

**Blaby District Council  
Council**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	30 June 2026
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Blaby District Local Plan (Proposed Submission Version): Regulation 19 Publication</b>
	This is not a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan
<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Cllr. Mike Shirley – Planning, Strategic Growth and Environment</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Development Strategy Manager
<b>Strategic Themes</b>	All Themes: Enabling communities and supporting vulnerable residents; Enhancing and maintaining our natural and built environment; Growing and supporting our economy; Keeping you safe and healthy; Ambitious and well managed Council, valuing our people

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 To present the Blaby District Local Plan (Proposed Submission Version) to Council and seek approval that it can be published under Regulation 19, to seek representations.

**2. Recommendation(s) to Council**

- 2.1 Agree the contents of the draft Statement of Consultation (Appendix A)
- 2.2 The Proposed Submission Local Plan at Appendix B and associated papers be approved for publication under Regulation 19 TCP(LP)(England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Planning, Strategic Growth and Environment Portfolio Holder to make any minor factual or presentational changes prior to publication.

**3. Reason for Decisions Recommended**

- 3.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce Local Plans. The Local Plan, once adopted, will be part of the Development Plan for the District of Blaby. The Plan has to be prepared in accordance with the Town and

Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

- 3.2 In order to progress the Local Plan to Submission by 31 December 2026 and Examination in Public thereafter in accordance with the programme set out within the Local Development Scheme and Government deadline as set out under the Levelling Up Act and Regulations. This includes the publication of the Local Plan under Regulation 19. Minor amendments may be required prior to publication and as such delegated authority to make such changes is required.
- 3.3 To progress to Local Plan adoption and regain Plan led decision making and a 5 year housing land supply position.

#### **4. Matters to consider**

##### **4.1 Background**

A Local Plan sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where. Adopted Local Plans provide the framework for development across England. Having an up-to-date plan in place is essential to guide development in the District and provide clarity to communities, partners and the development industry in terms of decision making.

The Government has been clear that it expects every Local Planning Authority in England to have an adopted and 'up-to-date' Local Plan in place. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Plans should be reviewed at least every five years to determine whether they require updating and, if so, then be updated as necessary. The Council's Local Plan comprising the Core Strategy (adopted 2013) and Delivery DPD (adopted 2019) are both more than 5 years post adoption. This means that the Council cannot normally apply full weight to the policies within the development plan when making decisions on planning applications. The Local Plan, once adopted will supersede the Core Strategy and Delivery DPD in their entirety.

An adopted Local Plan reestablishes a 5 year housing land supply position through the allocation of development sites, restoring plan led decision making.

Approval of publication of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19), (referred to as the Local Plan in the rest of this report) is necessary in order for Blaby District to progress the Local Plan to submission and subsequent adoption of the Local Plan.

The updated Local Development Scheme was approved by Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026. This document contains the work programme of the Local Plan production and identifies the key milestones, including Submission by 31

December 2026, as required by Government through regulations under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

If the Local Plan is not submitted to Government for Examination by 31 December, Blaby District Council will be subjected to the new plan making system and would in effect have to restart the process.

### **Blaby Local Plan**

Work began on the new Blaby Local Plan in June 2019, following approval from Council. This is referred to as the Regulation 18 consultation.

Issues and Options, published for consultation in 2019

This document considered a range of planning related issues and potential options. It focused on the overarching strategic matters rather than site specific issues.

New Local Plan Options, published for consultation 2021

This focused on four key areas; options for the location of future development which set out the direction that the Council expected to take; All reasonable site options which were sites promoted to the Council for development by landowners, developers and site promoters; the emerging strategic objectives; and initial information on policies in the Local Plan.

The Draft Statement of Consultation (Appendix A) sets out, for each of the Regulation 18 consultations, how the consultation was undertaken, who responded, and the key issues raised in the feedback. Officers have reviewed all comments received during the consultations and have taken these into account in preparing the Proposed Submission Local Plan. For the 2019 consultation, a total of 98 consultees responded to the 27 questions and for the second, a total of 871 consultees responded to the 32 questions asked in the consultation.

### **Proposed Submission Local Plan**

The proposed submission draft Local Plan is contained at Appendix B to this report. The Local Plan period is 2025 to 2042. The chapters and policies in the Local Plan align with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Local Plan is formed of the following chapters:

- 1 – Introduction
- 2 - Spatial Portrait, Vision & Objectives
- 3 - Spatial Strategy
- 4 - Climate Change & Flooding
- 5 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural & Built Environment
- 6 - Housing
- 7 - Health and Well-being
- 8 - Employment
- 9 - Retail, Leisure & Tourism
- 10 - Transport, Local Services and Infrastructure
- 11 – Implementation and Monitoring

Appendices:  
Housing Trajectory  
Employment Trajectory  
Open Space Provision Tables  
Monitoring Framework  
Glossary of Terms  
Lists of Policies Replaced by this Local Plan  
Maps

The Local Plan is to be read as a whole document. In total there are 74 policies, each with a specific role in directing and supporting development and protecting areas and development constraint within the district. There are a mix of strategic and non-strategic policies which are clearly set out within the Local Plan. The Strategic policies are as follows:

Policy S1: Location and Growth Strategy – sets the plan period, settlement hierarchy, the number of homes planned and the amount of employment development to be delivered.

Policy S2: Strategy for Housing – sets the strategy for the delivery of the new homes and where within the settlement hierarchy they will be delivered.

Policy S3: Strategy for a Prosperous Economy – sets the strategy for a strong and prosperous economy in line with the Council Economic Development Framework. This includes the retention and enhancement of key employment sites. It also sets out the delivery of new employment land.

Policy S4: Site Allocations for Housing – lists all of the proposed housing allocations and the number of homes to be delivered on each.

Policy S5: Site Allocations for Local and Strategic Employment Uses – sets out the site allocations to meet the local employment need and safeguarding strategic employment, as part of the strategic allocations.

Policy S6: Comprehensive Development and Masterplanning of Strategic Sites – details the comprehensive masterplanned delivery of the strategic sites.

#### Strategic site allocations

Policy S7: Strategic Development Sites – Land West of Stoney Stanton – strategic allocation of three new neighbourhoods for 5165 new homes, 965 to be delivered within the plan period, including provision of local employment land, community infrastructure, mobility hub, open space, gypsy and traveller provision, older persons accommodation, affordable housing, three primary schools, one of which within the plan period, and a secondary school. Safeguarded land for strategic warehousing to be delivered beyond the plan period.

Policy S8: Strategic Development Sites – Whetstone Pastures - 4500 new homes, 800 to be delivered within the plan period, including provision of local employment land, community infrastructure, mobility hub, open space, gypsy and traveller provision, older persons accommodation, affordable housing, self and custom build, two primary schools (one beyond the end of the plan period) and a secondary school. Safeguarded land for strategic warehousing to be delivered beyond the plan period.

Policy S9: Land to the North of the A47 Hinckley Road, Kirby Muxloe Strategic Site [Hastings Fields Phase 2] – 650 new homes, 510 to be delivered in the plan period, affordable homes, including new community facilities, local centre, mobility hub and open space.

Policy S10: Land West of Beggars Lane, Lubbesthorpe Strategic Site – strategic extension to New Lubbesthorpe, 825 new homes, provision of a new primary school, mobility hub and local centre.

Policy S11: Land at Carlton Park, Narborough Strategic Site – 560 new homes, local employment, mobility hub, affordable housing, local centre and open space.

Policy S12: Land South of Whetstone Strategic Site – 760 new homes, local employment land, affordable housing, mobility hub, open space, local centre and land safeguarded for a new primary school.

#### Other key strategic policies

Policy S13: Strategy for Retail and Leisure and Network of Centres – sets the positive approach to planning for retail, town centre and leisure uses by protecting existing centres within the district and supporting managed growth at the Motorway Retail Area, Meridan Leisure and leisure at Everards Meadows.

Policy S14: Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show Persons – broad locations and criteria-based policy to be used in the decision making of planning applications in the development management process.

Policy S15: Design and Place-making – sets the design strategy for future growth in the district with a positive criteria based policy and design principles. Requires production of a Design Supplementary Plan and Design Codes.

Policy S16: Green Wedges – identification and protection of Green Wedges within the district.

Policy S17: Areas of Separation – identification and protection of Areas of Separation within the district.

Policy S18: Countryside – protection of countryside and identification of appropriate development types within the countryside.

In addition to the above listed policies, there are further strategic policies within the Proposed Submission Local Plan at Appendix B. They cover issues such as infrastructure, community facilities, conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### Vision and Growth Targets

Local Plans contain overarching visions which set out how the area should change over the period of the plan. They are also an opportunity to reflect longer term aspirations stretching beyond the plan period.

The vision for the Proposed Submission Local Plan is 'Our vision is to ensure that Blaby District is 'a great place to live, work and visit'.

This is grounded in the Council's aspiration to become a Carbon Neutral District and the goal of net zero by 2050. It reflects both on national policy, growth targets and Council strategies including the Blaby Climate Change Strategy.

The levels of growth to be delivered through the Local Plan in the context of the Local Plan vision takes account of national policy, including the standard methodology for calculating local housing need. This includes evidence produced jointly by the Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities and at the Blaby District level. Key evidence documents include the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2022, the Updated Housing Needs Distribution Paper 2025, Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic B8 Study 2025, Blaby Employment Land and Premises Study 2025 and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2022

The Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground Relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022) was signed by Council in July 2022. Although the housing element has since been superseded, the approach to employment land is still relevant to the Proposed Submission Local Plan as contained in Appendix B. In addition the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution was signed by Council on 27 January 2026.

The growth targets for the Local Plan can be found within Policy S1 Location and Growth Strategy within Appendix B of this report.

It is worth noting that a large proportion of the Local Plan target is formed of existing committed sites either from existing allocated sites such as New Lubbethorpe, or from recently permitted extensions to medium sized villages in the district. In particular these will supply the housing need over the first part of the Local Plan, whilst New Lubbethorpe will continue to deliver over the life of the Plan.

Growth allocated in the Local Plan will be delivered in the District according to the settlement hierarchy. Settlements are grouped together in a tier on the hierarchy according to the level of local services, access to public transport and access to employment opportunities. The settlement hierarchy is not dissimilar to the one contained in the current Local Plan.

Most new development will be focussed on the Principal Urban Area (PUA) of Leicester and our most sustainable villages, especially during the early to middle part of the plan period. However, as we move towards the end of the Plan Period and beyond, there will be greater emphasis on delivering growth in new communities, in particular Land West of Stoney Stanton and Whetstone Pastures. The creation of these communities will allow us to continue to direct development to these new communities whilst protecting our existing communities from excessive growth and coalescence.

#### Non strategic policies.

The Local Plan also contains a series of non strategic policies which will primarily be used for the detailed consideration of proposals on the proposed allocations and other applications when they are submitted as planning applications.

#### Supporting Documents

##### *Policies Map*

The Policies Map is a spatial interpretation of the development plan policies covering the district. The Policies Map for the Local Plan consists of one PDF overview map and inset maps for individual settlements.

Strategic policies and spatial policies within the Local Plan require amendments to the policies map. Appendix E to this report shows the mapping changes from the strategic and site allocations that will be made to the Policies Map.

##### *Sustainability Appraisal*

The development of the Plan has been shaped by an iterative process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA). It assesses the significant social, environmental and economic effects of the plan to ensure that decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development. The NPPF requires that reasonable alternatives to the Local Plan strategy are considered to demonstrate that it is justified as part of the tests of soundness, and under Regulation 12(2) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Alongside the Strategic Housing Land Availability Appraisal and Site Selection, the Sustainability Appraisal has assessed all potential sites, broad locations, and proposed policies reasonable for development. The process and methodology to considering both patterns for development and site options is detailed within the Sustainability Appraisal and Site Selection Paper. The Sustainability

Appraisal is contained in Appendix C of this report. This will be published alongside the Local Plan for representation.

A key part of the Sustainability Appraisal is assessing alternative ways of delivering the Local Plan's objectives and their sustainability effects. This helps identify an appropriate strategy and opportunities to maximise benefits and minimise adverse effects.

The Sustainability Appraisal considered alternative ways of delivering growth across the District and the sites needed to support them. Building on the Regulation 18 stage, it tested three reasonable growth options based on the updated housing need evidence set out in section 7 of Appendix C.

Three distribution options were also tested. This again built on those tested at Regulation 18 and on the site appraisal and selection process evidence work undertaken by the Council to inform a distribution strategy. It also reflected on the amount of growth already committed in meeting the growth target. The SA concluded that all three options show broadly similar outcomes (in terms of significant effects) and any differences were considered marginal.

The Non Technical Summary contained at the beginning of Appendix C provides an overview of the process undertaken and the key findings.

#### Habitat Regulation Assessment

A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening exercise has been undertaken to identify whether there is the potential for the Local Plan to adversely effect biodiversity sites of international importance. Having undertaken this assessment we concluded that the Plan would not have any likely significant effects and that further assessment is not required. Natural England were consulted on our views and provided the HRA screening assessment for them to scrutinise and they have agreed with our conclusions. This will be published alongside the Local Plan for comment and is contained at Appendix D.

#### Health Impact Assessment

In addition, a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been produced by Public Health. This has evaluated the potential health effects of the Local Plan and recommended wording changes to lessen the impact.

#### Evidence Base

The Local Plan is supported by a robust and extensive evidence base. The below is a list of the evidence which are the most significant:

- Housing Employment Needs Assessment 2022 – identifies local employment need and affordable housing need.
- Housing and Employment Needs Assessment and Apportionment - following Government update to the national guidance and local housing need, these studies were updated to inform the housing target and approach to be taken forward within the Local Plan.

- Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) - this study assesses all known potential development sites for their suitability, availability and achievability, and informs the allocation of sites.
- Site selection – Building on the SHELAA, this document considers in more detail sites for proposed allocation within the Local Plan.
- Green Wedge and Areas of Separation Review – this study reviews the existing designated Green Wedge and Areas of Separation against the joint Leicestershire methodology.
- Green and Blue Infrastructure Study– which identifies the District’s key green and blue assets and opportunities to enhance the network.
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment – this study identified the housing needs of Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities within the district.
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – assessing sites submitted to the council for flood risk to provide a comprehensive and robust appraisal of the extent and nature of flood risk from all sources of flooding.
- Retail, Town Centre, and Leisure Study – identifies the needs for the district and review of existing centres
- The Blaby Open Space Assessment (2019), Blaby District Playing Pitch Strategy (2024), Built Facilities Strategy and Action Plan (2024) in relation to open space and facilities infrastructure requirements.
- A Joint Transport Evidence (JTE), produced in partnership with Leicestershire County Council and south Leicestershire authorities, with ongoing engagement with National Highways in consideration of impacts of Local Plan growth at a strategic level on the road network.
- Blaby specific Interim Strategic Transport Assessment. This builds on the JTE to test the locational strategy and growth targets by applying a ‘vision and validate’ approach advocated in the NPPF. It tests the impacts of the Local Plan Vision in respect of transport and movement on the existing highways network and applies the onsite provision of services and amenities and connectivity to existing services through the Blaby Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (BCWIP) and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP). It identifies mitigation necessary to delivery the Local Plan growth.
- Strategic Warehousing - identifies the needs of strategic warehousing in Leicestershire and apportioning by local authority area.
- Blaby Employment Land and Premises Study - identifies the needs for the district and review of existing employment sites.
- Interim Whole Plan Viability – a financial appraisal undertaken on the policies of the plan to provide an initial conclusion on the viability of the plan.
- High-level Heritage Impact Assessment – desktop sifting of SHELAA sites where heritage assets exist onsite, or in proximity to sites.

#### Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The Local Plan allocates land to meet future development needs and includes details of the infrastructure required to support growth. This is expanded upon in a separate document—the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

The IDP is produced in collaboration with key service providers to help ensure that the infrastructure needed to support the Local Plan are identified, coordinated, and appropriately prioritised. Content includes:

Transport – As set out above, appropriate mitigation in the form of walking, cycling, bus infrastructure and highway mitigation informed by transport evidence to support growth within the Local Plan.

Education – Education discussions with Leicestershire County Council and education modelling commissioned and informed by the Leicestershire County Council Planning Obligations Policy (July 2019).

Healthcare – Discussions with the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board on primary healthcare infrastructure requirements have informed the infrastructure requirements contained within the Schedule.

Community Facilities – applying understanding of existing provision of open space, playing pitches and built facilities and standards contained in evidence to calculate new provision to support proposed local plan growth.

Green and Blue infrastructure – identification of onsite and offsite priority area mitigation opportunities.

Utilities – Discussions with utility providers including Cadent Gas, Seven Trent Water and National Grid Electricity Distribution have informed identification of impacts on their service provision and the process to mitigate impacts.

The full suite of published evidence is available on the Local Plan [website](#) and should be read alongside the proposed submission Local Plan.

#### Further work to be undertaken

The following additional evidence and supporting material is in the process of being finalised. It is intended that this updated evidence will be completed for Submission alongside the Local Plan and supporting documentation:

- Blaby Local Plan Transport Evidence - As stated above the Blaby Interim Strategic Transport Assessment forms part of the Evidence base. Further work will be undertaken following Publication of the Local Plan to further refine and cost mitigation measures necessary to support delivery of the Local Plan ahead of Submission.
- Whole Plan Viability Appraisal – As indicated above, an interim Whole Plan Viability Appraisal has been undertaken. On completion of the transport evidence costings work, the outstanding mitigation will be plugged into the Whole Plan Viability Appraisal to assess the financial implications of the full infrastructure and policy requirements (particularly affordable housing, biodiversity net gain and sustainable construction standards) on the viability of the development strategy and types of sites.

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan – The Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Schedule forms part of the evidence base to support the Proposed Submission Local Plan. This is a living document and will be updated accordingly.
- Heritage Impact Assessment - High-level Heritage Impact Assessment work to date has involved a sift of all SHELAA sites to establish where further assessment is needed to establish heritage impacts. We are now at a stage where 25 sites have been identified for additional assessment to identify the assets affected and their significance, as well as provide recommendations for mitigation.

### **Publication and Next Steps**

Subject to the approval of Members, the Proposed Submission Local Plan at Appendix B, and supporting appendices, will be published for a 6-week period at the beginning of July 2026.

The Regulation 19 Publication is the last opportunity for people to comment on the new Local Plan before the Council submits it to Government for Examination in Public. An independent Planning Inspector, appointed by the Government, will oversee the examination of the Local Plan. The Planning Inspector will be sent any representations that are made during this Regulation 19 publication.

The NPPF requires the Planning Inspector to decide if the Local Plan is sound. Plans are considered 'sound' if they are:

- a) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- b) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- c) Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- d) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

In accordance with the requirements set out above, the Council will notify in writing all specific and general consultees—including Parish Councils and neighbouring authorities—as well as any individual or organisation that has previously expressed an interest in the Local Plan process. The Proposed Submission Local Plan will be made available for inspection on the Council's website, alongside all supporting evidence documents. Paper copies of the Plan and other key documents will also be accessible at libraries across the District and at the Council Offices to ensure all residents have the opportunity to participate.

A series of drop-in events will be held at locations across the District. The Council's social media channels will be used to raise awareness of the consultation, and a set of Frequently Asked Questions will be published on the website to assist the public in understanding the process. Consultation packs, including posters for display on parish noticeboards, will be issued to all Parish Councils to help promote the publication. Articles have been included in the Council's general and planning newsletters to inform stakeholders of the upcoming publication period. Direct letter drops will take place targeting vulnerable residents who may not have access to online correspondence.

The Government has published a model representation form for local plans at the publication stage. This form will be used the council during the Publication period. This invites comments on whether the plan is legally compliant and sound.

Following Publication, representations received will be collated, analysed and reported to Council for consideration. Once this work is complete the Council can then consider the submission of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan and accompanying documents to the Secretary of State for Examination.

It is important to note that after Regulation 19 Publication the Council cannot make further changes to the Local Plan itself. It must submit the version it has published at Regulation 19. Following the Regulation 19 consultation, if the Council wishes to make changes to the published version, it must do so in a separate schedule. This schedule will contain the modifications that have been identified following the Regulation 19 Publication. If the changes are significant in nature, changes must be reflected in the associated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment. These can be submitted in the form of minor and main modifications. The Council will need to make a specific request of the Inspector to consider these as part of the Examination.

Once the Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State, the timetable for the examination will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. It is currently anticipated that the hearings sessions which form part of the examination will take place in spring 2027.

#### 4.2 Proposal(s)

That the responses to the previous Blaby District Local Plan Regulation 18, and Council's proposed responses in Appendix A are agreed and that the Local Plan Proposed Submission Version (Appendix B), and associated papers are approved for Publication under Regulation 19.

There may be need for minor, factual and presentational changes that arise prior to publication. Delegated authority is sought for any changes to be agreed by the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Planning, Strategic Growth and Environment in advance of Publication.

### 4.3 Relevant Consultations

Relevant internal consultations have taken place, including the Director of Place and the Assistant Director - Planning and Strategic Growth.

### 4.4 Significant Issues

#### Legal implications

Subject to submission by 31 December, the Local Plan will be examined under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, excluding the amendments made by the LURA, and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

#### Duty to Cooperate

The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) is a legal requirement introduced under the Localism Act 2011 (amending the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requiring local planning authorities to 'engage constructively, actively, and on an ongoing basis in any process' on strategic, cross-boundary matters. It aims to ensure effective planning on issues spanning across administrative boundaries—such as housing, infrastructure, and transport.

The Government has confirmed as of 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2026, the statutory Duty to Cooperate (DtC), introduced by the Localism Act 2011, is abolished for local plans in England. This includes the Blaby District Local Plan.

Notwithstanding this, the Government has been clear the need for plan making authorities to continue to maintain collaboration, in particular with neighbouring plan making authorities, on meeting unmet development needs. This is something the examination Inspector will consider through the tests of soundness. The council has continued to progress the Compliance Statement on Duty to Cooperate as a record of the collaboration on strategic matters with statutory bodies.

Members will recall on 27 January, Council approved the signing of the updated Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution following NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2024 (December 2025).

In respect of strategic warehousing and distribution the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing Need (January 2026) is being presented to council under a different item. This confirms that no further strategic B8 warehousing is required to be delivered within Blaby District within the study period up to 2046.

#### Human Resource implications

The examination of a Local Plan requires the appointment of a Programme Officer to liaise with the Planning Inspectorate. The process to appoint this role has commenced.

## Equalities

An Equality Impact & Needs Assessment (EINA) has been prepared and is contained at appendix G to this report.

- 4.5 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

## **5. Environmental impact**

The environmental impacts of the Local Plan are assessed within the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal, as required by Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appendix 4). The Sustainability Appraisal also meets the requirement for a strategic environmental assessment in accordance with The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

A Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) has been carried out. The NZCIA identifies that the Local Plan will have both positive and negative impacts on the environment, which will be mitigated through policies introduced in the Local Plan. The Local Plan contributes to the overall positive impacts anticipated that greenhouse gases, air pollution and pollutants in soil or water will decrease. Sustainable transport will be encouraged and biodiversity will be improved along with an increase in climate change adaption and sustainable materials being used in some places. Negative impacts anticipated are a significant change to land use, increase in energy use and waste production. Where negative impacts have been identified, mitigation measures have been put in place through the Local Plan to reduce these impacts.

## **6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?**

- 6.1 The costs for Local Plan preparation are already allowed for in the General Fund budget, including the staff and examination costs referred to below. This will support the progress of the Local Plan to adoption. In addition the Council has been successful in securing a MHCLG fund of £200,000 to support the progress to Regulation 19.

Staff – A Programme Officer will need to be engaged for the period of the Local Plan Examination to administer the process and be the main point of contact between the Inspector and all other interested parties. The Planning Inspectorate advise that the Programme Officer should be in post by the time a plan is submitted to the Secretary of State and remain until the Examination is closed. It is estimated that the cost of the appointment would be approximately £20,000, the majority of which will be paid for within 2027/28.

Examination costs – costs for the Examination of the Local Plan are likely to occur in 2027/28. The principal cost will be the Inspector's fees (currently

estimated to be around £150,000 -£200,000). These are within the budget framework for 2026/27.

	<b>Current year</b>	<b>2027/28</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	£260,117	£306,000
<b>Capital</b>	N/A	N/A

## 7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

### 7.1

Current Risk		Actions to reduce the risks
Council does not approve to publish the Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan	Low / medium  Impact would be considerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief Members in advance of Council meeting of the statutory duty of Local Planning Authorities to produce and adopt a Local Plan and the consequences of not doing so.</li> <li>• Provision of information and relevant documentation to support decision making</li> </ul>
Staff turnover / long term absence/ reduction in staff numbers.	Medium / high.  Impact could be considerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate training to encourage staff retention.</li> <li>• Provide a varied workload to keep staff engaged and motivated.</li> <li>• Recruitment to commence as soon as the current post holder submits their notice (subject to available funding).</li> <li>• Employ agency staff / consultants to cover periods of absence (subject to available funding).</li> <li>• Re-deploy suitable staff from the Development Services Team should opportunities arise.</li> </ul>

Evidence gathering delays	Medium / high.  Impact could be considerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Plan relies on substantial evidence on a range of issues.</li> <li>• Provide resources and funding to complete evidence gathering.</li> </ul>
Changes in housing, employment, and other development requirements.	High.  Impact could be considerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor changes to LHN</li> <li>• Build in flexibility into Local Plan options for growth.</li> <li>• Early completions/reviews of the Statements of Common Ground with other HMA partners.</li> </ul>
Substantial evidence requirements arising from Strategic Sites – including transport evidence, viability and deliverability (in terms of potential delivery of strategic infrastructure that relies on third parties).	High.  Impact could be considerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with strategic site promoters and receipt of site specific evidence to ensure an understanding of site constraints and key issues are picked up and additional evidence and mitigation undertaken and tested.</li> </ul>
Partnership collaboration ceases	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong links have been made over the past months to ensure good working relationships can be built and maintained with strategic partners. Continued dialogue and development of shared priorities will ensure continued collaboration.</li> </ul>

## 8. Other options considered

### 8.1 Not to produce a Local Plan

The production of a Local Plan is required by the National Planning Policy Framework and is key to enabling the Council to guide and shape sustainable development in this District and to the restoration of a 5 year housing land supply position. Adoption of the Local Plan will provide the Council with a comprehensive development plan against which to determine planning applications and will replace the Core Strategy (2013) and Delivery DPD (2019) in their entirety. Not producing a Local Plan leaves the Council

vulnerable to continued speculative planning applications under the tilted balance.

**9. Appendices – Published separately in supplemental agendas**

- 9.1 Appendix A – Consultation Statement
- 9.2 Appendix B – Proposed Submission Local Plan
- 9.3 Appendix C - Sustainability Appraisal
- 9.4 Appendix D – Habitat Regulation Assessment
- 9.5 Appendix E – Policies Maps
- 9.6 Appendix F - Statement of Community Involvement
- 9.7 Appendix G – Equality Impact & Needs Assessment (EINA) (To Follow)
- 9.8 Appendix H– Authority Monitoring Report
- 9.9 Appendix I - Local Development Scheme

**10. Background paper(s)**

- 10.1 Local Plan Evidence on the [Local Plan evidence page](#) of the Council website.

**11. Report author’s contact details**

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