

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.^{19 20} 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.²¹ 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).

¹⁹ 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](#)

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

²¹ 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	++?	++	++
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 negative 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 – Foxton 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 given 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 Strategy²² and a Blue Green Infrastructure Study for Blaby²³ 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.

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

²³ 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 [?]	0 [?]	0 [?]
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 development²⁴, 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.

²⁴ 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” sensitivity²⁵.

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.

²⁵ 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” sensitivity²⁶.

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

²⁶ 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 (BLA031/034/039/40)** 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	1	2	3

Environmental protection: Air quality

Option 1 (Standard Method, 10,500)

There are currently two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) 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 (NO₂) 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 NO₂ 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 in 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.²⁷

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.²⁸

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.

²⁷ 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](#)

²⁸ 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.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Congestion	_-?	_-?	_-?
Rank	1	2	3
Sustainable travel	++	++	++
Rank	3	2	1