it is anticipated that this option will have uncertain **minor negative effects**.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Water quality	0	?	?

## 9. Environmental Protection: Air Quality

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 focuses employment development on land north of Glenfield. The site does not overlap an Air Quality Management Area, with the nearest AQMA located over 1.6 km away. This indicates that the site is not located within an area currently experiencing managed air quality exceedances. Existing air quality conditions in the surrounding area are already influenced by urban traffic associated with Leicester and Glenfield.

Employment development would generate additional vehicle movements associated with commuting and servicing. However, the site's proximity to the Leicester urban area and good public transport accessibility provides some opportunity to limit car-based commuting. Given the relatively modest scale of development and the absence of nearby AQMA constraints, impacts on air quality are likely to be localised and incremental.

The site benefits from good access to public transport and proximity to the Leicester urban area, which provides some potential to limit car-based commuting. However, employment development would still generate additional vehicle movements, including staff travel and servicing traffic, which could contribute to localised increases in emissions on nearby roads. Given the relatively limited scale of development under Option 1 and its location adjacent to an established urban area, any additional air quality effects are likely to be limited, rather than resulting in significant deterioration of existing conditions. It is anticipated that **minor negative effects** could potentially arise given the increase in vehicle movements, but there is a degree of uncertainty.

### Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 distributes employment development across several sites. None of these sites overlap an AQMA, and all are located over 1.5 km from the nearest air quality management areas. This suggests that development would not directly affect locations currently subject to statutory air quality controls.

The increased scale and dispersed nature of employment development would result in a greater number of vehicle movements across the network, including commuter and servicing traffic. While this may lead to incremental deterioration in local air quality along affected routes, particularly at peak times, impacts would be spread across a wider area and would not be focused on known air quality hotspots. They would also take place against a backdrop of generally improving air quality across the District as indicated in the Council's Air Quality Assessment. Nonetheless, it is anticipated that **minor negative effects** are likely given the increase in vehicle movements associated with this growth option.

### Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 extends Option 2 through the inclusion of strategic B8 employment sites, increasing the scale of development and the intensity of freight and HGV movements.

While the additional sites, including land west of M69 Junction 2 and Whetstone Pastures, are also located well away from AQMAs (over 8.5 km to the nearest), the nature of strategic logistics uses is likely to generate higher emissions per trip.

Compared to Option 2, Option 3 would therefore introduce greater overall traffic-related emissions, particularly on the strategic road network, but also on the local road network in the absence of improvements to access to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) near to the proposed sites. However, based on the available evidence, these effects would remain indirect and diffuse, rather than directly affecting designated air quality management areas. Therefore, **minor negative effects** remain.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Air quality	?	-	-

## 10. Climate Change

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

In terms of climate change, Option 1 concentrates employment development on a single site adjacent to the existing settlement of Glenfield and close to the Leicester urban area. This location benefits from relatively good accessibility to the local labour market and public transport, which provides some opportunity to limit car-based commuting and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The scale of development under Option 1 is limited compared to the other options, resulting in lower overall levels of traffic generation and energy demand. While employment uses would still generate emissions through commuting, servicing and operational activity, these effects are limited by the modest quantum of development and the site’s proximity to an existing urban area.

Option 1 represents a contained pattern of growth, reducing the risk of unnecessary travel distances and supporting comparatively lower emissions relative to the higher growth options. Overall, **neutral effects** are predicted.

With regards to flood risk and other resilience factors, Option 1 focuses employment development on a single site north of Glenfield. The site is affected by areas of surface water flood risk, with small proportions of the site falling within the 1 in 30, 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 year surface water flood risk categories. There is also a limited overlap with Flood Zones 2 and 3, indicating some sensitivity in relation to fluvial flooding. Further the smaller scale of development reduces exposure to climate-related risks such as extreme rainfall and heat events. On balance, **neutral effects** are predicted in this regard.

## Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 introduces a greater number of employment sites, including Land West of Stoney Stanton, Whetstone Pastures, and Land South of Whetstone. The increased scale and dispersal of development under this option is likely to result in higher greenhouse gas emissions, particularly from construction activity and additional vehicle movements associated with commuting and freight.

An increase in employment land provision will likely lead to increased use of resources during construction, but operationally such developments should be more efficient than some older employment land. In this respect, one would expect per capita emissions not to significantly increase. The locations are accessible to an extent and could support sustainable travel, but an increase in trips is inevitable, and therefore uncertain **minor negative effects** could arise in terms of emissions from transportation.

Option 2 increases the scale and geographic spread of employment development, with all sites being subject to varying levels of flood risk. These sites show overlaps with surface water flood risk zones, and some are located within or close to Flood Zones 2 and 3. The dispersed pattern of development raises the potential for cumulative impacts on surface water runoff across different catchments, particularly where sites require engineered drainage solutions. While all sites can be designed to incorporate SuDS, the need to manage water quality and flow across several locations increases the risk of residual effects. This indicates a minor level of climate vulnerability, particularly in relation to extreme rainfall events which are expected to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change. However, the majority of sites remain capable of accommodating mitigation measures such as SuDS, green roofs, and flood-resilient design. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted for this option.

## Option 3 (Higher Growth)

The significantly larger quantum of employment floorspace, together with its strategic warehousing function, is likely to result in higher absolute greenhouse gas emissions from embedded carbon, increased HGV and LGV vehicle movements and employee commuting.

Although the sites will form part of comprehensive mixed-use developments, allowing for integrated masterplanning and potential delivery of sustainable transport corridors, the nature of logistics development typically generates a high proportion of road-based trips. Even with mitigations such as travel planning, bus infrastructure, last-mile delivery consolidation, and potential future uptake of low-carbon freight technologies, transport remains a contributor to emissions under this option.

The strategic sites may, however, offer opportunities that smaller sites do not, including sustainable design and layout to help minimise emissions. However, overall emissions are still likely to be higher than those for Options 1 and 2. As such, **a minor negative effect** is predicted with greater certainty.

Despite the larger land requirement, none of the additional Option 3 sites are significantly constrained by either fluvial or surface-water flood risk, meaning the option does not inherently increase exposure to flooding. However, the scale and form of strategic warehousing introduce additional climate-resilience considerations, as extensive hardstanding and large roof areas will generate high volumes of surface water runoff and reduce opportunities for natural infiltration unless permeable design features are incorporated. Because these sites form part of planned mixed-use communities, water management can be addressed holistically through integrated blue-green infrastructure, strategic SuDS networks, and landscape-led attenuation features, offering greater resilience than piecemeal development. Overall, flood-related impacts ought to remain manageable and the sites should be capable of accommodating appropriate mitigation measures, resulting in **neutral effects** overall in this respect.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Mitigation	0	?	-
Flooding	0	0	0

## 11. Economy

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 delivers a modest level of employment land over the plan period, largely supporting industrial and warehousing uses, with no significant expansion of strategic B8 logistics provision beyond sites already committed. As a result, Option 1 would support continued economic activity and job retention but offers limited scope for economic diversification or step-change growth. The restricted scale of development may reduce the district's ability to respond flexibly to changing market demand and could limit opportunities to attract new investment, particularly in strategic logistics and higher-value employment sectors. Moreover, it will also necessitate the loss of an existing employment premise to facilitate access into the land to the rear of Mill Lane.

Further, the Land North of Glenfield site involves growth in an area that is already well connected to the M1, A46, and A50. The site is also located directly adjacent to the existing Mill Lane Key Employment Site (KES), as well as in close proximity to the Optimus Point KES and the County Hall KES, therefore relating well to existing KES, and would provide land to support local business growth. On balance, **minor positive effects** are predicted.

## Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 delivers a medium level of growth across four sites. This option increases the supply and range of employment land, supporting a broader mix of uses including industrial, warehousing and some office and R&D floorspace. The scale of growth under Option 2 improves the district’s ability to accommodate business expansion, attract inward investment and provide a wider range of job opportunities for local resident. Overall, potential **significant positive effects** are predicted.

## Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 builds on the economic effects of Option 2 through the inclusion of strategic B8 employment sites, notably the land west of M69 Junction 2 and Whetstone Pastures. These additions significantly increase the scale and diversity of employment provision, strengthening the role of the area within the sub-regional and regional economy. The strategic location of the land west M69 Junction 2-adjacent to the motorway site could support logistics and distribution uses that are not well accommodated within smaller, settlement-edge employment sites. This enhances economic resilience by broadening the employment base and attracting inward investment and supporting supply chains. The scale of development also increases the capacity to deliver a substantial number of jobs, including roles across a range of skill levels.

However, the economic benefits of Option 3 are more unevenly distributed than under Option 2. Strategic sites are less closely aligned with individual settlements, which may reduce direct benefits to some local communities compared to more locally focused employment provision. There is also a greater reliance on a specific sector (B8 logistics), which can reduce economic diversity if not balanced by other employment types. Overall, Option 3 represents a step change in economic ambition compared to Option 2, delivering strong growth potential but with a more strategic, less locally embedded character. It is considered that this option is likely to have **significant positive** effects, due to substantial increase in employment capacity, inward investment potential and sub-regional economic role, outweighing reduced localised distribution of benefits.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Economy	+	++?	++

## 12. Accessibility

### Option 1 (Lower Growth)

Option 1 is located immediately north of Glenfield, giving it a strong spatial relationship with the existing settlement and access to a sizeable local labour catchment. The site adjoins the built-up edge of Glenfield and is close to the wider Leicester urban area, supporting integration with established infrastructure and providing good access to the workforce. Its proximity to several key employment spaces further enhances accessibility by utilising existing transport links and minimising travel times.

Public transport accessibility is strong, with a bus stop approximately 350 metres away on Church Road, offering opportunities for commuting by bus and reducing reliance on private cars. The site is also within cycling distance of Glenfield and western Leicester and adjoins National Cycle Route 63 (the Ivanhoe trail), supporting active travel for short-distance journeys. Reasonable walking and cycling access to key services further promotes non-car travel and limits the need for longer trips.

The site benefits from an accessible urban-edge location near employment opportunities in Glenfield and Leicester, although it does not directly overlap with designated employment areas. Currently however it is noted that there is no formal pedestrian access to the site via Mill Lane. While development would generate additional traffic during peak hours and through servicing movements, the scale proposed under Option 1 is relatively modest and concentrated in a relatively well-connected location. Consequently, impacts on the local road network are expected to be localised and manageable, with good potential for mitigation through travel planning and sustainable access measures, including local active travel improvements.

Overall, Option 1 performs well in accessibility terms. It is likely to have neutral effects on congestion, with some localised increases in peak-hour traffic, but these are offset by its strategic location and strong sustainable travel options. In sustainability terms, the site is anticipated to have a **minor positive effect** due to its good access to services, public transport, and proximity to a large urban labour market, supporting sustainable commuting patterns.

## Option 2 (Mid Growth)

Option 2 distributes growth across several sites on the edges of Glenfield and close to Stoney Stanton and Countesthorpe / Whetstone, all of which have relationships with existing settlements. These locations provide access to local labour markets and established transport infrastructure, although accessibility varies between sites.

The sites are within reasonable walking distance of bus stops (generally 150 - 450 metres) providing opportunities for bus-based commuting. The proximity of sites to nearby residential areas also supports cycling and short-distance car journeys. However, the more dispersed pattern of development means that commuting trips are spread across multiple routes and settlements, increasing the likelihood of car use for employees travelling from further afield. Further, while most sites are well related to their host settlements, Whetstone Pastures is somewhat separated from the main built-up area of Whetstone, which may reduce the attractiveness of walking and cycling for some trips and increase reliance on vehicular travel compared to more directly connected urban-edge sites. However, it is noted that in the longer term, strategic development at Whetstone Pastures will create further connections between jobs and homes.

The increased scale and spatial spread of employment under Option 2 would lead to a rise in commuter and servicing traffic on local road networks. This may result in peak-time congestion on key local routes, particularly through village centres and at junctions already experiencing pressure. It is anticipated that there would be **minor negative effects** on congestion, as there would be increased traffic across several settlements, with potential for peak-time congestion on local routes. For sustainability, it is expected that there will be **minor positive effects**, with good overall accessibility to local labour markets and public transport.

## Option 3 (Higher Growth)

Option 3 represents the largest scale of employment growth and includes strategic B8 sites designed to serve sub-regional and regional markets. The strategic site west of M69 Junction 2 benefits from some access to the strategic road network, albeit there is currently no access to the M69 to/from the south. Nonetheless partial access to the Strategic Road Network may make it attractive for logistics and distribution uses, but it is relatively remote from existing settlements and public transport.

As a result, employees commuting to this site are more likely to be car-dependent, and the nature of B8 uses would generate significant HGV and servicing movements some of which may need to use local roads to access the SRN. While the strategic employment site at Whetstone Pastures is closer to existing settlements and offers better public transport and cycling potential, overall travel demand under Option 3 would be higher.

The combination of increased commuter traffic and freight movements would place pressure on both local roads and strategic junctions, particularly around the M69 and key connecting routes, increasing the risk of congestion and delays. There will likely be a need for mitigation on junctions and / or new infrastructure to support improved access to development as well as enhanced public transport links to strategic growth.

Overall, it is expected that there will be likely **minor negative effects** on congestion, with expected increases in car and HGV traffic, with heightened congestion risk on local and strategic networks. In terms of sustainability, there is some road accessibility for freight, but schemes could lead to congestion or increased use of local roads including by HGVs. In addition, these sites have limited public transport access and higher car dependency, reducing overall sustainability. Therefore, for this theme minor positive effects carry a greater degree of uncertainty.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Congestion	0	?	-
Sustainability	+	+	+ ?

Table 5.1: Presenting the significance of effects

Type of effect	Likely	Uncertain / potential
Significant positive effects	++	++?
Minor positive effects	+	?
Neutral effects	0	0?
Minor negative effects	-	?
Significant negative effects	--	--?

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Health: Facilities / accessibility	+	++?	++
Health: Amenity / safety	0	?	-
Population and housing	0	0	0
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	?	-	-
Cultural Heritage	?	-	--?
Waste	0	0	-
Minerals	0	?	?
Landscape	-	-	--?
Soil	-	-	--
Water quality	0	?	?
Air quality	?	-	-
Mitigation	0	?	-
Flooding	0	0	0
Economy	+	++?	++
Accessibility: Congestion	0	?	-
Accessibility: Sustainability	+	+	+

# Appendix H: Detailed Site Selection Rationale

## Rationale for proposed site allocations

### General Approach to Site Selection

In allocating sites the Council has, reflecting on the transport challenges facing the South Leicestershire area, sought to have regard to the Plan's vision and objectives related to Transport and movement. This itself has been influenced by NPPF requirements to take a vision-led approach to transport planning in preparing new plans.

To summarise the Council's Vision in respect of Transport and movement is as follows:

Existing and new communities will be sustainable thriving neighbourhoods well connected to local services, shops, green spaces, jobs and education. Residents will have genuine transport choice for shorter trips using active travel modes such as walking, cycling, and wheeling. For longer trips demand responsive and traditional public transport services will provide opportunities to reduce reliance on private vehicles. Improved electric vehicle infrastructure will be rolled out to support the decarbonisation of private and commercial vehicles and deliver improvements to air quality along our busiest road corridors.

Key planning objectives related to transport and movement include:

- To provide new homes and businesses of high-quality design and co-located with a compact mix of uses accessible by Active Travel and public transport.
- To reduce carbon dioxide emissions and encourage renewable energy generation.
- To make efficient use of land, water, minerals, soil, waste, energy and other resources including maximising the reuse of previously developed land or contaminated land.
- To support the District's rural economy and the retention and improvement of existing and local services and facilities to meet the needs of local communities.
- To help facilitate the delivery of strategic infrastructure to support the long-term housing and economic growth of the District and wider South Leicestershire area as articulated in the Strategic Growth Plan.
- To support the provision of new transport infrastructure and services, reduce the need to travel by car, the distance travelled, and increase the use of active travel and public transport to access jobs, key services and facilities
- To work with partners to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure needed to support existing and new communities.

*The NPPF states at section 9 (para 109) that:*

*“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This should involve:*

- a) making transport considerations an important part of early engagement with local communities;*
- b) ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places;*
- c) understanding and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks;*
- d) realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- e) identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use; and*
- f) identifying, assessing and taking into account the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains”.*

Paragraph 110 then goes on to advise that: *“the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”.*

The Council’s transport evidence indicates that much of the Strategic and Local Road Network are under strain in the South Leicestershire, and even in the absence of the plan many junctions will be saturated and operating above capacity by 2042. Further growth will add further traffic which unconstrained could have very significant effects on the local highway network.

Reflecting this the Council has, at the outset, sought to plan to prioritise sites that can contribute to sustainable transport choice and minimise the need to travel by seeking to internalise trip rates and support active travel and wherever practicable public transport. Therefore, the Council favours the delivery of sites which can contribute to the delivery of onsite facilities and services in the middle to latter part of the Plan period and will require these to support our vision led approach. The requirements to deliver our vision are explicit in the detailed policy wording for allocated sites and can make a notable difference to the number of trips generated by new development. However smaller sites tend not to lend themselves to onsite provision of services such as shops, primary schools and community facilities such as village halls or playing pitches. In many locations further urban extensions to our villages or PUA settlements would create growth some distance from village/local facilities which are often found in an historic core of the settlement and often not connected by high quality walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure that would meet modern requirements.

Nonetheless, the NPPF is clear that opportunities for maximising sustainable transport solutions will be less in rural areas, and this should not be a barrier to growth. Indeed, in a district such as Blaby, where there are many villages of varying sizes, some village growth is necessary and will help support local services and facilities. Moreover, recent experience also reminds us that Blaby's villages are desirable places to live. Since the Council identified its lack of land supply in 2023 there have been very many planning applications for extensions to our villages. Most of these have been in either the larger villages of Blaby, Countesthorpe, Enderby, Narborough or Whetstone or the Medium Villages of Cosby, Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. At the point of drafting a total of around 1,400 homes have been committed or are near committed in our Larger and Medium Central Villages. Around the same number again are subject to well advanced planning applications under the 'tilted balance' which are likely to be considered prior to the plan being submitted in December 2026. Given the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which applied to planning decisions in Blaby presently many of these could benefit from planning permission well before the plan is adopted.

Reflecting that a significant proportion of growth is already likely to be committed in the larger and medium villages prior to submission of its Plan the Council considers that it is unnecessary to identify significant further growth in these tiers of settlement hierarchy, not least because these sites are unlikely to offer the opportunity to deliver mixed use or co-located services and facilities. Nonetheless where there may be clear benefits from allocating further growth in this tier of the hierarchy the Council will make further allocations and will set out the reasoning for this later in this section.

In respect of smaller villages, the Council is seeking to limit growth in these villages to small scale development only. These settlements are poorly connected to local facilities and services and present little opportunity to support active travel or public transport improvements. New residents will therefore likely be reliant on the use of a private vehicle to access some or most day to day services.

## **Housing Sites within the Principal Urban Area**

To promote good design which supports the creation of resilient, active, safe, healthy and inclusive communities where people want to live, work and visit.

The Principal Urban Area is comprised of 6 settlements; Braunstone Town, Glenfield, Glen Parva, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester Forest East and Lubbesthorpe. In total 47,600 people lived in these settlements according to the 2021 census. This was equivalent to around 46% of the district's total population at that point, although there has been notable further growth in Lubbesthorpe since 2021. Under the Council's preferred housing growth option this tier of settlement would accommodate just under half of all growth in the plan period. This is a notably lower proportion of growth than that allocated in the current local plan. However, it is clear that past assumptions about the quantum of growth which can be accommodated in the PUA have been overly ambitious. This is clearly indicated in the Council's housing monitoring and this underlines the challenges the Council has faced in delivering in the PUA.

It is therefore considered reduced growth (compared to the adopted plan) and more accurately aligning growth in the PUA to reflect the proportion of people living in these settlements, as well as providing for some unmet need from the City represents a preferred approach to distribution. A total 29 sites have been promoted for development across the PUA settlements.

The following section of this report sets out the Council's Preferred site allocations and the reason for their inclusion in the Plan. It also sets out those sites it does not consider suitable for development and those which may be capable of accommodating growth, but which have not been allocated and the reasons for not allocating non-preferred sites. Consideration of sites is outlined on a settlement by settlement basis.

### Braunstone Town

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
BRA001	Land off Brockenhurst Drive, Braunstone Town	<b>Not Allocated</b>

The Council has not allocated any sites in Braunstone Town. Only one site was promoted and this site has significant issues in respect of- biodiversity value, flood risk, and availability as it is known to have been marketed and sold as amenity woodland. There has been no recent active promotion for housing use. Notwithstanding this Braunstone Town is identified as an accessible location with DfTs connectivity Tool indicating typical scores of between 60-70 for this settlement<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/connectivity-tool>

## Glenfield

Three sites have been promoted for growth in Glenfield. Of these, site one has been allocated for housing development (GLE030 - Land to the Rear of County Hall, Glenfield).

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
GLE030	Land rear of County Hall, Glenfield	Allocated
GLE031	Western Park Golf Course	Not Allocated
GLE032	Land North of Glenfield	Not Allocated

The site chosen for inclusion in the Plan is subject to some environmental constraints including surface water flood risk, although the Council's site selection work indicates these can be likely overcome. This site will likely deliver new homes towards the end of the Plan Period in Blaby District. The Council favours the inclusion of this site as whilst the Blaby element of this scheme will only deliver a modest number of homes (170) this will form a component of a much larger cross boundary site (in addition to committed components in Charnwood Borough and Leicester City)<sup>30</sup> and will help facilitate the delivery of new infrastructure necessary to deliver a sustainable community including potential school and new active travel infrastructure. Although in isolation this is a smaller site it is likely to come forward towards the end of the plan period reflecting its part of a larger cross-boundary strategic site which will be accessed through highways infrastructure in neighbouring areas.

Of the two remaining sites promoted and not preferred in Glenfield,

GLE031 (Western Park) was considered as potential housing site, in addition to an adjoining mixed use allocation included in the adopted Leicester City Local Plan. However, this site is likely to be significantly constrained by ecology, and it is unclear to what extent biodiversity net gain requirements could undermine viability or delivery based on information submitted by the site promoter to support the site.

In respect of the City part of the site it is noted that the Inspectors Report into the Examination of the Leicester City Local Plan states "*The site is designated as a Green Wedge in the adopted development plan for Leicester and forms part of the Kirby Frith Green Wedge, which extends across the City boundary into Blaby District. It also contains areas of woodland and a Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which provide habitats for protected species, and the area is used for informal recreation by local residents in the adjoining communities of Glenfield. As such, it is a valued local amenity, significant areas of which would be lost if the site were developed.*" (para 88).

In the context of the Leicester City Local Plan it is noted that the Inspectors conclude that "*Despite the loss of Green Wedge that would result, and the other constraints,*

<sup>30</sup> HA12 in Charnwood Local Plan adopted in 2026 and Policy SL02 included in the Adopted in the Leicester City Local Plan (2026)

*subject to appropriate mitigation measures, which we consider below, we are satisfied that the need for housing outweighs the impacts, and that the site is justified as appropriate, taking into account the reasonable alternatives and the SA assessment” (para 89).* However, BDC has had a notable number of sites submitted through its own SHELAA capable of meeting its development needs and considers that alternative sites which would have less notable environmental impacts are available for development. We therefore consider the planning balance in Blaby falls in favour of allocating sites which are less environmentally constrained. Nonetheless we have sought to include a policy in our Plan to facilitate an access into the Leicester City allocation through that part of the former Western Park Golf Course located in Blaby District.

The final site promoted for development in Glenfield is GLE032 - land north of Glenfield. This site is not allocated for housing development due to current accessibility/access issues, however, the Council are looking to allocate part of the site for commercial development and will contribute around half of the Council’s local commercial development requirement over the plan period. Allocation of this site will allow the Council to significantly enhance access to existing and proposed commercial development by upgrading walking and cycling infrastructure, including the creation of footways and cycleway along Mill Lane the main access route to the site, therefore supporting the Councils vision to improve active travel provision in the district.

Overall sites in the Glenfield is identified as performing strongly in respect of accessibility with this settlement typically scoring 55-65 in DfTs Connectivity Tool.

### Glen Parva

Six sites have been promoted for development in Glen Parva. Of these none have been allocated for housing development within the Plan.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
GPA010	Land at Glen Ford Grange, Little Glen Road, Glen Parva	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GPA023	Summit Engineering, Wharf Road, Glen Parva	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GPA024	Old Piggery	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GPA025	Land west of 23 Little Glen Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GPA026	Land south of 111 Little Glen Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GPA027	Land off Cork Lane	<b>Site has planning permission for housing</b>

Four sites were considered to be unsuitable for allocation within the Council’s Site Selection Report as follows:

- GPA010: Land at Glen Ford Grange, Little Glen Road, Glen Parva. This site is subject to flood risk and land contamination (it is in use as a scrap yard) and in the view of the Council may not be deliverable in the plan period.
- GPA023: Summit Engineering, Wharf Way, Glen Parva. This site has suitability issues related to land contamination and amenity and significant availability / achievability issues as it is currently in active use for employment. Moreover, given the site lies within the settlement boundary the principle of development is already acceptable on this site meaning it could be suitable for development should the current use cease without allocation.
- GPA024: The Old Piggery, The Ford, Glen Parva. The site has significant suitability issues related to flood risk (and so not sequentially preferable) and land contamination. It is also constrained by site access issues.
- GPA027, Cork Lane. Site is no longer available. It has planning permission for housing and is a committed site.

Sites which the District's Site Selection Report (SSR) suggest could be available include GPA025 (Land west of 23 Little Glen Road, Glen Parva) and GPA026 Land south of 111 Little Glen Road, Glen Parva. These sites are subject to flood risk issues. In addition, GPA025 is subject to historic landfill /contamination issues and GPA026 is subject to heritage issues. These issues may be capable of mitigation, however the Council considers that it has sufficient small scale sites allocated or in planning with permission or resolutions to grant permission to deliver an adequate supply of housing during the early part of the plan period and does not consider that the allocation of further smaller sites is preferable given the District's vision and objectives to secure sites that can make a meaningful contribution to trip internalisation and modal shift, especially through the delivery of new active travel infrastructure. However, this does not mean there will be no growth in Glen Parva in the Plan period. There are 3 committed housing sites in this settlement. cumulatively these will deliver around 220 homes of which 79 are expected to be affordable in the period to 2042.

Overall sites in Glen Parva are identified as performing strongly in respect of accessibility with this settlement typically scoring 55-70 in DfTs Connectivity Tool.

## Kirby Muxloe

Nine sites have been promoted for development in Kirby Muxloe. Of these a single site has been allocated for housing development within the Plan.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
KMU009	Land north of Desford Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU020	Blood's Hill (small)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU021	Blood's Hill (large)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU022	Land off Farley Way	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU023	Land at Roundhill	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU024	Land off Portland Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU025	Land north of Hinckley Road	<b>Allocated</b>
KMU026	Land at Blood's Hill (south)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
KMU027	Land south east of Main Street	<b>Not Allocated</b>

Site KMU025 is subject to some environmental constraints including surface water flood risk, biodiversity and infrastructure although site selection indicates these can be overcome. The Council has a strong preference to allocate this site due to its potential to support our proposed approach to delivering high levels of trip internalisation and modal shift to reduce impacts on the local road network and due to its potential to improve the sustainability of an adjoining committed site.

This site is located on the A47 transport corridor and will immediately adjoin an existing committed site for 885 homes (Hasting's Fields). This committed site will be supported by a new 1FE primary school but does not include other facilities. The Council will expect the new allocation (Hastings Field's Phase 2) to expand the school to a 2FE primary thereby making it more sustainable (LCC no longer builds 1FE schools due to the costs of building and running these). Moreover, an expansion of the site will also deliver a local centre to include shops and other facilities, community facilities and mobility hub and enhanced active travel connectivity within the site and offsite. In particular, there are opportunities to link this urban extension with the New Lubbethorpe site located around 1.2km to the south, where a recently opened health centre has been delivered and a proposed secondary school is planned. Further growth in this area is therefore considered to fit well with the Council's wider sustainability ambitions and will provide opportunities to significantly improve access via active travel modes to new and planned facilities in this area.

Of the remaining eight sites in Kirby Muxloe, six are not considered suitable for allocation in the Site Selection Report for following reasons:

- KMU020 Blood's Hill (Small), Kirby Muxloe. This site has significant suitability issues in respect of heritage due to its proximity to Kirby Muxloe Castle (Grade 1 listed and Scheduled Monument)

- KMU021 Bloods Hill (Large) Kirby Muxloe. This site has significant suitability issues in respect of heritage (relationship with Kirby Muxloe Castle and Kirby Fields Conservation Area), as well as biodiversity landform and site access issues.
- KMU022 Land off Farley Way, Kirby Muxloe. Site has very significant suitability issues related to flood risk and is not sequentially preferable.
- KMU023 Land at Roundhill, Kirby Muxloe. Site has significant suitability issues in respect of heritage due to its proximity to Kirby Muxloe Castle and Kirby Fields Conservation Area (application for self-build homes recently dismissed at appeal due to heritage impacts despite pressing need for such homes)
- KMU024 Land off Portland Road, Kirby Muxloe. This site has significant suitability issues in respect of heritage (relationship with Kirby Muxloe Castle and Kirby Fields Conservation Area), as well as biodiversity landform and site access issues.
- KMU027 Land south east of Main Street, Kirby Muxloe. This site has significant suitability issues in respect of heritage due to proximity/relationship to Kirby Muxloe Castle.

Sites which the District's SSR suggest could be suitable for allocation include KMU009 (Land north of Desford Road) and KMU026 (Land at Blood's Hill (South), Kirby Muxloe. KMU009 has suitability issues including in respect of flood risk, heritage, landscape / townscape but these are identified as being capable of mitigation. This site is identified as having a capacity of around 325 homes. KMU026 has suitability issues in respect heritage issues (impact of Kirby Muxloe Castle and Kirby Fields) and also flood risk and biodiversity issues. However, more recent proposals for this site indicate that a development could be contained by landform and not visible from the Scheduled Monument; but in order to try and obtain such 'containment' would reduce the site capacity by around half to around 400 homes.

Whilst these sites may be capable of mitigation in respect of the issues identified in the SSR, neither provide significant opportunities to internalise trips or secure modal shift compared to KMU025. This is because they are smaller and less likely to be able to accommodate on site facilities and services such as a local centre, primary school or mobility hub etc. As a result, whilst these sites are not small scale (300-400 homes) and could potentially make a meaningful contribution towards housing delivery these sites would be less likely to conform with the Council's vision and objectives related to sustainable and active travel. For this reason they are not preferred for allocation.

It is worth noting that Kirby Muxloe performs relatively poorly in respect of connectivity compared to other PUA settlements. DfTs Connectivity Tool indicates this settlement scores between 40-55 in respect of connectivity, with connectivity dropping off as you move west (further from the city boundary). This underscores the need for the provision of new facilities and services on any sites bought forward in this settlement.

## Leicester Forest East

Five sites have been promoted for development in Leicester Forest East. Of these two sites has been allocated for housing development within the Plan.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
LFE017	Land at Webb Close	Not allocated
LFE018	Land at Baines Lane	Not Allocated
LFE019	Land at Kingstand Farm	Allocated
LFE020	Land at Kingstand Golf Course	Allocated
LFE021	Land north and east of Desford Crossroads (most within LFE parish)	Not Allocated

The preferred sites are LFE019 (Land at Kingstand Farm) and LFE020 (Land at Kingstand Golf Course). Both sites are identified as having some suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk and heritage which the Site Assessment Report indicates are capable of mitigation. Cumulatively these two sites could deliver around 400 homes. LFE019 already benefits from planning permission for 145 homes. The sites are located on the A47 corridor and are to the immediate south of Hastings Fields committed site, albeit in Leicester Forest East.

Whilst in isolation these sites would not achieve high levels of trip internalisation and therefore would not perform well against the Council's wider vision and objectives in respect of transport (as they won't have the critical mass to secure the delivery of on-site facilities) the Council is seeking to use these sites to improve active travel infrastructure between the Hastings Fields sites to the north and New Lubbesthorpe to the east. In particular, the Council is seeking a 3m off road shared footway to connect from the A47 to the immediate south of the Hastings Fields to new Lubbesthorpe site via a new access point onto Beggars Lane in the vicinity of Forest House Lane. This will provide an opportunity to improve interconnectivity of these two growth areas and provide new and existing residents local improved access to nearby facilities. In addition, these sites will contribute to the funding of the proposed 2FE school on Hastings Fields site to the north as well as the new secondary school at New Lubbesthorpe.

Put simply, therefore, the location and proximity of these two sites to committed and new allocated sites provides an opportunity to 'connect up' and support the provision of additional facilities and services through additional financial contributions and improved active travel measures.

Non-preferred sites in Leicester Forest East (LFE) include:

- LFE017: Land at Webb Close. This site is already committed for housing development and is within the settlement boundary so is acceptable for housing development in principle.

- LFE018: Land at Baines Lane. This site has suitability issues related to flood risk and site access. In particular it should be noted that cars and motorbikes are prohibited from Baines Lane; this being a service road for LFE motorway service station (MSA).
- LFE021 Land north and east of Desford Crossroads (most within LFE parish), Leicester Forest East. The site has suitability issues related to surface water flood risk. Although it's likely that any environmental constraints could be overcome this site is located a significant distance from the PUA urban edge lying beyond the Hastings Fields Phase 1 and Phase 2 Sites. Given that the Council's housing trajectory indicates that by 2042 Hastings Fields 2 will not have built out completely the Council does not consider it likely that this site will adjoin the urban edge by the end of the plan period. Given that the site is dislocated from the urban edge and will likely still be in 2042 it is not considered appropriate to allocate this site at this time.

### New Lubbethorpe

Five sites have been promoted for development in Leicester Forest East. Of these two sites has been allocated for housing development within the Plan.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
LUB001	Land east of Narborough Wood Park	<b>Allocated</b>
LUB002	Land at Desford Road / Beggar's Lane	<b>Allocated</b>
LUB003	Land north of Desford Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
LUB004	Land East of Desford Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
LUB005	Land off Forest Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>

The Council's preferred sites are LUB001 (Land East of Narborough Wood Park) and LUB002 (Land at Desford Road / Beggar's Lane). Both sites are identified as having some suitability issues. LUB001 is identified as having surface water flood risk, heritage site access issues, whilst LUB002 is identified as having surface water flood risk, noise, light and air quality issues as well as site access issues. The Council has issued an EIA scoping opinion for 825 homes on this site and is expecting an application covering both SHELAA land parcels imminently.

The site is located to west of the New Lubbethorpe Site which is an urban extension to the Principal Urban Area. New Lubbethorpe is a mixed-use development for 4,250 homes which is expected to substantially build out by the end of the plan period. This site has been building out since 2016 and there are currently around 1,300 homes completed together with a primary school, local centre and doctor's surgery/chemist. The two new allocations will have a close relationship with the

adjoining site and will be well related to committed and new allocations at Kirby Muxloe and Leicester Forest East. The allocation of these sites will help to improve local active travel infrastructure and connectivity locally (reflecting on its PUA location) and due to the large scale of the scheme will support the delivery of local schools, shops, older peoples' accommodation, community infrastructure and mobility hub in the middle to late part of the plan period. The strategic nature of this site is therefore likely to support the Council's Plan vision and objectives to increase trip internalisation and mode shift and will support the Council's aspirations to deliver more sustainable travel choice.

Three sites have not been allocated for housing development as follows:

- LUB003 Land north of Desford Road, Lubbethorpe. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and potential noise, light and air quality and may not be suitable for housing use given the recent construction of an energy (battery) storage facility on around half of the site.
- LUB004, Land East of Desford Road, Lubbethorpe. The site has surface water flood risk issues as well as suitability issues as it is detached from the current/future urban edge of the PUA being around 370m from the New Lubbethorpe Site.
- LUB005 Land off Forest Road, Lubbethorpe. There are no notable suitability, availability or achievable issues. However, this is a small site dislocated from the settlement edge of the PUA and nearby Enderby and not well related to nearby services and facilities. Moreover the Council considers that it has sufficient small scale sites allocated or in planning with permission or resolutions to grant permission to deliver an adequate supply of housing during the early part of the plan period and does not consider that the allocation of further smaller sites is preferable given the District's vision and objectives to secure sites that can make a meaningful contribution to trip internalisation and modal shift, especially through the delivery of new active travel infrastructure.

New Lubbethorpe performs relatively poorly in respect of connectivity compared to other PUA settlements. The DfTs Connectivity Tool indicates this settlement scores around 45 in respect of connectivity, with connectivity dropping off as you move away from those areas already built out. It is likely that connectivity will improve as the site continues to build out and new facilities such as local centres, and the proposed secondary school are built out.

### **Housing Sites within the Larger Villages**

There are 5 larger villages in Blaby District. These are Blaby, Countesthorpe, Enderby, Narborough and Whetstone. In total around 35,000 people lived in these settlements in 2021 accounting for 34% of the District's population. Across these 5 settlements a total of 50 sites have been Promoted to the Council through the SHELAA. Excluding duplicate sites (for example where a small and large version of

a site has been promoted through the SHELAA) a total of six sites have been allocated.

## Blaby

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
BLA030	Land off Lutterworth Road	<b>Committed</b>
BLA031	Land north of Hospital Lane	<b>Not Allocated*</b>
BLA032	Land at Glebe Farm	<b>Not Allocated**</b>
BLA033	Land at Keepers Farm	<b>Allocated</b>
BLA034	Land at Hospital Lane	<b>Not Allocated*</b>
BLA035	Land at Keepers Farm (small)	<b>Allocated as part of BLA033</b>
BLA036	Land off the A426	<b>Allocated as part of BLA038</b>
BLA037	Willow Farm	<b>Not Allocated</b>
BLA038	Land east of Lutterworth Road	<b>Allocated</b>
BLA039	Land north of Hospital Lane (small)	<b>Not Allocated*</b>
BLA040	Land at Highfields Farm, Mill Lane	<b>Not Allocated*</b>

\*Assemblage of sites considered together as a strategic allocation as Hospital Lane

\*\*site subject to a planning appeal for 198 homes. Inquiry scheduled for May 2026

There are 11 sites promoted for development in Blaby. Of these one site has planning permission, 4 sites are allocated and six are not proposed for allocation.

BLA030, Land off Lutterworth Road has planning permission for the delivery of 53 homes. The site is one of two sites in Blaby identified as a reserve housing site in the Blaby Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Council's SSR notes that the Site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity and heritage issues though concludes these can be mitigated. The recent planning approval confirms this is the case.

Sites which have been allocated are Keepers Farm (BLA033 and BLA035). The smaller site submission, like BLA030 is a reserve site in the Blaby NDP. However, the Council has determined that the larger site should be allocated for housing development. This site will notably extend the southern extent of the village and will, through comprehensive treatment of the whole site define the extent of built development in Blaby and the 'separation' between the settlements of Blaby and Countesthorpe for the long term by creating a new publicly accessible country park between the two villages as part of the application proposals. It will also deliver a new convenience store on site and seek to provide new active travel provision on and off site to help secure mode shift and improved accessibility to local facilities including in Blaby itself. It is noted that the Council's site assessment report

identifies that this site is constrained by surface water (and potentially ground water) flood risk and ecology, although the report concludes that it is likely capable of mitigation. The site is subject to a hybrid planning application for 350 homes which is expected to be considered by the Council in Summer 2026.

The two remaining sites proposed for allocation in Blaby are BLA036 and BLA038. Together these sites could deliver around 375 homes on land south of Rose Way Business Park. The Council's site assessment report notes constraints related to surface water flood risk, noise and heritage, however confirms that it is likely that these impacts can be mitigated. Part of the site is also subject to availability constraints in that a significant proportion is currently used for the provision of sports pitches which would be lost. Reflecting that the Blaby NDP clearly indicates a preference towards growth to the south of the village in its identification of reserve sites, and this site offers opportunities to significantly improve and expand the provision of sports pitches for a local football club, the Council favours the allocation of this site in combination with those that are committed to the south of the village to meet housing needs in Blaby. Reflecting the Council's ambitions to improve active travel infrastructure and trip internalisation it is proposed that any new site include proposals for improved walking and cycling infrastructure locally and the provision of a small convenience store on site.

Sites which are not proposed for allocation include:

- BLA032. Land at Glebe Farm, Blaby. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk although this issue can likely be mitigated. Availability of the site is affected by the site's current use as a golf course and related uses. Whilst this site is in the Council's preferred direction of growth in Blaby, it is not considered suitable for allocation as housing development would result in the loss of widely used local facility. It would also lead to some loss of green wedge locally. However, it is likely that the suitability of this site for development will be determined well before any new local plan is adopted as the site is the subject of a planning appeal to be held in May 2026. Its status will therefore be kept under review by the Council.
- BLA037, Willow Farm, Blaby. This site is subject to some surface water flood risk and heritage constraints. In addition, the site is likely to be physically detached from the existing settlement edge and would likely represent an intrusion into the Green wedge separating Blaby and Whetstone.
- BLA031, BLA034, BLA039 and BLA040 comprise an assemblage of sites in the vicinity of Hospital Lane. The Council has reviewed these sites and considered that key constraints related to these sites includes flood risk (fluvial and surface water), heritage, landfill / land contamination, biodiversity and access issues. However, in considering these sites together as a strategic site it is likely that identified constraints can be appropriately mitigated.

Although not proposed for allocation the assemblage of sites for Hospital Lane have been considered in some detail through the plan making process. Not least

because we have considered this site within our higher growth housing delivery option (i.e 13,500 homes). However, whilst it is considered that this site may be capable of mitigation, and performs similarly in respect of accessibility to sites to the south of the village (both areas score between 45-60 for accessibility in DfTs connectivity tool) the Council's has determined not to allocate this site for the following reasons:

- There are notable heritage constraints locally and site allocation could cause some harm (although this is likely to be less than substantial harm) to these facilities. However, on balance it is considered that the Hospital Lane sites are slightly more constrained than sites to the south of the village, though not significantly so.
- There is ongoing uncertainty about how this site could interact with the highway network in Oadby and Wigston given its proximity (Oadby and Wigston BC's Local Plan is constraining growth in its own Borough due to the impact of further growth on its road network).
- The Council's preferred direction of growth is to the south of Blaby village, having regard to the reserve sites allocated in the Blaby NDP by the local community and committed sites proposed for that location.
- Further large-scale growth, in addition to that already proposed in the village, would be out of proportion with the settlement and not justified by current need, although this issue will need to be kept under review pending ongoing discussions with OWBC and their unmet need/transport evidence.

Based on the sites committed and allocated for development in Blaby there are likely to be around 800 homes delivered in the village over the Plan period.

**Countesthorpe**

<b>Site Ref</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Allocated</b>
COU022	Land to west of Leicester Road	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU024	Land to the east of Willoughby Road	<b>Allocated as Part of COU043</b>
COU025	Land south of Hospital Lane / East of Leicester Road	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU037	Land rear of 33 Willoughby Road	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU038	Land north of Foston Road	<b>Site has Planning Permission</b>
COU042	Land east of Willoughby Road (large site)	<b>Part allocated, but residual not allocated</b>
COU043	Land to the east of Willoughby Road (smaller site)	<b>Allocated</b>
COU044	Land at Newton House, Bambury Lane	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU045	Land off Cosby Road	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU046	Land off Peatling Road	<b>Allocated see COU051 and COU052</b>
COU047	Land off Gillam Butts	<b>Allocated</b>
COU048	Land north of Bambury Lane	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU049	Land East of Rosebank Road	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU050	Land West of Leicester Road 'The Round House'	<b>Not allocated</b>
COU051	Land off Peatling Road (East Parcel)	<b>Allocated</b>
COU052	Land off Peatling Road (West Parcel)	<b>Allocated</b>

Countesthorpe is the largest of the villages in the District according to the 2021 Census with a population of 7,700 people. Countesthorpe therefore accounted for around 7.5% of the district's population in 2021. The village scores relatively well against DfTs Connectivity Tool with most of the village falling between 50-60 suggesting it is relatively sustainable.

There are 15 sites promoted for development in the village, of these one site has planning permission and is currently under construction, four sites are allocated (excluding duplicates) and ten are not proposed for allocation.

COU038, Land north of Foston Road has planning permission and is under construction. It is therefore committed and will deliver 170 homes within the plan period.

Sites which have been allocated in the Plan include:

- COU024, Land to the east of Willoughby Road (as part of COU043)
- COU043, Land to the east of Willoughby Road (smaller site)
- COU046 Peatling Road (larger site)
- COU047, Land off Gillam Butts
- COU051, Land off Peatling Road (East Parcel)
- COU052, Land off Peatling Road (West Parcel)

Sites COU024 and COU043 are no longer available as these land parcels benefit from planning permission. Site COU46 is made up of Sites COU051 and COU052.

Site COU047 is allocated for around 105 homes, however part of the site already benefits from detailed planning permission for 41 homes and is committed. The remainder of the site is subject to some surface water flood risk however it is likely that this constraint can be appropriately addressed and the site is suitable for development.

Sites COU051 and COU052 are, at the time of writing subject to a well-advanced planning application for 295 homes. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, ecology and heritage. Achievability is also affected by the High-Pressure Gas Pipeline crossing the site to the south. However, it is likely that these issues can be overcome.

The Council has sought to allocate these sites because cumulatively they have the potential to facilitate the delivery of a new highway route between Willoughby Road and Peatling Road. Indeed, the planning applications that have been submitted/determined to date are designed to ensure that new roads within the site are capable of connecting to adjoining sites and deliver a new 6.75m carriageway. This road, if it can be secured through the development management process, will help alleviate pressure on a number of routes and junctions on the local highway network.

It is also worth noting that many of these sites are already committed or as indicated above subject to well-advanced planning applications. As smaller sites, which in some cases are being bought forward directly by homebuilders, these are likely to make a significant contribution to the early delivery of homes mostly in the first 5 years of the plan being adopted. In addition, the southwards expansion of the village helps preserve the gap between the built-up area of Countesthorpe, Blaby and Whetstone which is under pressure from development and in many places is already very narrow.

This combination of potential for early site delivery; the delivery of a new potential highways route; and the Council's preference to maintain as far as possible the gap between settlements, coupled with the presence of a defensible boundary to the

south created by the high pressure gas pipeline, underpins the Council's preference to focus allocations in Countesthorpe on land to the south of the village.

Sites which are not proposed for allocation include:

- COU022, Land to west of Leicester Road. This site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk and heritage issues, though it is likely that these issues can be mitigated. However, in view of the Council, sufficient sites are likely to have been committed in Countesthorpe to meet identified settlement needs given recent decisions on Foston Road, Willoughby Road and Gillam Butts and other applications under consideration in the village.
- COU025, Land south of Hospital Lane / East of Leicester Road. The site has some suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, landfill and heritage. Further, the site is dislocated from the village edge.
- COU037, Land rear of 33 Willoughby Road. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity and heritage though these could be capable of mitigation. However, the site is detached from the settlement boundary.
- COU042, This would be a southwards extension of sites COU024 and COU043. However, this site is significantly affected by the high-pressure gas pipeline as well as surface water flood risk and heritage, although it is likely environmental constraints could be mitigated. The Council is not seeking further growth to the site as new development could bring the site close to the proposed new settlement of Whetstone Pastures and sufficient homes to meet our preferred distribution option are likely to be delivered by the sites already committed in the settlement.
- COU044, Land at Newton House, Bambury Lane. This site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk requiring further investigation. Achievability is significantly affected by the high-pressure gas pipeline with the consultation zone affecting more than 80% of the site. Further, the site is dislocated from the settlement edge.
- COU045, Land off Cosby Road. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage and accessibility. Further investigation is required on these matters although they may be capable of mitigation. However, growth to the west of the village is not the Council's preferred direction of growth as it could reduce the gap between Whetstone and Countesthorpe. Nonetheless, the site is subject to a well-advanced planning application by Redrow homes for 109 dwellings under the 'tilted balance' and it is likely that acceptability of this site for development will be determined through the development management process ahead of the Blaby Local Plan being submitted.
- COU048, Land north of Bambury Lane. This site is subject to some surface water flood risk though its likely capable of mitigation. Achievability is significantly affected by the high-pressure gas pipeline crossing the site with

the consultation zone affecting more than 90% of the site. Further, the site is not preferred as its detached from the village edge and mostly located in the buffer zone of the gas pipeline.

- COU049, Land East of Rosebank Road. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk and ecology. Achievability is uncertain due to unclear site access. This site is not preferred due to the environmental and achievability constraints affecting the site.
- COU050, Land West of Leicester Road 'The Round House'. Land to west of Leicester Road. This site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk. It is also affected by former landfill activities, though it is likely that these issues can be mitigated. However, the site is dislocated from the settlement edge, and the Council considers that sufficient sites are committed or subject to well advanced planning applications which will be determined ahead of the plan being submitted.

Based on the sites allocated and committed around 750 homes could be delivered in Countesthorpe within the plan period. This is equivalent to around 6.7% of the Council's housing requirement over the plan period.

Moreover the Council considers that it has sufficient small scale sites allocated or in planning with permission or resolutions to grant permission to deliver an adequate supply of housing during the early part of the plan period and does not consider that the allocation of further smaller sites (apart from the remaining part of Gillam Butts) is preferable given the District's vision and objectives to secure sites that can make a meaningful contribution to trip internalisation and modal shift, including through the delivery of new active travel infrastructure.

The non-preferred sites are all of a scale and nature similar to the sites already committed or in planning but do not offer an opportunity to deliver highway improvements such as those being sought on the sites to the south of the village. Site specific suitability and achievability reasons for not preferring alternative Countesthorpe sites are set out above. Further, sites, COU022, COU025, COU037, COU042, COU043, COU044, COU045, COU048, COU049 and COU050 do not provide the same potential to deliver a new highway connection between Peatling Road and Willoughby Road.

## Enderby

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
END009	Quarry Lane	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END017	Land to the west of the M1 (adjacent the public footpath)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END022	Land off Blaby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END023	Enderby Metals	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END024	Land rear of Strawberry Gardens	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END025	West of First Hangings, Blaby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END026	First Hangings, Blaby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END027	First Hangings, Blaby Road (combined site)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END028	Enderby Golf Course / Leisure Centre, Mill Lane	<b>Allocated (part of NAR022)</b>

Enderby is the smallest of the 'Larger Villages' in the District according to the 2021 Census with a population of 6,400 people. Enderby therefore accounted for around 6.2% of the district's population in 2021. There are 9 sites promoted for development in Enderby. Of these promoted sites, one site is proposed for allocation. The village scores relatively well against DfTs Connectivity Tool with most of the village falling between 56-64 suggesting it is relatively sustainable.

END028, Enderby Golf Course / Leisure Centre, Mill Lane. The site has significant suitability issues including surface water flood risk, heritage, noise and landfill / land contamination. Availability and achievability are uncertain due to existing leisure centre and golf course uses on site. It is considered that given the scale of the site that the identified environmental constraints are capable of mitigation albeit development would lead to the loss of a municipal golf course. However, Enderby is one of the District's larger settlements and this site represents the only realistic larger site capable of meeting housing needs in the plan period in Enderby. The site is well related to Narborough and Enderby and is of a scale that could deliver a sustainable new community including enhanced active travel and public transport connectivity. It is therefore considered to best fit the vision and objectives articulated in the Local Plan. For this reason, it is proposed for allocation, although acknowledging given the current use it is unlikely to deliver until the middle to latter part of the plan period.

Sites not proposed for allocation:

- END009, Quarry Lane, Enderby. The site has some suitability issues for housing uses including surface water flood risk, landfill and ecology. Achievability is significantly affected by the former use of the site as landfill. Site is comprised of priority habitat (comprising of open mosaic habitat). It is unclear whether this site is likely to be deliverable or viable given recent BNG

requirements and its likely ecological value and the historic use as a landfill. Moreover, the site is within the settlement boundary of Enderby and was historically allocated for employment use in the 1999 Blaby Local Plan but did not come forward for development. This history highlights uncertainty regarding site delivery, but in any case should suitability issue be overcome the site is acceptable in principle for development.

- END017, The site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk and noise associated with the M1 which is in close proximity to the east. Moreover, achievability is significantly affected by the lack of site access to the highway and former use of a nearby site as landfill. Site delivery is uncertain in the plan period and given the small scale of the site it is unclear if how much of the site could be suitable for housing once an appropriate noise mitigation strategy is implemented to attenuate motorway from the nearby M1 motorway.
- END022, Land off Blaby Road. This site has significant suitability issues including surface water flood risk, ecology (including BNG requirements) and heritage. However, SSR indicates that suitability issues could potentially be overcome. Achievability is affected by uncertainty about site access, as it is understood that the site frontage is not within the control of the site promoter. The site is within the settlement boundary of Enderby and had it been deliverable, given the principle of development on this site is acceptable, and having regard to the fact it's in the control of a housebuilder the Council would have expected an application for housing given the Council's lack of land supply. An allocation is unlikely to resolve the technical issues preventing delivery of this site.
- END023, Enderby Metals, Enderby. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination. It is detached from the settlement edge and in the view of the Council unsuitable for development.
- END024, Land rear of Strawberry Gardens. This site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination. It is also subject to site access constraints and is located away from the main settlement.
- END025, West of First Hangings, Blaby Road, Enderby. This site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination and site access. It is detached from the settlement edge.
- END026, First Hangings, Blaby Road, Enderby. site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination. It is detached from Enderby.
- END027, First Hangings, Blaby Road (combined site), Enderby. This is a previously developed site. However, it has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination and is located away from the main part of the village.

Based on the sites allocated and committed around 560 homes could be delivered in Enderby/Narborough within the plan period. Given that the two settlements account for around 12.8% of the population this level of growth is notably lower than might be expected across both districts settlements. However, opportunities for development are considered to be constrained in Enderby and Narborough as outlined above.

Given the constrained nature of sites in Enderby and having regard to their scale and nature it is unlikely that the allocation of smaller sites will help deliver the Council's vision and objectives to deliver growth in a way which internalises trips and supports modal shift, including active travel. Sites which are poorly related to nearby settlements will be difficult to mitigate in transport terms and are unlikely to conform with the Council's vision led approach to transport, especially where they are small-scale and offer no opportunities for the onsite provision of facilities or services. Sites which are remote from the village edge are likely to increase the need to use private vehicles to access local facilities.

Nonetheless sites END009 and END022 do fall within the settlement boundary and where identified constraints can be addressed these sites could come forward for development. However, it is presently not appropriate to allocate these sites as it is uncertain what level of mitigation is required (and hence what capacity these sites could have) or even if the sites are capable of delivery in the plan period.

## Narborough

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
NAR002	Land at Ambulance Station, adjacent to the Rosings	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR008	Land off Leicester Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR016	Land south of Carlton Park	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR018	Land at Seine Lane	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR019	Land north of Huncote Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR020	Land off Forest Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR021	Land at Cottage Farm	<b>Not Allocated</b>
NAR022	Land at Carlton Park and Enderby Golf Course	<b>Allocated</b>

Narborough has a population of 6,400 people, roughly the same as Blaby. It therefore accounted for around 6.6% of the District's population in 2021. There are eight sites promoted for development in Narborough. Of these, one site is proposed for allocation at Carlton Park. Narborough village scores relatively well against DfTs

Connectivity Tool with most of the village falling in a range of 53-63 suggesting it is relatively sustainable.

NAR022, Land at Carlton Park and Enderby Golf Course, Narborough/Enderby. This site is identified as having significant suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity, landfill, heritage, noise and air quality. Availability and achievability are uncertain due to golf course use on part of site. However, this is a large site and as a result it is likely that impacts on environmental constraints can be avoided or mitigated through appropriate design and layout leaving a significant part of the site available for development. It is well related to Narborough and Enderby and is of a scale that could deliver a sustainable new community including enhanced active travel and public transport connectivity. It is therefore considered to best fit the vision and objectives articulated in the Local Plan.

Sites not preferred include:

- NAR002, Land at Ambulance station, adjacent to the Rosings, Narborough. The site has no significant suitability issues, however availability and achievability of are uncertain due to existing health related uses on site and whether or not these will cease. In any case the site is in the settlement boundary and should redevelopment be pursued the principle of development is already established on this site.
- NAR008, Land off Leicester Road, Narborough. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), flood risk, biodiversity (including potential hydrological links to Narborough Bogs SSSI) noise and air quality. Achievability is uncertain due to site access onto B4114. The SSR concludes that on site constraints make this site unsuitable for allocation.
- NAR016, Land south of Carlton Park, Narborough. This site forms part of NAR022. However, is a smaller land parcel. This site is subject to a number of environmental constraints including surface water flood risk, biodiversity (the site includes a candidate wildlife site), landfill, heritage, noise and air quality.
- NAR018, Land at Seine Lane, Narborough. The site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk, noise and landfill / land contamination, although the SSR indicates that these may be capable of mitigation. It is relatively inaccessible to local services and villages with a former railway line (Whistle Way) acting as a barrier to local accessibility. Allocation would also break a strong defensible and well-defined settlement edge.
- NAR019, Land north of Huncote Road, Narborough. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and landfill. Landfill migration is specifically highlighted as an issue by the Environment Agency. The site is separated from Narborough by Whistle Way which forms a strong and well-defined settlement edge in this location. The SSR indicates that this site is unlikely to be suitable for allocation.

- NAR020, Land off Forest Road, Narborough. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and noise, although are likely capable of mitigation. The site intrudes into the countryside and is poorly related to the settlement edge being separated by Whistle Way.
- NAR021, Land at Cottage Farm, Narborough. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and noise. Achievability is uncertain due to planning approval to construct car parking for Next HQ on part of the site.

Based on the sites allocated and committed around 560 homes could be delivered in Enderby/Narborough within the plan period. Reflecting on the fact that the two settlements account for around 12.8% of the districts population this level of growth is notably lower than expected across both settlements. However, opportunities for sustainable development in Narborough are considered to be constrained as outlined above.

Given the constrained nature of sites in Narborough and having regard to their scale and nature it is unlikely that the allocation of smaller sites in Narborough will help deliver the Council's vision and objectives to deliver growth in a way which internalises trips and supports modal shift. Sites which are remote from the village edge, or poorly connected by footways are likely to increase the need to use private vehicles to access local facilities. It is considered that the scale of growth proposed at Carlton Park is most likely to deliver the improved active travel connectivity. It will, however, lead to the loss of an existing community leisure facility.

Whistle Way is a well-used local leisure route and provides an exceptionally strong boundary to the western edge of Narborough. Sites to the west of this boundary are not supported for allocation because this feature (a former railway line) which is elevated above the surrounding countryside provides both a strong landscape feature which screens views of built development from the countryside to the west but also impedes walking and connectivity locally.

Nonetheless site NAR002 does fall within the settlement boundary. This site is an operational ambulance station, but should this use cease the principle of (re) development of this site is acceptable.

## Whetstone

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
WHE004	Land off Station Street	Not Allocated
WHE019	Former JC Remedial, King Street / The Nook	Not Allocated
WHE026	Land South of Abbott Way	Allocated
WHE028	Land off Enderby Road	Not Allocated
WHE030	Land at Merrydale Farm	Not Allocated
WHE031	Land south of Whetstone	Allocated
WHE032	Land north of Warwick Road	Not Allocated

Whetstone is the second largest the village in the District according to the 2021 Census with a population of 7,300 people. It therefore accounted for around 7.1% of the District's population in 2021. There are 7 sites promoted for development in Whetstone. Two sites are proposed for allocation. The village scores relatively well against DfTs Connectivity Tool with most of the village falling between 56-64 suggesting it is relatively sustainable.

The two allocated sites are:

WHE026, Land South of Abbott Way. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and biodiversity. However, it has been demonstrated these can be overcome. A detailed planning application has been submitted for this site and this has a resolution to grant planning permission subject to legal agreement. The site has been promoted by a major housebuilder and will contribute towards the early delivery of homes supporting the Council's 5-year housing land supply on plan adoption.

The other allocation is much larger and adjoins Land South of Abbott Way. Again, this site is being promoted by a large housebuilder. An initial phase of development is proposed and an application for this first phase was recently deferred at planning committee to allow further information to be presented to the Council in respect of ecological matters.

The scale of both sites combined should support the delivery of significant new on-site infrastructure including: 3 ha of local employment land, local centre to include convenience store, land for the provision of a two-form entry primary school (if required); and mobility hub, as well as high quality active travel infrastructure within the site. The allocation of a large strategic site in this area is therefore considered to fit well with the Council's wider sustainability ambitions and will provide opportunity to significantly improve access to new and planned facilities locally. In addition, the allocation of this site could also provide an opportunity to improve the highway network in the vicinity of the site including around the Countesthorpe Road, Lutterworth Road staggered crossroad junction.

Sites that are not preferred by the Council include:

- WHE004, Land off Station Street, Whetstone. The site has no significant suitability issues although achievability is uncertain due to lack of site access.
- WHE019, Former JC Remedial, King Street / The Nook, Whetstone. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water). Achievability is uncertain due to current use of site for business use and the site not being promoted.
- WHE028, Land off Enderby Road, Whetstone. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, heritage and ecology. An application for a 100% affordable housing scheme was refused due to serious harm to Whetstone Grange (heritage asset) in 2016 and dismissed at appeal. Given the site history it is considered unlikely that heritage constraints can be overcome. Moreover, it is unclear if this site is still being promoted for housing as a recent application for employment was refused planning permission in 2023.
- WHE030, Land at Merrydale Farm, Whetstone. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage. It is detached from the settlement boundary.
- WHE032, Land north of Warwick Road, Whetstone. The site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), ecology and heritage. The SSR indicates that it is likely that these could be mitigated, but the site is poorly related to the settlement boundary.

Based on the sites allocated and committed around 760 homes could be delivered in Whetstone within the plan period. This is equivalent to around 6.8% of the Council's housing requirement over the plan period.

In line with the vision and objectives set out in the local plan the Council favours the allocation of a strategic site in Whetstone to meet housing needs. This site will present the greatest opportunity to secure active travel enhancements and trip internalisation. Other sites within the village are constrained and of a scale where it will not be possible to deliver on site services and facilities. Moreover, the Council has sufficient small sites identified to deliver shorter term housing needs and is seeking a mix of housing sites to ensure that a demonstrable 5 year supply of sites is available across the whole plan period. The allocation of land south of Whetstone will contribute towards housing delivery in the middle to latter part of the plan period due to its size.

## General comments on Larger Villages

There are a number of non-preferred sites in the larger villages of Enderby, Narborough and Whetstone not allocated by the Council that could be capable of meeting housing need subject to addressing locally identified constraints. However, the Council's strong preference in respect of this tier of settlement is to focus on the allocation of larger (strategic) sites where possible to deliver strategic level housing growth supported by the delivery of a range of new facilities and services, in order to reduce trip generation, increase the internalisation of trips and create a modal shift towards active travel. In addition, such sites provide potential to link up new facilities proposed on site as well as coalesce growth around a single location to deliver new active travel infrastructure connecting up to existing services and facilities. Strategic sites are proposed for Whetstone and Narborough/Enderby.

The circumstances driving site selection in Blaby and Countesthorpe are somewhat different. Within Countesthorpe a number of sites needed to deliver new homes already benefit from planning permission. These include Foston Road, Willoughby Road and Land South of Gillam Butts. Presently there are already 400 homes committed in the village. Applications for a further 400 homes are already in planning and are well advanced. This includes sites at Peatling Road and Cosby Road. The acceptability of these sites will likely be determined under the 'tilted balance' well before the Plan will be adopted. It is likely, therefore, that Countesthorpe will deliver significant growth in the period to 2042 even in the absence of a plan. However, whilst these sites have come forward opportunistically they still provide the very significant benefit of boosting growth in the early part of the plan period and therefore play an important role in respect of ensuring a demonstrable supply of land across the entirety of the plan period.

Had the Council had opportunity to bring forward growth in Countesthorpe it would have preferred growth to the south of the village where much of the growth has come forward. This is because there is an assemblage of sites to the immediate south of the village which, if delivered comprehensively, could be of a more strategic nature. These sites would have the potential to deliver a new highway to help mitigate congestion and improve highways capacity in the village through the creation of a new road between Peatling Road and Willoughby Road. The Council is still seeking to secure this new piece of infrastructure through the development management process despite the challenges of working with multiple third parties. However, given the scale of growth already committed or in planning the Council does not consider there is an adequate justification for the allocation of further homes in Countesthorpe as this would be contrary to the Council's growth strategy of focussing on larger sites where vision led development can be secured.

Within Blaby there are essentially two directions in which the village can grow. Eastwards in the vicinity of Hospital Lane and southwards in the vicinity of Blaby golf course. Both directions are subject to some environmental constraints, but it is likely these can be overcome.

Typically, the Council would look to secure growth on larger (more strategic sites) such as Hospital Lane as this could fit better with the District's vision and plan objectives in respect of accessibility. However, there are a number of wider considerations:

Firstly, the Blaby Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) identifies a number of reserve sites that could come forward should there be a housing need. Both of these sites lie to the south of the village at Land adjacent to Lutterworth Road and Land East of Winchester Road. Perhaps inevitably, due to the lack of housing land within the District, both of these sites have come forward as planning applications. Planning permission has been granted for 53 homes off Lutterworth Road, whilst a hybrid application has been submitted for 350 homes at Land east of Winchester Road. This larger application includes the reserve housing allocation in the Blaby NDP. In addition, the Council has also recently refused a planning application for 198 homes on the site of the Blaby Golf Course (Glebe Farm). Whilst the Council will seek to defend its decision on Glebe Farm there remains a possibility that significant growth could be committed to the south of the village well before the plan is adopted.

Moreover, Hospital Lane is somewhat dislocated from Blaby by an assemblage of sites which are likely to be unsuitable for development. These include local green spaces designated in the NDP, heritage assets (the protection of which needs to be given great weight), a cemetery and wildlife sites. Although it is possible that Hospital Lane could overcome issues surrounding accessibility by seeking to significantly boost facilities and services on site it does make this site more challenging to deliver and given its strategic nature it would be unlikely to come forward quickly due to complex land ownership and site promotion issues. Therefore, it is likely that significant new growth will already be committed to the south of the village before the plan is adopted. Given this fact and the clear preference of the local community to support growth to the south (as articulated in the Blaby Neighbourhood Plan<sup>31</sup>) it is not considered appropriate to allocate Hospital Lane under our preferred growth option. (i.e. 12,000 homes)

Hospital Lane was considered as part of a higher growth option (13,500) homes and may be capable of meeting additional housing need should the District's housing need increase further. However, to date we do not consider sufficient justification exists to pursue this level of growth. On that basis the Council has favoured the southern expansion of the Blaby village around Lutterworth Road and Winchester Road within the plan period.

### **Housing Sites within the Medium Villages**

There are six medium villages in Blaby District. These are Cosby, Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. In total around 17,200 people lived in these settlements in 2021 accounting for around 17% of the District's population.

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<sup>31</sup> [blaby-neighbourhood-plan-final-version.pdf](#)

Across these six settlements a total of 45 sites have been promoted to the Council through the SHELAA.

### Cosby

There are 8 sites promoted for residential development in Cosby. Of these one site is allocated for housing and will deliver around 180 homes to the south of the village.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
COS009	Land West of Broughton Road	Allocated
COS010	Land at Cosby Hill	Allocated (for employment).
COS011	Land off Narborough Road	Not Allocated
COS012	Land north of Countesthorpe Road	Not Allocated
COS013	Land off Croft Road, Cosby	Not Allocated
COS014	Land east of Tudor Drive	Not Allocated
COS015	Land north of Countesthorpe Road, south of Walnut Leys	Not Allocated
COS016	Land opposite Cosby Cemetery (Cosby)	Not Allocated

There are 8 sites promoted for development in Cosby. One site is proposed as a housing allocation as follows:

- COS009, Land west of Broughton Road, Cosby. This site has some suitability issues, including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), noise, air quality, ecology, and heritage. The SSR concludes that the site has some environmental and physical constraints that can be avoided or mitigated. The site is subject to a well-advanced planning application which is likely to be determined under the 'tilted balance' in summer 2026. The site promoter is a major housebuilder and it is likely that this site could make a meaningful contribution to the Council's land supply position during the early part of the plan period as outlined in the Council's trajectory and therefore assist the Council in demonstrating a 5 year housing land supply on adoption.
- COS010, Land at Cosby Hill, Cosby. Land is proposed for allocation as part of the Whetstone Pastures strategic site albeit for commercial development. This site is considered later in this commentary.

Sites not proposed for allocation in Cosby include:

- COS011, Land off Narborough Road, Cosby. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and land contamination although the SSR

indicates these can likely be mitigated. However, this site would represent an intrusion into the countryside and would significantly extend development to the edge of Littlethorpe village eroding the gap between the two villages.

- COS012, Land north of Countesthorpe Road, Cosby. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, ecology, heritage, air quality and noise. The SSR indicates that these may be capable of mitigation. However, site access is likely to lead to poor connectivity to the village due its likely location and would be counter to the Council's transport/movement objectives.
- COS013, Land off Croft Road, Cosby, Cosby, this site has some suitability issues, including in respect of flood risk (fluvial and surface water) landfill / land contamination and heritage. Site has planning permission for 200 homes.
- COS014, Land east of Tudor Drive, Cosby. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, air quality and noise. The SSR indicates that these may be capable of mitigation.
- COS015, Land north of Countesthorpe Road, south of Walnut Leys, Cosby. This site has suitability issues in respect including surface water flood risk, ecology, heritage, air quality and noise. The SSR indicates that these may be capable of mitigation.
- COS016, Land opposite Cosby Cemetery, Cosby. The site has significant suitability issues including Flood risk (fluvial and surface water), ecology, heritage and land contamination. Availability and achievability are uncertain due to lack of information.

Of the non-preferred sites COS011, COS012, COS014 and COS015 may be capable of being delivered in the plan period. None of these sites are preferred for allocation as the Council considers that sufficient sites will be available for development within this village by the time the plan is submitted given existing commitments and well-advanced applications which will need to be considered under the tilted balance.

As noted a notable number of homes are committed in Cosby including Land West of Cosby which has planning permission for 200 homes (COS013). Should the Broughton Road be granted planning permission both sites would deliver around 390 additional homes in the Plan period. Given the village is currently comprised of 1,500 homes this represents growth within and adjoining the village of around 26% over the plan period. This is a significant level of growth for a settlement of this scale and further allocations in this plan period could adversely affect settlement character. The Council does not consider there is a need for the allocation of further sites given its preferred growth strategy. Moreover, were further allocations to be made in Cosby it is likely that these would be relatively small scale reflecting the nature of the settlement, and available site options; and these would therefore not be able to support the delivery of on-site services or facilities (and trip containment). They would be dependent on services located in the existing settlements.

Notwithstanding the above, the settlement performs well in respect of accessibility, the Department of Transport's (DfT) Connectivity Tool<sup>32</sup> indicates the village has a score of 45-53. It is therefore one of the most accessible villages within this tier of settlement hierarchy meaning opportunities for delivering non car modes of travel will be more likely.

## Croft

There are five sites promoted for residential development in Croft. No sites are allocated for development in this village. One site has planning permission for 95 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
CRO003	Land to the north of Hill Street and Station Road and east of Huncote Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
CRO006	Land at Poplars Farm	<b>Not Allocated</b>
CRO007	Land west of Broughton Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
CRO008	Land North of Hill Street	<b>Not Allocated</b>
CRO009	Croft Lodge Farm, Broughton Road	<b>Site has Planning Permission</b>

The Council has previously been minded to allocate Site CRO009, Croft Lodge Farm. This site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk. A high-pressure gas pipeline may also affect site achievability. However, site constraints have been considered as part of an outline planning application submitted by a major housebuilder and the site now has planning permission for 95 homes. It will therefore likely make a notable contribution to the Council's 5 year housing land supply post adoption of the Plan.

A further site Land at Poplars Farm (CRO006) was considered as a potential allocation under a high housing growth option in the sustainability appraisal. However, this high growth option is not being pursued by the Council and so the Council does not propose to allocate this site.

Non-preferred sites include:

- CRO003, Land to the north of Hill Street and Station Road and east of Huncote Road, Croft. This site is subject to suitability issues including ecology, heritage, air quality, dust, noise. Achievability is uncertain due to the buildings on site being marketed for office rental. The site is largely in the

settlement boundary, and should constraints be overcome it is likely that some development could come forward on this site in the plan period should it become available.

- CRO006, Land at Poplars Farm, Croft. This site has some suitability issues, including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity and heritage. Achievability may be affected by the high-pressure gas pipeline crossing a small portion of the site. It is likely that these issues could be overcome through careful design and layout. This site was considered as a potential allocation as part of the high growth scenario (Option 3).
- CRO007, Land west of Broughton Road, Croft. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and ecology. Achievability is affected by the high-pressure gas pipeline crossing a large portion of the site. It is a large site which is out of scale with the settlement.
- CRO008, Land North of Hill Street, Croft. The site has suitability issues including ecology, heritage, air quality, dust, noise, vibration and land stability. Further investigation is required on these matters. (it is comprised of a small part of site CRO003 (see above) and is within the settlement boundary. It is currently subject to a planning application.

Croft has a population of 1,700 people and 750 households (2021 Census). Although classed as a medium village, it is relatively small settlement and less well served by local facilities than other medium villages and therefore it scores relatively poorly using the DFTs connectivity tool (between 31-37). This indicates that the settlement is relatively poorly connected to other services and facilities and therefore growth in this village is likely to be relatively unsustainable compared to other settlements in the District. Significant growth in this location would therefore conflict with the Council's vision and objectives to secure more sustainable travel opportunities. Given that around 100 homes are already committed in the village and these account for growth of around 14% over the plan period it is considered that this represents a sufficient level of growth. Moreover, a number of the submitted sites are already located in or partially within the settlement boundary of the village and so the principle of development on some of the discounted sites is already acceptable subject to issues of achievability or availability in the plan period being overcome. Therefore, there remains scope for growth beyond that already committed to 2042 in the absence of further allocations being made.

## Huncote

There are 7 sites promoted for residential development in Huncote. Of these two sites are allocated and will cumulatively deliver around 345 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
HUN013	Land south of Narborough Road	Allocated
HUN016	Land east of Huncote	Not Allocated

HUN017	Land west of Forest Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
HUN018	Chantry Close	<b>Not Allocated</b>
HUN019	Springfield Farm, Forest Road	<b>Allocated</b>
HUN020	38 St James Close	<b>Not Allocated</b>
HUN021	Land east of Forest Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>

The two sites which are proposed for allocation are HUN013, Land south of Harborough Road and HUN019 (Springfield Farm, Forest Road). HUN013 has some suitability issues, including flood risk fluvial and surface water), landfill, air quality, noise and vibration, whilst HUN019 is subject to suitability constraints related to previous local landfill uses nearby. However, these constraints have been considered as part of recent planning applications for the two sites. Both sites benefit from resolutions to grant permission (subject to legal agreements) and are likely to be committed before the plan is submitted. Together these two sites will make provision for around 345 homes to be delivered in the village to 2042 with provision likely in the early to middle part of the plan period reflecting the scale and nature of the sites.

Non-preferred sites in Huncote include:

- HUN016, Land east of Huncote. This site has significant suitability issues including landfill, surface water flood risk, air quality, noise and vibration. The Environment Agency have specifically highlighted concerns about landfill.
- HUN017 Land west of Forest Road, Huncote. This site has suitability issues in respect of landfill and surface water. Further investigation is required on these matters. There is a planning application submitted for housing development on this site.
- HUN018, Chantry Close, Huncote. This site has significant suitability issues including in respect of landfill, flood risk (fluvial and surface water), air quality, noise and vibration. Achievability is uncertain due to a lack of access to the highway.
- HUN020, 38 St James Close, Huncote. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), ecology, air quality, noise and vibration. Achievability is uncertain due to a lack of access to the highway.
- HUN021, Land East of Forest Road, Huncote. The site has suitability issues landfill and surface water. It is dislocated from the settlement edge and is out of scale with the settlement.

Huncote has a population of 2,200 people and 870 households (2021). There are already a significant number of homes which benefit from recommendations for approval in the village which have come forward under the 'tilted balance'. It is likely they will be approved before the Plan is submitted or adopted. Cumulatively both

sites would deliver around 345 additional homes in the Plan period and once complete these will see the village grow by around 16% by 2042. It is also worth noting that a further 'tilted balance' application on site HUN017 has been made to the Council. This application is for around 47 homes and if this is approved could see the village grow by a minimum of 18% over the plan period. Both scenarios would represent a significant level of growth.

It is noted that the settlement performs well in respect of accessibility, the Department of Transport's (DFT) Connectivity Tool indicates the village has a score of 44-50. It is therefore one of the most accessible villages within this tier of settlement meaning opportunities for delivering non car modes of travel will be more likely. However, given the significant level of growth likely to be committed before the plan is submitted/adopted, it is considered that the further allocation of homes in the plan period is unwarranted. The above text sets out specific issues in respect of individual sites. These mainly relate to sites being poorly related to the settlement edge, subject to access constraints, or subject to suitability issues such as proximity to landfill, flood risk or other environmental constraints. Notwithstanding these site specific issues the Council does not consider there is a need for the allocation of further sites this far down the settlement hierarchy given the number of homes already recommended for planning approval in Huncote. As noted previously the Council favours sites that can best contribute to its vision-led approach to sustainable transport and therefore supports on-site service provision and improvements to active and public transport provision.

## Littlethorpe

There are six sites promoted for residential development in Littlethorpe. One site is allocated and will deliver around 150 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
LIT003	40 Cosby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
LIT008	Land south of Tysoes Nursery, Cosby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
LIT009	Tysoes Nursery, 53 Cosby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
LIT022	Land south of Warwick Road / east of Cosby Road	<b>Allocated</b>
LIT023	Land off Oak Road	<b>Site has Planning Permission</b>
LIT024	Land west of Cosby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>

The site proposed for allocation is LIT022. Land south of Warwick Road / east of Cosby Road. The site is subject to some flood risk (fluvial and pluvial). However, it is subject to an outline planning application for 150 homes under the 'tilted balance' and it is likely that environmental constraints can be mitigated. As part of this scheme the Council is seeking a new active travel link between Cosby Road and Warwick Road to improve the attractiveness of a priority walking route (corridor 3) highlighted in the Council's Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

Non-preferred housing sites include:

- LIT003, 40 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe. The site has no identified suitability issues. However, availability and achievability is uncertain due to a lack of access to the highway or recent site promotion. The site already falls within the settlement boundary.
- LIT008, Land south of Tysoes Nursery and west of Cosby Road, Littlethorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including in respect of flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and aquifer which may make it unsuitable for development.
- LIT009, Tysoes Nursery, 53 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including in respect of flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and aquifer which may make it unsuitable for development.
- LIT023, Land of Oak Road. Site is committed and benefits from planning permission for 155 homes.
- LIT024, Land west of Cosby Road, Littlethorpe. The site has few suitability issues but there is flood risk (fluvial and surface water) on western boundary and aquifer. Note this is a smaller version of sites LIT008 and LIT009. There are sequentially preferable sites available in the village in respect of flood risk.

Littlethorpe has a population of 1,900 people and 870 households (2021). There are already a significant number of committed or near committed homes in the village (180) which have come forward under the 'tilted balance' and are likely to deliver early in the plan period. In addition, a further site for 150 homes is subject to an outline planning application to the east of the village. This is likely to be considered by Planning Committee in Summer 2026. Cumulatively committed sites and sites being progressed through the DM process could deliver around 330 additional homes. This could see growth in the village of around 35%. This is a very significant level of growth even given Littlethorpe is a relatively sustainable settlement, partly because of its access to Narborough village and its facilities to the north, and its access to the railway station which lies between Littlethorpe and Narborough.

Having reviewed the Department for Transport's (DFT) Connectivity Tool in this suggests the village has a connectivity score of 48-61. It is the most accessible village within this tier of settlement and in the view of officers, the relative sustainability of the village and its potential to support more sustainable travel modes justifies a relatively high level of growth. However, it is nonetheless accepted that Littlethorpe has been allocated proportionately more homes than other medium tier villages and further allocations beyond that south of Warwick Road are not warranted in the plan period.

### Sapcote

There are 11 sites promoted for residential development in Sapcote. Three sites are allocated and will cumulatively deliver around 160 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
SAP013	Land north of Hinckley Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP019	Land at Park Road	<b>Allocated with SAP035</b>
SAP024	Land north of Leicester Road	<b>Planning permission</b>
SAP025	Land south of Hinckley Road	<b>Allocated with SAP035</b>
SAP026	Lime Avenue, The Limes	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP028	Land north of Stanton Lane, Stoney Stanton	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP029	London Leys Farm, Sharnford Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP031	Nuttingore Farm, Stanton Lane	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP033	Land South of Hinckley Road	<b>Part Allocated with SAP035</b>

SAP034	Land West of Sharnford Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
SAP035	Land off Hinckley Road / Park Road	<b>Allocated</b>

There are 11 sites promoted for residential development in Sapcote. Of these four sites are allocated, albeit sites SAP019, SAP025, SAP033 and SAP035 have been combined to make a single site. The selected sites form part of an allocation for around 160 homes on land to the south the Hinckley Road. The site has significant suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity and heritage. The site is subject to a well-advanced detailed planning application under the 'tilted balance' by a large housing developer and will contribute to the early of delivery of homes within the plan period.

Non-preferred housing sites in Sapcote include:

- SAP013, Land north of Hinckley Road, Sapcote. This site has suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk and heritage.
- SAP024, Land north of Leicester Road, Sapcote. This site has outline planning permission for 80 homes and is committed.
- SAP026, Lime Avenue, The Limes, Sapcote. The site has significant suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity (mitigation for previous site) and heritage. The site lies within the settlement boundary.
- SAP028, Land north of Stanton Lane, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote, the site is subject to no identified constraints. Site is considered as part of larger Land West of Stoney Stanton Site (STO026).
- SAP029, London Leys Farm, Sharnford Road, Sapcote. The site has some suitability issues, including surface water flood risk, landfill and heritage. The SSR indicates that these issues can likely be mitigated and this site was considered as a possible allocation in the Council's high growth housing option.
- SAP031, Nuttingore Farm, Stanton Lane, Sapcote. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, biodiversity and heritage. Achievability may be affected by infrastructure requirements of Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026). Site is detached from the settlement edge.
- SAP033, Land South of Hinckley Road, Sapcote. This site is part allocated as SAP035. The remainder of the site is out of scale with the settlement and achievability potentially challenging due to a lack of appropriate highways access.
- SAP034, Land West of Sharnford Road, Sapcote. This site has suitability issues in respect of surface water flood risk, ecology and heritage. There is a planning application submitted for housing on part of this site.

Sapcote has a population of around 3,300 people and 1,400 households (2021). There are already a significant number of committed homes in the village (around 100) including 80 on Land North of Leicester Road, which has come forward as a 'tilted balance' application site and as such is likely to deliver new homes early in the plan period. In addition, the proposed allocation site is subject to a detailed planning application for around 170 homes. It is also worth noting a further application for around 50 homes has been submitted on part of SAP034, although this is not a site preferred by the Council for allocation in the Plan. It is likely that given the sites submitted to the Council as planning applications combined with existing commitments, by the time the plan is submitted up to around 330 homes could be committed. This could lead to the village growing by around 24% without any further allocations being made.

In respect of local accessibility, DfT's connectivity tool indicates that this village performs relatively poorly in connectivity terms achieving a score of 34-42. However, the Council is seeking to deliver its preferred allocation because it considers it offers opportunities to improve active travel links between existing housing to the west of the village where accessibility is poorest and provide enhanced active travel infrastructure and connectivity to the centre of the village including the school and public open space.

The above text out sets out specific issues in respect of individual sites. Some of these form part of a wider strategic allocation on Land West of Stoney Stanton. Others are subject to environmental or access issues or are poorly related to the settlement edge. Notwithstanding these site specific considerations, the Council does not consider there is a need for the allocation of further sites this far down the settlement hierarchy given the number of homes already recommended for planning approval in Sapcote and its position in the settlement hierarchy, especially since the village performs relatively poorly in respect of connectivity and accessibility as indicated by the DfT connectivity tool.

## Stoney Stanton

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
STO002	Land at Boundary Farm (smaller site), Stanton Lane	Allocated (Part of STO026)
STO009	Land west of Huncote Road	Allocated
STO016	Land south of Hinckley Road	Allocated (Part of STO026)
STO019	Land at junction of Huncote Road and Calor Gas access road	Allocated (Part of STO026)
STO023	Land off Middleton Close	Not Allocated
STO024	Land north of Broughton Road	Not Allocated
STO025	Land south of Broughton Road	Allocated (Part of STO026)
STO026	Land West of Stoney Stanton	See Strategic Sites Section
STO028	Boundary Farm, Stanton Lane	Not Allocated

There are nine sites promoted for residential development in Stoney Stanton. Of these 5 sites are allocated, although only one would fall within the village itself. The site proposed for allocation is STO009, Land west of Huncote Road. This site is noted as having suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage although it is considered that these can likely be overcome. This is a relatively small site and will allow some limited growth within this village early in the plan period.

Sites not preferred by the Council in Stoney Stanton include:

- STO002, Land at Boundary Farm (smaller site), Stanton Lane, Stoney Stanton. This site is identified as having suitability issues including in respect of surface water flood risk and heritage. Site is considered and allocated as part of Land West of Stoney Stanton.
- STO016, Land south of Hinckley Road, Stoney Stanton. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage. The SSR indicates that constraints can be likely mitigated. Site is considered as part of Land West of Stoney Stanton.
- STO019, Land at junction of Huncote Road and Calor Gas access road, Stoney Stanton. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and noise. Achievability is affected by the Calor Gas Hazard Consultation Zone and unclear site access. It is also part of site STO026.
- STO023, Land off Middleton Close, Stoney Stanton. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water)

biodiversity and heritage although the SSR indicates these issues may be capable of mitigation. Achievability is uncertain as site access may require third party land.

- STO024, Land north of Broughton Road, Stoney Stanton. The site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and heritage. It is detached from the settlement boundary.
- STO025, Land south of Broughton Road, Stoney Stanton. The site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and landfill although the selection report indicates these are likely to be capable of mitigation. The site is considered as part of Land West of Stoney Stanton.
- STO026, Land West of Stoney Stanton, Stoney Stanton – Housing and Mixed Use. The site has some suitability issues, including surface water flood risk, noise, air quality, ecology, and heritage, requiring further investigation. Achievability is affected by the need for strategic infrastructure to support the development of the site. (This site is discussed further in the Strategic Sites section).
- STO028, Boundary Farm, Stanton Lane, Stoney Stanton. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk although the selection report indicates these are likely to be capable of mitigation. Site is considered as part of Land West of Stoney Stanton.

Stoney Stanton has a population of around 4,600 people and 1,900 households (2021). Despite being the largest medium village it is the second least connected village in this tier according to DfT Connectivity Tool reflecting the relatively poor relationship with local services and facilities. The Council proposes to allocate just a single standalone site for 37 homes in the village. Together with existing commitments this could deliver a further 50 homes over the plan period. This site is being promoted by a home builder and is likely to be submitted as an application in Spring 2026 we would expect this site to deliver homes during the early part of the plan period to support the Council's land supply position in the near term.

The reason we are proposing such limited growth is a strategic site (Land West of Stoney Stanton) is also proposed in close proximity to this settlement, this will be a very large scale site which will help address housing needs in Stoney Stanton generally, but will also help to improve the general accessibility to nearby facilities so long as appropriate connections to the existing settlements of Sapcote and Stoney Stanton can be secured. Considering the Council's preference to allocate a strategic site as Land West of Stoney Stanton further standalone sites within or immediately adjoining the village are not proposed.

### **General comments on Medium Villages**

The medium villages account for around 16% of the District's population with approximately 17,200 people living in the six villages that fall within this tier of the settlement Hierarchy.

A significant number of development sites are already committed, near committed or subject to well-advanced planning applications in the six villages amounting to over 1,500 new homes. This means even in the absence of a Plan around 14% of the Council's total housing requirement (based on the whole plan requirement which includes some provision of unmet need for Leicester City) or around 16% based on Blaby District Council's own Standard Method Housing need will be met in this tier of villages. It is not considered necessary to have this tier of settlement accommodate more than its fair share of growth given the scale and nature of sites.

Although these villages meet the minimum requirements to be considered sustainable and accessible, the small scale of sites promoted adjoining them are unlikely to facilitate trip internalisation or modal shift in a significant way, especially when compared to sites in the PUA or larger villages. Residents will therefore likely be more car dependent to access local services. It is thus considered that these sites are less likely to meet the Council's wider vision and objectives in respect of securing sustainable travel choice and reducing the need to travel.

The Council is therefore not minded to allocate further sites in this tier of the settlement hierarchy instead relying on those sites which are committed or near committed to meet local needs and contribute to housing delivery. However, where sites do not already benefit from planning permission, we have sought to draft policies for inclusion in the plan to help articulate the Council's expectations including in respect of transport issues and also to ensure that these sites can still come forward should permissions lapse. Wherever possible we have sought to set out specific requirements to improve local opportunities for walking, cycling and wheeling.

Whilst it is acknowledged that in transport terms, 'smaller sites' in the medium villages will not be able to deliver opportunities to secure modal shift or reduce trip generation, it is recognised that these sites are not without wider sustainability benefits. They are often promoted by home builders who can quickly build out these sites contributing to the early delivery of homes and supporting the Council's land supply early in the plan period. They also provide smaller sites, distributed across the district and so support housing choice. They are also able to make use of local infrastructure capacity where this exists (for example where schools have spare capacity) and can support existing local services.

## Housing Sites within the Smaller Villages

There are four smaller villages in Blaby District. These are Elmsthorpe, Kilby, Sharnford, Thurlaston. In total around 2,910 people lived in these settlements in 2021 accounting for around 2.8% of the District's population. Across these 4 villages a total of 21 sites have been promoted to the Council through the SHELAA.

These villages are relatively unsustainable as indicated by the DfT's connectivity tool. Moreover, large sites are often out of scale with the settlements they relate to, or too small to make any meaningful contribution to sustainable travel or deliver on site local facilities. The Council has therefore sought to limit allocations in this tier of the settlement hierarchy. However, it is likely that further growth will occur in the plan period in these settlements as windfalls.

### Elmsthorpe

There are 5 sites promoted for residential development in Elmsthorpe. One site is allocated and will deliver around 10 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
ELM001	Land north of The Home Farm	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELM008	Land north of the railway line	<b>Not Allocated (See strategic Sites Section)</b>
ELM009	Land at 24 Billington Road East	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELM010	Station Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELM011	Church Farm, 44 Station Road	<b>Allocated</b>

A single site has been allocated in Elmsthorpe. This is site ELM011, Church Farm, Station Road. This is a small site which can help deliver locally scaled development which in the view of the Council is proportionate to the scale and nature of the existing village. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, heritage and noise, however recent planning applications on part of the site indicate that these can be likely overcome.

Non-preferred sites include:

- ELM001, Land north of The Home Farm, Elmesthorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and noise. Achievability is affected uncertainty a site access affected by flood risk and / or railway crossing. The site has capacity to accommodate around 350 dwellings and would be out of scale with the settlement.

- ELM008, Land north of the railway line, Elmesthorpe, Elmesthorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity, heritage and noise. The site has capacity to accommodate around 1,100 dwellings. It is considered further in the Strategic Sites section.
- ELM009, Land at 24 Billington Road East, Elmesthorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water) and biodiversity. This is a 3ha site with an identified capacity of around 49 dwellings and is detached from the settlement boundary.
- ELM010, Station Road, Elmesthorpe. The site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity and noise. This site is detached from the settlement boundary and could accommodate around 135 homes.

Elmesthorpe is a small village comprised of around 300 homes or 760 people. It performs poorly in respect of accessibility and typically scores 32-55. However, the western part of the village is well related to Earl Shilton and the preferred site scores around 50-55.

Given the small scale of Elmesthorpe and its position in the settlement hierarchy and reflecting on the relative lack of facilities in the village the Council is seeking to restrict development to a scale appropriate to its size. The alternative sites proposed are considered to be out of scale with the settlement and / or more environmentally constrained.

## Kilby

There are 3 sites promoted for residential development in Kilby, one site is allocated and will deliver around 25-30 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
KIL002	Steeple Chase Farm, Main Street	Allocated
KIL006	Land south of Chapel Close and Main Street	Not Allocated
KIL008	Land rear of 40 Main Street	Not Allocated

A single site has been allocated in Kilby. This is site KIL002, Steeple Chase Farm, Main Street. This is a small site which can help deliver locally scaled development which in the view of the Council is proportionate to the scale and nature of the existing village. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage. However, it is likely these can be mitigated and the site is capable of development within the Plan period.

Non-preferred sites include:

- KIL006, Land to the south of Chapel Close and Main Street, Kilby. The Council's site selection assessment notes that the site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water including at village access points) and noise. Achievability is uncertain due to unclear site access and lack of information on deliverability.
- KIL008, Land rear of 40 Main Street, Kilby. The site has suitability issues including flood risk at village access points, and heritage. Achievability is uncertain due to unclear site access and lack of information on deliverability.

Kilby is a very small village comprised of around 120 homes or 290 people. It performs poorly in respect of accessibility and typically scores 29-33 in respect of DfTs Connectivity Tool.

Given the small scale of Kilby and its position in the settlement hierarchy and reflecting on the relative lack of facilities in the village the Council is seeking to restrict development to a scale appropriate to its position in the settlement hierarchy. The alternative sites proposed are likely to be more constrained and may not be deliverable within the plan period due to access constraints.

### Sharnford

There are 3 sites promoted for residential development in Sharnford. One site is allocated and will deliver around 25-30 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
SHA008	Land west of Coventry Road	Allocated
SHA009	Leicester Road	Not Allocated
SHA010	Land off Mill Lane	Not Allocated

A single site has been allocated in Sharnford. This is site SHA008, Land West of Coventry Road. This is a small site which can help deliver locally scaled development which in the view of the Council is proportionate to the scale and nature of the existing village. The site has suitability issues including surface water and fluvial flood risk, landfill / land contamination, ecology and heritage. However, it is likely these can be mitigated and the site is capable of development within the Plan period. This site is subject to a planning application for 19 homes and has a resolution from the Council's Planning Committee to grant permission.

Non-preferred sites include:

- SHA009, Leicester Road, Sharnford. The site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), ecology and heritage. Achievability is dependent on suitable site access.

- SHA010, Land off Mill Lane, Sharnford. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and biodiversity. However, it is a large (c. 207 dwellings) and is out of scale with the existing settlement.

Sharnford is a small village comprised of around 470 homes or 1100 people. It performs poorly in respect of accessibility and typically scores 21-31. The DfTs Connectivity Tool indicates that it is the most poorly performing settlement in respect of accessibility despite being the largest of the smaller villages.

Given the small scale and relative lack of facilities in the village the Council is seeking to restrict development to a scale appropriate to its position in the settlement hierarchy. The alternative sites in the village are subject to suitability and achievability issues and or of a scale out of proportion with the size of the settlement. The Council is therefore not seeking to allocate any further sites other than its preferred site which already benefits from a resolution to grant planning permission.

### Thurlaston

There are ten sites promoted for residential development in Thurlaston. Two sites are allocated for housing and will deliver around 45 homes.

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
THU003	Land at Croft Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU004	Nursery, Hill View Nurseries	<b>Allocated</b>
THU005	Land east of Croft Road	<b>Allocated</b>
THU006	Moat Close	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU007	Land east of Tyers Close	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU008	Land south of Earl Shilton Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU009	Land north of Thurlaston Lane	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU010	Land north of Enderby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU011	Thurlaston Sawmill	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU012	Thurlaston Lodge Farm	<b>Not Allocated</b>

Two sites have been allocated for development in Thurlaston. These are sites THU004, Nursery, Hill View Nurseries and THU005, Land east of Croft Road. Together these two sites could deliver around 45 dwellings. THU004 is identified as having suitability issues including surface water flood risk. Achievability is uncertain due to site's current use as a garden centre. Site THU005 is subject to some surface

water flood risk. It is likely that potential site suitability issues can be appropriately mitigated.

Non-preferred sites include:

- THU003, Land at Croft Road, Thurlaston. This site has no identified suitability issues, although achievability is uncertain due to narrow site access.
- THU006, Moat Close, Thurlaston. This site has no identified suitability issues although it is designated as a local green space in the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan and therefore not considered suitable for allocation.
- THU007, Land east of Tyers Close, Thurlaston. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and biodiversity. Achievability is uncertain due to unclear site access.
- THU008, Land south of Earl Shilton Road, Thurlaston. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk. Achievability is uncertain due to lack of site promotion information.
- THU009, Land north of Thurlaston Lane, Thurlaston. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and noise/air quality. Achievability may be affected by the site being in two parts separated by the A47. The site is dislocated from the edge of a settlement located in an adjoining district and dislocated from the settlement edge.
- THU010, Land north of Enderby Road, Thurlaston. This site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity and heritage. This is a large site and considered further in the Strategic Sites section of this commentary.
- THU011, Thurlaston Sawmill, Thurlaston. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk. Achievability is uncertain due preferred use for employment.
- THU012, Thurlaston Lodge Farm, Thurlaston. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, noise and air quality. This is a large site and considered further in the Strategic Sites section of this commentary.

Thurlaston is a small village comprised of around 330 homes or 760 people. It performs poorly in respect of accessibility and typically scores 29-33 in DfT's Connectivity Tool.

Reflecting on its location in the settlement hierarchy and the relative lack of facilities in the village the Council is seeking to restrict development to a level that reflects the small scale of the village. The alternative sites proposed are considered to be out of scale with the settlement, more environmentally constrained, or subject to deliverability issues which could prevent sites coming forward. Development to the south of the village is also considered to minimise the impact on the rural character of the village by allowing the reuse of an existing site in commercial use and the delivery of a site which is already surrounded on two sides by built development.

## Strategic Sites

There are five strategic sites which have promoted to the Council as being capable of delivering large scale, standalone settlements these are as follows. A further Strategic Site (Hospital Lane) is considered in detail within the Larger Villages owing to its proximity and relationship with Blaby Village:

Site Ref	Site Name	Allocated
ELM008	Land north of the railway line, Elmesthorpe,	<b>Not Allocated</b>
STO026	Land West of Stoney Stanton	<b>Allocated</b>
THU010	Land north of Enderby Road, Thurlaston.	<b>Not Allocated</b>
THU012	Thurlaston Lodge Farm, Thurlaston.	<b>Not Allocated</b>
WHE027	Whetstone Pastures, Whetstone	<b>Allocated</b>

The Council favours the allocation of two of the large-scale strategic sites promoted through the SHELAA. These are Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026) and Whetstone Pastures (WHE027).

Land West of Stoney Stanton has some suitability issues, including surface water flood risk, noise, air quality, ecology, and heritage, requiring further investigation. Achievability is affected by the need for strategic infrastructure to support the development of the site.

The site itself is being promoted for a mixed-use development of up to 5,000 homes together with commercial development in addition to district/local centres, small supermarket, primary schools, a secondary school, doctor's surgery and other community facilities. Subject to ensuring these new facilities and services are well planned and new active travel provision is delivered to link facilities together and new housing and provision is also made for public transport; this site could make a meaningful contribution towards delivering a new sustainable settlement. It could also ensure that new growth meets the Local Plan's vision and objectives of delivering sustainable transport choice. Moreover, development at this scale could also help to deliver local and strategic infrastructure as part of the site which would benefit residents across the wider district.

Land at Whetstone Pastures is being promoted as a 'Garden Village'. The site has some suitability issues including flood risk and high-pressure gas pipeline, noise, air quality, ecology and heritage requiring further investigation. The achievability is affected due to strategic infrastructure and high-pressure gas pipeline. However, this

is a large site and it is likely that any constraints could be appropriately mitigated through design and layout.

The site itself is being promoted for a mixed-use development of up to 4,500 homes together with commercial development in addition to other facilities including district/local centres, small supermarket, a secondary school, primary schools, doctor's surgery and other community facilities. Subject to ensuring these new facilities and services are well planned and new active travel provision is delivered to link destinations together and connect to new homes, and ensure provision is made for public transport; this site could make a meaningful contribution towards delivering a new sustainable settlement and ensuring that new growth meets the plan's vision and objectives of delivering sustainable transport choice. Moreover, development at this scale could also help to deliver local and strategic infrastructure as part of the site which would benefit of residents across the wider district.

It is recognised that given the scale and complexity of both sites they are unlikely to deliver new homes until towards the end of the plan period. However, the designation of larger sites will provide significant new homes during the last 5 years of the plan and can contribute to ensuring there is certainty regarding the long-term direction of growth in the District.

Three strategic sites have not been allocated in the Plan. Non-Preferred sites include:

- ELM008. Land north of the railway line, Elmhurst.
- THU010. Land north of Enderby Road, Thurlaston.
- THU012. Thurlaston Lodge Farm, Thurlaston.

ELM008, Land north of the railway line, Elmhurst. This a heavily constrained site subject to flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity, heritage and noise issues and it is likely that the number of homes which can be accommodated on site will be notably less than 1,100 indicated. In any case, even assuming it can accommodate this number of homes, this is not a large enough number of homes to provide the broad mix of facilities proposed on the two preferred sites. It is therefore likely that residents would need to access some facilities such as employment, education and health facilities off site. This could increase private car trips given the isolated nature of this site. It is therefore not considered to perform as well as the larger preferred sites in respect of Council's vision and objectives to secure trip internalisation and modal shift.

THU010, Land north of Enderby Road, Thurlaston. This site is subject to flood risk as well as heritage and biodiversity constraints. It could accommodate around 1,900 homes. However, this is still significantly smaller than the Council's two preferred strategic sites and like ELM008 is not considered large enough to provide the broad mix of facilities and services on site. It is unlikely that it would be large enough to sustain secondary school provision or a doctor's surgery. Given its rural and relatively isolated location it would likely lead to a notable increase in private car use which would be difficult to mitigate given the site's isolated location.

THU012, Thurlaston Lodge Farm, Thurlaston. This site is subject to flood risk, noise and air quality constraints. It could accommodate around 1,140 homes. This is significantly smaller than the Council's two preferred strategic sites and is not considered large enough to provide the broad mix of facilities and services on site to facilitate the significant levels of trip internalisation or modal shift which could be secured on a much larger site such as those preferred by the Council.

### Commercial/ Employment Sites

In total there were 14 Employment Sites and 10 Mixed Used Sites submitted to the Council

<b>Commercial only sites</b>		
CRO002	Croft Quarry	<b>Not Allocated</b>
EAST001	Land West of Junction M69 Aston Flamville	<b>Allocated as Part of STO026</b>
EBLA002	Land off Lutterworth Road	<b>Allocated for Housing</b>
EBLA003	Land off A426	<b>Allocated For Housing</b>
EBLA004	Parsons Spinney Glebe Farm	<b>Part Allocated for Housing</b>
ECOS001	Cosby Hill	<b>Allocated</b>
EKMU001	Blood Hill South	<b>Not Allocated</b>
EKMU002	Land south of Desford Hall	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELMO001	Land North of Junction 2 M69 (Elmsthorpe)	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELUB002	Narborough Wood Park	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ESTO001	Highfields Farm	Planning Permission
EWHE001	Land off Enderby Road	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ESHA001	Aston Lane Sharnford	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ETHU001	Thurlaston Sawmill	Planning Permission
<b>Mixed Use Sites</b>		
BLA034	Hospital Lane	<b>Not Allocated</b>
ELM008	North of Railway Line Elmsthorpe	<b>Not Allocated</b>
END009	Quarry Lane Enderby	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GLE031	Western Park Golfcourse	<b>Not Allocated</b>
GLE032	Land North of Glenfield	<b>Allocated</b>
KMU026	Land at Bloods Hill South Kirby Muxloe	<b>Not Allocated</b>
STO026	Land West of Stoney Stanton	<b>Allocated</b>
WHE027	Whetstone Pastures	<b>Allocated</b>
WHE031	Land South of Whetstone	<b>Allocated</b>

The Council has identified four Local Employment Sites. Of these, one site is allocated solely for commercial purposes. This is land North of Glenfield (GLE032). Land North of Glenfield is identified in the SSR as having suitability issues including in respect of flood risk, land contamination and heritage. There are also potential access issues as a new access route would require the demolition of an existing industrial unit. The site was previously promoted for mixed use development but during consideration of the site and discussions with stakeholders concerns regarding access for large scale residential development were raised and as a result the site now covers a smaller land parcel of around 20ha and is allocated solely for commercial development.

The site lies to the immediate north of the existing Mill Lane Industrial Estate and as it is in Glenfield, forms part of the Principal Urban Area. The proposals adjoin a national cycle route connecting into the City and is located close to bus stops with real time information boards on Kirby Road which is also served by a shared footway/cycleway. However, Mill Lane is comprised of a wide access road with no footway or cycleway provision. Further development could enable improvements to this road to reduce pedestrian/cyclist conflicts with motorised vehicles including HGVs and will perform well against the Council's vision and objectives to improve opportunities for walking and cycling. Moreover, the site is located in the highest tier of the settlement hierarchy in a sustainable location and Glenfield performs well in respect of connectivity achieving a typical score of 55-65 in DfTs Connectivity Tool. Around half of the Council's local employment land provision will be accommodated by this site.

Other local employment sites will be located on large mixed-use housing sites. Two commercial sites will be located in the new sustainable settlements of Land West of Stoney Stanton (STO026) and Whetstone Pastures (WHE027). In order to deliver walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods where a range of facilities are 'connected together' and increase opportunities for trip internalisation the Council is seeking to deliver a number of larger scale communities supported by a range of uses. It is considered such an approach fits well with the plan vision and objectives including providing new homes and businesses of high-quality design and co-located with a compact mix of uses accessible by active travel and public transport; reducing the need to travel by car, the distance travelled, and increase the use of non-car modes to access jobs, key services and facilities and support the creation of resilient, active, safe, healthy and inclusive communities where people want to live, work and visit.

The final preferred local employment site is located in Whetstone as part of a mixed-use development for around 800 homes. The proposed allocation on this site is relatively modest, however it reflects the character of Whetstone's industrial heritage. Only 3ha of commercial space is proposed on this site, but like the large strategic sites set out above, a mixed-use development on this site would conform with the Plans vision and objectives for delivering a mix of uses on sites. It is also considered that commercial buildings could be located close to the M1 motorway which defines the western boundary of the site and could contribute to noise attenuation.

Whetstone is a larger villager and scores relatively well against DfTs Connectivity Tool with most of the village falling between 56-64 suggesting it is relatively sustainable.

Not Preferred wholly commercial sites:

- CRO002, Croft Quarry. This is a previously developed site. It has suitability issues including biodiversity, flood risk. The achievability of the site is linked to the ongoing use of the quarry.
- EBLA002, Land off Lutterworth Road. This site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk requiring further investigation. However, the site isn't available for commercial development as it is proposed to allocate it for housing development.
- EBLA003, Land off A426. This site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk requiring further investigation. However, this site is not available for commercial use as it is allocated for housing development.
- EBLA004, Parsons Spinney. The site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk. It is subject to site access constraints.
- EKMU001, Blood Hill South. This site has significant suitability issues including heritage, flood risk and biodiversity constraints. However, this site is now being promoted for housing, and it is also understood that a planning application is imminent. The site is owned by a major housebuilder.
- EKMU002, Land south of Desford Hall. This site has suitability issues in respect of surface water flood risk and heritage issues. The site is detached from the settlement.
- ELMO001, Land North of Junction 2 M69 (Elmsthorpe). The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk and ecology. The site is outside and detached from the settlement boundary of Elmesthorpe, a Smaller Village, the fourth tier in the hierarchy. The site is out of scale with surrounding settlements and local employment land needs. It was previously considered for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange through a development consent order (DCO) although this was refused consent due to likely impacts on the local and strategic road network.
- ELUB002, Narborough Wood Park. This site has some suitability issues including surface water flood risk and heritage as well as site access issues. The availability of the site is uncertain due to proposals for housing use on the site.
- ESTO001, Highfields Farm. This site has planning permission and is committed for employment uses.
- EWHE001, Land off Enderby Road. This site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk, heritage and ecology. An application for a 100% affordable housing scheme was refused due to serious harm to Whetstone Grange (heritage asset) in 2016 and dismissed at appeal. An application for commercial development was also refused by the Council in 2024 on heritage and biodiversity grounds.

- ESHA001, Aston Lane Sharnford. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk. The site adjoins Sharnford (a smaller village) but is out of scale with the settlement.
- ETHU001, Thurlaston Sawmill. The site has suitability issues including surface water flood risk. This site has planning permission and is committed for employment uses.

#### Not Preferred mixed use commercial sites:

- BLA034, Hospital Lane. The site has suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), landfill / land contamination, biodiversity, and heritage. The Council considers that this area would need to be comprehensively planned and other sites surrounding BLA034 are promoted for housing only. The Council has not preferred this site for housing for the reasons set out previously. Achievability and suitability for employment land is uncertain in the plan period.
- ELM008, North of Railway Line Elmsthorpe. This site has significant suitability issues including flood risk (fluvial and surface water), biodiversity, heritage and noise. The site is remote from the settlement and is out of scale with the position of Elmsthorpe in the settlement hierarchy.
- END009, Quarry Lane, Enderby. The site has some suitability issues for housing uses including surface water flood risk, landfill and ecology. Achievability is significantly affected by the former use of the site as landfill. Site is comprised of priority habitat (comprising of open mosaic habitat). It is unclear whether this site is likely to be deliverable or viable given recent BNG requirements and its likely ecological value and the historic use as a landfill. Moreover, the site is within the settlement boundary of Enderby and was historically allocated for employment use in the 1999 Blaby Local Plan but did not come forward for development. This history highlights uncertainty regarding site delivery.
- GLE031, Western Park former Golf Course. The site has suitability - biodiversity value and related achievability viability concerns. As set out in the housing section.
- KMU026, Bloods Hill (South). See EKMU001, above

### General Comments on Employment Sites

Around half of the proposed employment land will be located within the PUA. Most of the remaining provision is directed to the proposed new settlements of Land West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures.

The Council has sought to prioritise commercial allocations on sites higher up the settlement hierarchy, or include new land as part of large-scale new communities to support the creation co-located and compact mixed-use communities accessible by active travel and public transport modes.

AECOM Limited  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (161) 907 3500  
[aecom.com](http://aecom.com)