

Leicester and Leicestershire, Strategic Growth Plan

SA Scoping Report

*Blaby District Council,
Charnwood Borough Council,
Harborough District Council,
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council,
Leicester City Council,
Leicestershire County Council,
The Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise
Partnership,
Melton Borough Council,
North West Leicestershire District Council &
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council*

January 2018

REVISION SCHEDULE					
Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	January - August 2017	Draft Report	Ian McCluskey <i>Senior Consultant</i> Matt Stopforth <i>Planner</i> Lucy Sykes <i>Graduate Planner</i>	Ian McCluskey <i>Senior Consultant</i>	Alex White <i>Associate Consultant</i>
2	January 2018	Final Report	Ishaq Khan <i>Graduate Planner</i>	Ian McCluskey <i>Principal Consultant</i>	Alan Houghton <i>Associate Director</i>

AECOM
 Bridgewater House
 4th Floor
 Whitworth Street
 Manchester
 M1 6LT

Tel: +44 (0) 161 907 3500

Fax: +44 (0) 161 907 3501

www.AECOM.com

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1. Introduction

1.1 This commission

1.1.1 AECOM have been commissioned by The Leicester and Leicestershire Councils and the Local Enterprise Partnership to prepare a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan.

1.1.2 The Strategic Growth Plan will cover the whole of the County of Leicestershire, and the City of Leicester. This work will include preparation of the following:

- SA Framework/Scoping Report;
- HRA screening including where necessary an Appropriate Assessment;
- SA of Objectives in the Strategic Growth Statement;
- SA of Reasonable Alternatives for the Scale and Spatial Distribution of Growth;
- SA/SEA/HRA of the Draft Strategic Growth Plan; and
- SA/SEA/HRA of Final Strategic Growth Plan.

1.1.3 The SA/SEA/HRA will need to assess and influence the key elements of the Strategic Growth Plan including:

- Objectives;
- Scale of growth for housing and employment land;
- Spatial distribution of growth;
- Major infrastructure requirements; and
- Environmental protection.

1.2 The SEA/SA process

1.2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment is a statutory process that must be carried out when a plan, policy or programme is considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. In the case of the Strategic Growth Plan (which sets the framework for future Local Plans) an SEA is determined to be necessary. However, to ensure that social and economic factors are also taken into consideration, it has been considered beneficial to undertake a sustainability appraisal (SA), which covers a wider range of factors including social and economic factors.

1.2.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process for helping to ensure that plans, policies and programmes achieve an appropriate balance between environmental, economic and social objectives. The process that is followed incorporates the requirements of an SEA.

1.2.3 SA should help to identify the sustainability implications of different plan approaches and recommend ways to reduce any negative effects and to increase the positive outcomes.

1.2.4 SA is also a tool for communicating the likely effects of a Plan (and any reasonable alternatives), explaining the decisions taken with regards to the approach decided upon, and

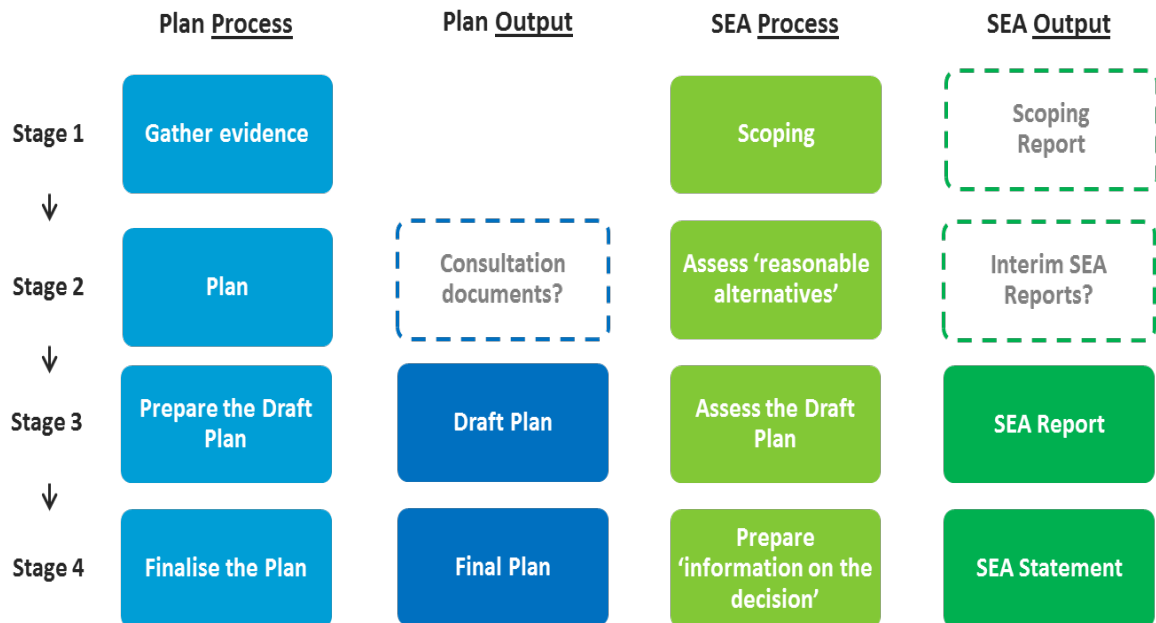
encouraging engagement from key stakeholders such as local communities, businesses and plan-makers.

1.2.5 Although SA can be applied flexibly, it contains legal requirements under the ‘Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which were prepared in order to transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive). The regulations set out prescribed processes that must be followed. In particular the Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that ‘identifies, describes and evaluates’ the likely significant effects of implementing ‘the plan, and reasonable alternatives’. The SA/SEA report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses when finalising the plan.

1.2.6 Though the strategic growth strategy is not a statutory document, it has the potential to have significant effects upon the environment, communities and economy. Therefore, it is considered necessary and beneficial to undertake a sustainability appraisal that meets the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

1.2.7 SA/SEA can be viewed as a four-stage process that produces a number of statutory and non-statutory outputs. As illustrated in Figure 1.1 below, ‘Scoping’ is a mandatory process under the SEA Directive, but the publication of a scoping report is a voluntary (but useful) output.

Figure 1.1: SA/SEA as a four stage process



1.3 The Plan area

1.3.1 The Strategic Growth Plan covers the whole of the County of Leicestershire and the City of Leicester. This is shown in Figure 1.2.

1.3.2 Each Local Authority has adopted, or is in the process of adopting, a Local Plan in order to guide development within their Borough or District. The status of these (as of June 2017) is outlined in Table 1.1, along with a summary of key issues identified through the SA and Plan making process.

Table 1.1 Plan progress for each authority

Local Authority	Local Plan Progress	Key Issues and objectives
North West Leicestershire	The new Local Plan was Adopted in November 2017.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to match housing growth with services • High car usage results in high carbon emissions • Ageing population • Ensure rural access to services • Affordability concerns • Improve public transport links and services • Air quality concerns • Limited renewable energy regeneration in district • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*points taken from AECOM NWL SA Report (2016)</i></p>
Leicester City Council	Currently working on a new Local Plan (expected to be adopted in 2018) which will replace the 2006 Local Plan and the 2014 Core Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of housing type, tenure and number to accommodate population growth • Reduce inequalities in health • Improve access to facilities and open space • Respond to an over-dependence on declining manufacturing jobs • Ensure adequate supply of employment land and workspace to meet local need • Increase graduate retention • Address strategic transport needs and reduce congestion • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*points taken from the core strategy (2014)</i></p>
Blaby District Council	The Local Plan (Core Strategy) was adopted February 2013. It has been through several stages of production. It provides a vision and strategy to 2029.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on housing supply and affordability due to population growth • Unequal access to services • District not thought to have a balanced portfolio of employment sites- might stifle future economic growth requirements • Dominance of micro-businesses in area • Congestion especially around Junction 21 of M1. Transport links thought to be key obstacle to econ growth • Air quality constraints • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*taken from Local Plan Core Strategy</i></p>
Charnwood Borough Council	The Adopted Local Plan for Charnwood is made up of the Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2028 (2015) and the saved policies from the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004). Work on a new Local Plan has commenced. Consultation on the scope of the Plan was undertaken in July 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing population demands increase in homes and services • Lack of employment land to satisfy new and expanding businesses • River valleys are subject to pressure from new development • Lack of green space and leisure facilities • Competition from shopping at Leicester, Derby and Nottingham • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*Taken from Charnwood Local plan</i></p>

Local Authority	Local Plan Progress	Key Issues and objectives
<p>Harborough District Council</p>	<p>The adoption of the Core Strategy 2006-2028 (Nov 2011) has replaced a large number of policies set out within the Harborough District Local Plan (April 2001). Saved policies are listed within the Adopted Core Strategy.</p> <p>In the process of preparing a new local plan for the period until 2031. Consultation on the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan was undertaken between September and November 2017. The Council intends to submit the plan for examination in March 2018.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship with the Leicester urban area for employment and services • Need to improve public transport services • Declining manufacturing sector causing employment pressures • Continuing development pressure for housing. • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*Taken from Harborough LDF Core Strategy 2006-2028</i></p>
<p>Melton Borough Council</p>	<p>Melton Core Strategy was withdrawn from examination in April 2013. The consultation on the emerging Local Plan was held between January and April 2016. The emerging plan is currently undergoing examination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local economy and infrastructure • Make existing structures and projects more accessible • Reduce traffic congestion in district • Enable more affordable housing • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*Taken from Melton Local Plan</i></p>
<p>Oadby & Wigston Borough Council</p>	<p>Current up to date policy can be found in Core Strategy and Town Centres Area Action Plan. The saved (original) Local Plan contains existing policies and guidance on development within the Borough.</p> <p>The Council has recently completed a consultation held in November and December on a pre-submission Draft Local Plan, with an aim to adopt in mid-2018.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing affordable housing. • Enhance quality of life. • Make use of a highly skilled workforce • Protect and enhance natural assets. • Providing stronger, self-reliant centres. • Provide better located accessible development. • Encourage sustainable transport. • Create the right balance of jobs, housing and infrastructure. • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*Oadby and Wigston pre-submission Draft Local Plan (2017)</i></p>

Local Authority	Local Plan Progress	Key Issues and objectives
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	<p>The Local Plan 2006-2026 (formerly the LDF) replaces the Local Plan 2001.</p> <p>The Council is currently working on a Plan Review. Consultation on the scope, issues and options for a new Local Plan is currently underway, with an estimated examination in public penciled for November 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overreliance on manufacturing industry • Improve access to services and facilities in rural areas • Address pockets of high deprivation • Housing affordability issues • High reliance on car travel within Borough • Avoid areas of Flood Risk. <p><i>*From Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009</i></p>

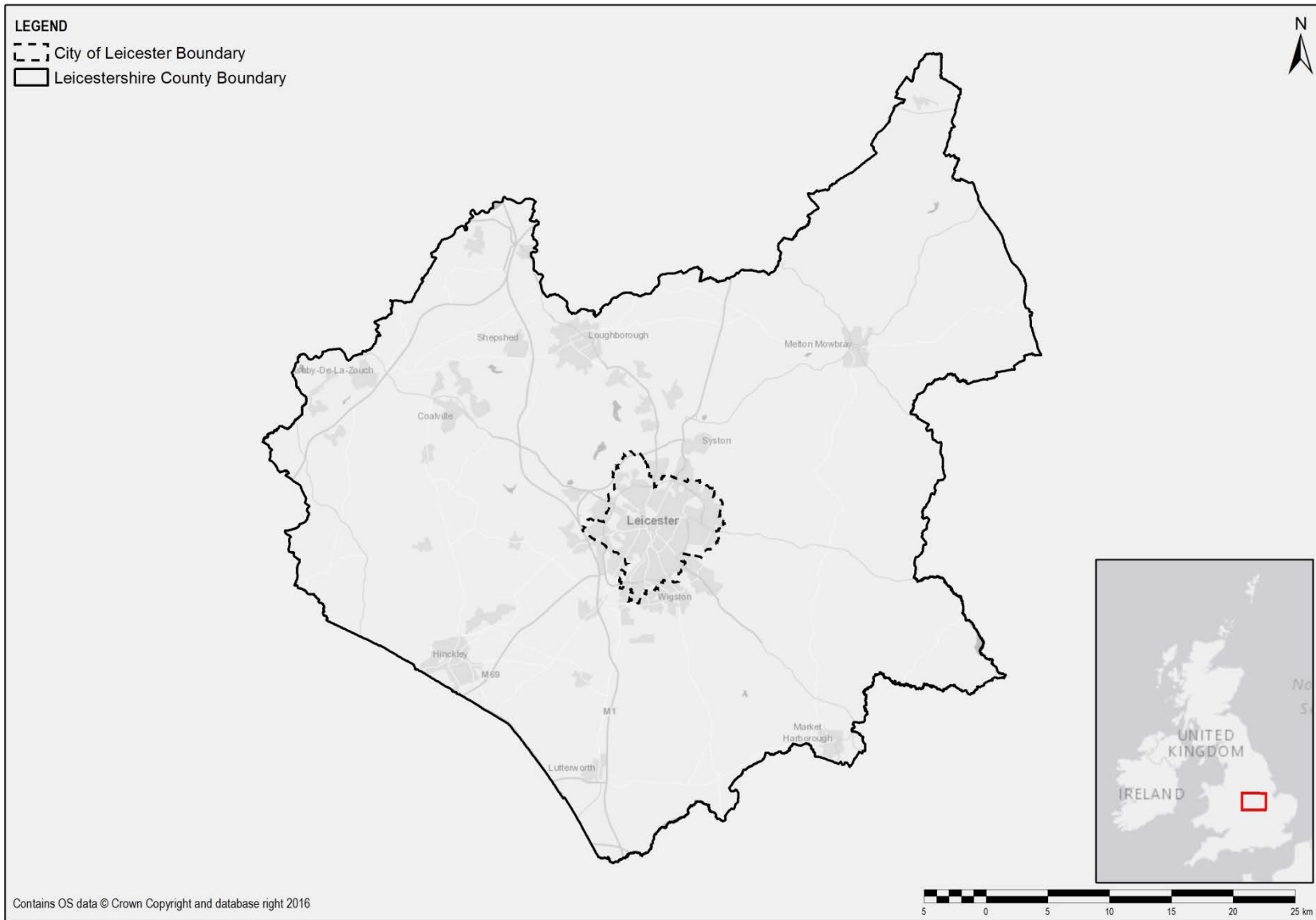


Figure 1.2: The Strategic Growth Plan area

2. Scoping

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section introduces the reader to the scope of the SA. In particular, and as required by the Regulations, this Chapter answers the series of questions below:

- What’s the Plan seeking to achieve?
- What’s the sustainability ‘context’?
- What’s the sustainability ‘baseline’?
- What are the key issues that should be a focus of SA?

2.1.2 The scope of the SA for the Plan needs to be proportionate and relevant to the scope and spatial scale of the Plan. It should therefore be strategic in nature, but acknowledge that there are local issues for each constituent authority.

2.1.3 It is also important to note that scoping has already been undertaken by each authority in the preparation of their planning documents. The information collected as part of these scoping exercises may help to inform the scope of the growth strategy. However, we have not sought to duplicate information that has already been gathered, and have focused the evidence base on the strategic issues for Leicester and Leicestershire.

2.1.4 Table 2.1 lists each of the planning authorities and the date that scoping exercises have been most recently completed (*whether this be as part of a scoping report, or an SA Report*). It can be seen that six of the eight authorities have scoping information that is less than two years old, with only Blaby and Charnwood (who are currently undertaking new SA scoping) requiring a refresh of locally specific information.

Table 2.1: Scoping Report status for each authority

Authority	Latest Scoping Report/Update
Blaby District Council	2016
Charnwood Borough Council	2018*
Harborough District Council	2017
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	2017
Melton Borough Council	2016
Leicester City Council	2016
North West Leicestershire District Council	2016
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	2017

**at the time of writing, the report is yet to be submitted to the local authority.*

2.2 Methods / approach

2.2.1 Ten Sustainability topics have been established to give the scoping process structure and to present findings in a succinct way. The topics reflect those themes identified in the SEA Regulations, and are common to each local authority (within their own SA processes).

1. Biodiversity and Geodiversity
2. Health and wellbeing
3. Housing
4. Employment and economy
5. Transport and accessibility
6. Air quality and noise
7. Climate change
8. Landscape and land
9. Cultural heritage
10. Water
11. Waste and minerals

2.2.2 For each topic, the Scoping report sets out the following information:

- Policy context at a national, regional and local level.
- Common policy themes and principles within adopted and emerging Local Authority Plans.
- Strategic baseline position: Information taken from the Local Plan scoping reports, and other sources of data, is collated and analysed. This section seeks to identify the important issues and trends at a strategic level. A table of issues and trends is provided for each topic area. Where possible, current performance is identified as well as the broad trends.
- Projected baseline, key issues and opportunities: This section identifies the future baseline, cross boundary issues and strategic opportunities.

3. *Biodiversity and Geodiversity*

3.1 Policy context

National

- 3.1.1 Sites of European status are protected under the **Birds (79/409/EEC as amended) and Habitats (92/43/EEC) Directives**, while national legislation protects Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and listed species.
- 3.1.2 The European Commission Guidance on **Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment (2013)** suggests that an SEA should focus on ensuring ‘no net-loss of biodiversity’ before considering mitigation and compensation. The assessment should also take account of ‘ecosystem services’ and the links between natural environment and economy.
- 3.1.3 **The Natural Environment White Paper** states that there is a need to halt the overall decline in biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services; and restore them in so far as feasible and seek to deliver net gains in biodiversity where possible¹. The **NPPF** also says that Local Plans should support healthy well-functioning ecosystems, encourage the ‘preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks’ and promote the ‘protection and recovery of priority species’.
- 3.1.4 **Biodiversity 2020** is the Government’s Strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services. It encapsulates the aims of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and seeks to achieve the following outcomes by 2020²:
- More, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife. No net loss of priority habitat and a net increase in priority habitats;
 - Restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems as a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation;
 - An overall improvement in the status of species and prevention of further human induced extinctions; and
 - Improved engagement in biodiversity issues.
- 3.1.5 The **UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework** (2012) is to provide an enabling structure for national action until 2020. The targets of the scheme include:
- To set out a shared vision and priorities for UK-scale activities, in a framework jointly owned by the four countries, and to which their own strategies will contribute.
 - To facilitate the aggregation and collation of information on activity and outcomes across all countries of the UK, where the four countries agree this will bring benefits compared to individual country work
 - To streamline governance arrangements for UK-scale activity

¹ Defra (2012) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) [online] available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf>

² Biodiversity Partnership (2006) A Biodiversity Strategy for the East Midlands [online] available at: <http://www.embiodiversity.org.uk/files/documents/documents/emrbs-may2006.pdf>

Regional

- 3.1.6 The Leicester, **Leicestershire and Rutland (LL&R) Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)**³ sets the following three priorities:
- To promote the restoration, management and creation of BAP Priority Habitats;
 - To promote the creation of new wildlife habitat in the wider countryside; and
 - To survey, monitor and promote favourable management of existing good sites through the Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) system.
- 3.1.7 The **National Forest Biodiversity Action Plan** (2011) also helps to prioritise nature conservation objectives across the three counties which the National Forest is located.
- 3.1.8 The **6C’s Green Infrastructure Strategy** (2010) outlines a biodiversity specific objective (no.14) for the East Midlands region.

‘Reverse the decline in biodiversity by countering habitat fragmentation through investment in substantial habitat restoration and creation, informed by biodiversity opportunity mapping methods’.

Local

- 3.1.9 Table 3.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for biodiversity that are common to each of the eight authorities.

Table 3.1: Key messages for biodiversity and geodiversity

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
There is a need to conserve and enhance Protected Sites	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS19
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS13
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS8
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS17
	Leicester BAP 2011-2021 (November 2011)
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN2
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN1
Deliver the National Forest Strategy	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS12
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 21
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN3

³ Space for Wildlife - Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) - 2016-2026 [online] available at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-and-ecology>

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Maintain and enhance the function and character of Charnwood Forest	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS12
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 22
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN4
Manage the River Mease Special Area of Conservation	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN2
Maintain and strengthen ecological networks	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS19
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS13
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 20
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS17
	Melton Borough Council Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN3

3.2 Strategic baseline

- 3.2.1 Biodiversity within the wider East Midlands area is recorded as being the lowest level for any English region, having experienced a steady, long term decline over the previous 200 years. Leicestershire itself is deemed one of the most impoverished counties in the UK in terms of biodiversity resources.
- 3.2.2 Despite efforts to safeguard biodiversity, species across the County are under increasing threat from habitat loss and fragmentation.
- 3.2.3 Given the declining nature of biodiversity in many areas, the majority of local authorities express an intention to conserve and enhance these assets, and to strengthen connectivity.
- 3.2.4 The physical coverage of SSSI's in Leicestershire is below the national average, with individuals sites also smaller than the average size. As shown in Figure 3.1, the majority of these sites are clustered in the north west of Leicestershire. Aside from a small collection to the east of the County, the SSSIs are otherwise sparsely present.
- 3.2.5 The 76 SSSI (293 SSSI units) account for a total area of 2,861 hectares across Leicestershire. 85.2% of these are considered to be of a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition (Natural England, 2016). This is illustrated in table 3.2 which identified a positive baseline position in most local authorities with regard to the condition of SSSIs as well as a positive upward trend.
- 3.2.6 This is also true for many of the Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) outside of Leicester City Centre, which are mostly in a stable or favourable state (Table 3.2). These sites

are predominantly located in the west, with a number of candidate sites allocated which could increase the quantity of such assets in the future (Figure 3.2).

- 3.2.7 Regionally important strategic wildlife corridors include the National Forest / Charnwood Forest, River Mease, River Soar, River Sence the Grand Union Canal, the Rothley Mainline Railway and Ivanhoe Railway. Locally important corridors are mainly centred on brooks and Green Wedges.
- 3.2.8 Table 3.2 below highlights water systems as being of a poor or moderate quality, with limited improvement occurring in the short term for most authorities. There is a need for improvement in quality as well as the general trends in quality (which are not all positive).
- 3.2.9 Both the Charnwood Forest and the National Forest are recognised as a valuable asset for biodiversity within the region, especially for those within the north-west of Leicestershire. The National Forest Strategy has been applied which has sought to protect the forest from potential threats, and has led to the relative stabilisation of this habitat.
- 3.2.10 A densely forested area also exists to the north east between the settlements of Stathern and Belvoir, and to the east between the settlements of Skeffington, Withcote and East Norton.
- 3.2.11 A number of river catchments are also important habitats for wildlife, and as such it is important that the management of these catchments is continued. The River Mease, which is a site of European Importance, is one such network that is under threat from development and management practices.

3.3 Future baseline, key issues and opportunities

- 3.3.1 Development poses a potential threat to biodiversity assets and their connectivity. However, planning policies should help to enable safeguarding of protected sites and habitats. There is a consistent approach across the County, with each authority seeking to conserve and enhance protected species and habitats. This should help to balance the threats of development and should allow for biodiversity assets to be protected and maintained.
- 3.3.2 Without intervention, it is likely that river and water quality would continue to decline. Many of the SA scoping documents examined highlight that the ecological health of rivers is recorded as being predominantly poor in their current state. This could be exacerbated with the onset of development. However, catchment management plans such as the River Mease Management Plan ought to help better manage development proposed in current and emerging local plans.
- 3.3.3 Geodiversity assets are likely to remain protected under national legislation. Their status as protected sites is not likely to change, and it should be possible to avoid damage due to their relatively small number across Leicestershire.
- 3.3.4 Key issues to consider into the future include protecting the existing biodiversity assets, many of which are already fragile and under threat, whilst also meeting the housing and employment needs of the region, and helping to improve biodiversity resilience to climate change by investing in strategic wildlife corridors.
- 3.3.5 Delivery of the National Forest Strategy, which seeks to increase forest cover and recover associated ecosystems, is highlighted amongst various local plan policies across the HMA. The strategy in itself is naturally cross-boundary, and with increased growth the forest is likely to improve access to green and open space for residents within the region.

- 3.3.6 There may also potential to capitalise upon other cross boundary spaces such as green infrastructure corridors along various river networks and from Leicester City through to Swadlincote. Many of the locally designated sites and habitats are located within the Soar Valley and are inherently linked to the hydrology of the river. These sites are therefore vulnerable to impacts on water quality from development and climate change effects on the river flow characteristics. Therefore, it has been recognised that the River Mease SAC and the Soar Valley River may be sensitive to development given their status and / or their flood, water and landscape constraints⁴.
- 3.3.7 In addition to river systems, green corridors and other recreational routes will be enhanced to enable species movement throughout Leicestershire.
- 3.3.8 Steps should be taken to enhance the ‘Blue Corridors’ approach with the aim of improving biodiversity value, water quality, public access, flood plain use and tree planting to restore connectivity and improvements to air quality in the long term.

⁴ Charnwood Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2017), Charnwood Borough Council.

Figure 3.1: Biodiversity Assets within Leicester and Leicestershire

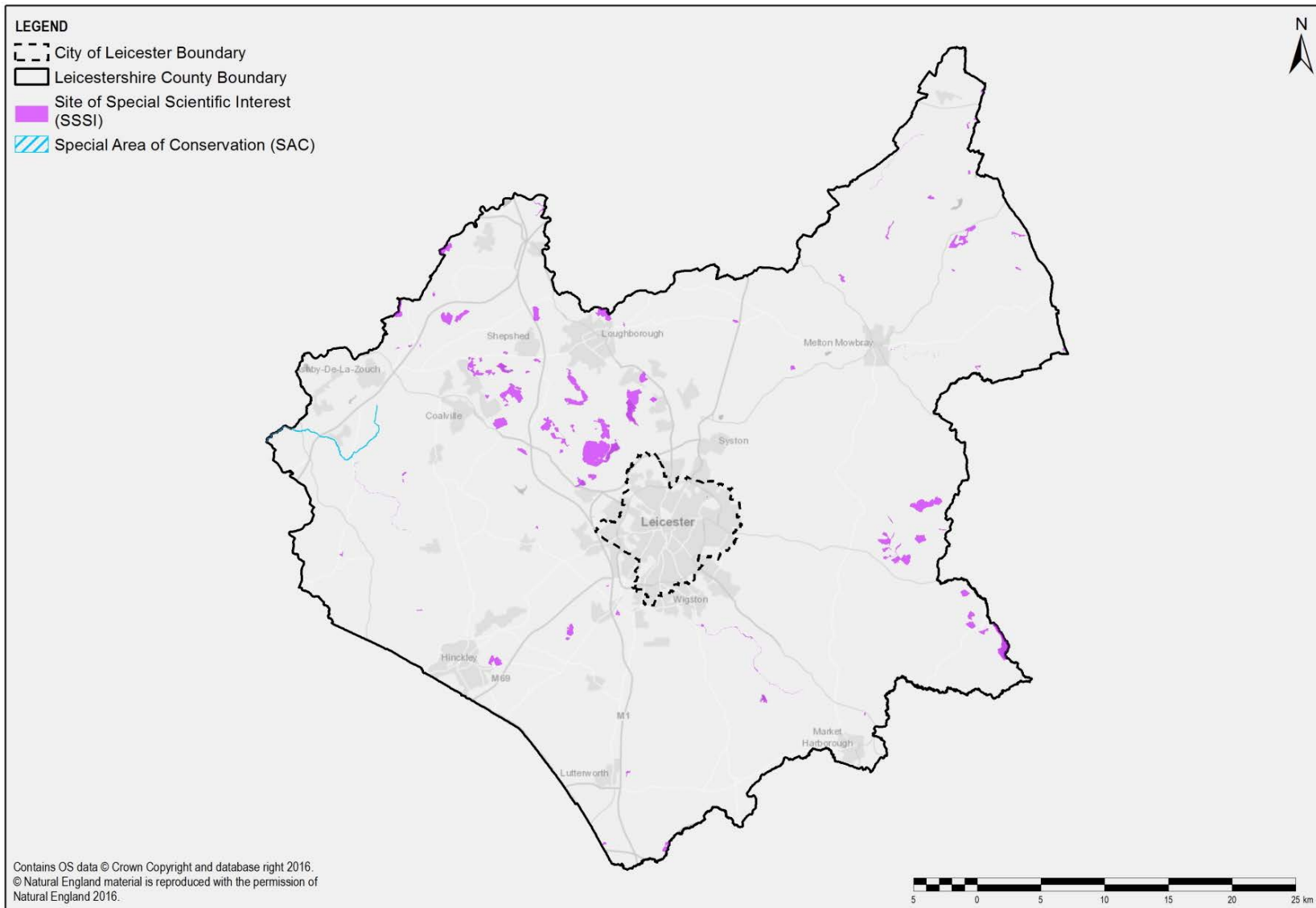


Figure 3.2: Geodiversity Assets within Leicester and Leicestershire

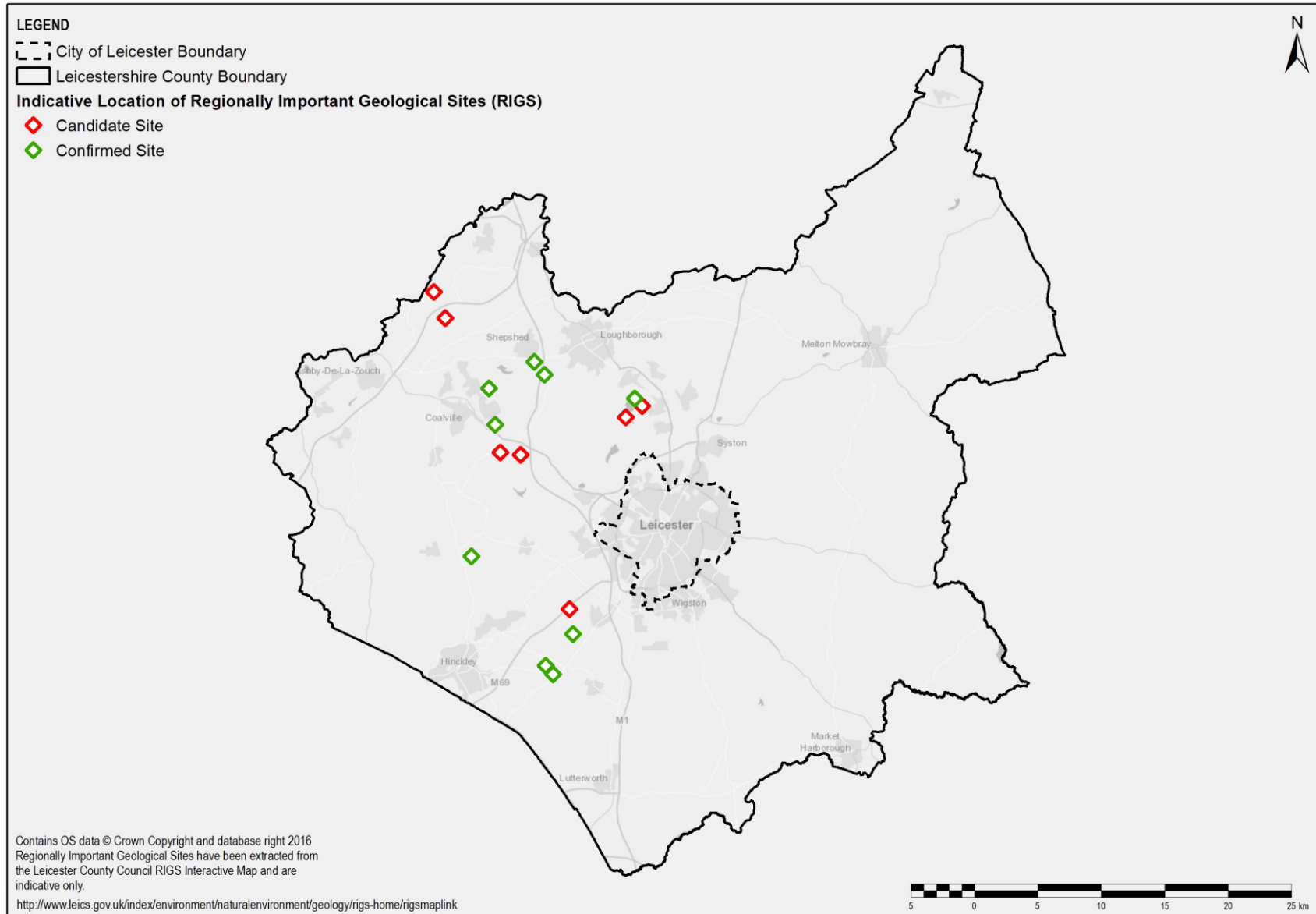
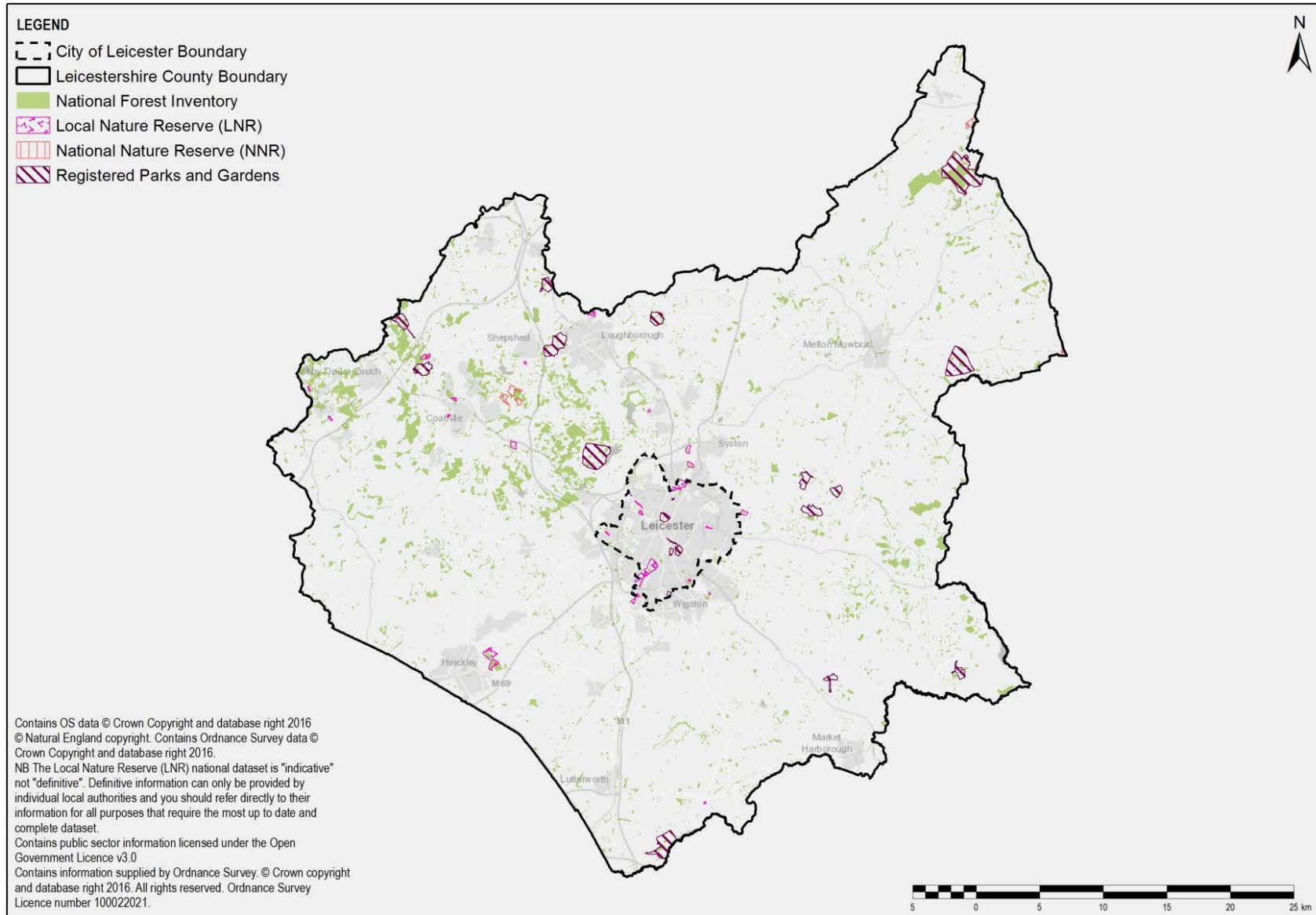


Figure 3.3: Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets within Leicester and Leicestershire



3.4 Strategic trends

3.4.1 Table 3.2 outlines the key biodiversity and geodiversity issues at a strategic level..

Table 3.2: Strategic Biodiversity and Geodiversity issues and trends across Leicester and Leicestershire

Key issues and trends				
Authority	Condition of SSSIs	River and water quality	Geodiversity Assets	Strategic assets
Leicester City	Gipsy Lane Pit is located approximately 2 miles to the north-west of the City Centre. Recorded as being in unfavorable and declining condition in 2016.	Quality of River Soar and the Grand Union Canal previously threatened. Now designated as Biodiversity Enhancement Site (2011).	One geological SSSI (Gipsy Lane Pit) 2miles to the north of the City, however this is of an unfavourable declining condition.	River Soar Corridor, Abbey Meadows, Castle Hill Country Park.
North West Leicestershire	Highest percentage area of SSSI land in a favourable condition in England (2009).	The River Mease is recorded as being of poor quality and is at risk from phosphate and waste pollution. A plan for the area ought to help improve trends, but there are threats from development.	3 RIGS sites, all in a favourable condition. These are not expected to deteriorate.	National Forest and Charnwood Forest covers part of Borough. River Mease SAC
Blaby District Council	4 biological SSSIs and 2 geological SSSIs. All sites in a favourable or unfavourable recovering (i.e. positive trend) condition (2016).	11 water bodies. None achieving 'good' ecological status (2016).	Two geological SSSIs and several RIGS (2016). No substantial changes recorded. Parts of the district contain Mineral Consultation Zones for sand and gravel and igneous rock.	River Soar valley, River Sence valley, Grand Union Canal and Rothley Brook provide wildlife and green infrastructure assets
Charnwood Borough Council	17 sites in the Borough. Majority of a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition (2013).	Water pollution potential threat. River Soar and River Wreake regionally significant wildlife corridors, and Black Brooke and Rothley Brook.	5 RIGS in the Borough of a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition (2013).	Charnwood Forest forms part of the eastern edge of the National Forest. Five RIGS.

	Condition of SSSIs	River and water quality	Geodiversity Assets	Strategic assets
Harborough District Council	The vast majority of the 14 sites are in an unfavourable (amber score) recovering (upwards trend) condition (2013).	Particular issues with phosphates and nitrates in the South (2014) resulting in an amber score. Quality improved since 1990. Most watercourses classified as 'bad' or 'moderate' (2014).	Geological SSSI. Tilton Railway in a favourable condition with unlikely threats (2013).	No National Nature Reserves (2015) Bitteswell Brook, River Swift, River Sence
Melton Borough Council	Most sites are in an unfavourable recovering condition. This results in a below average performing baseline (amber), but with an upward trend.	It has been highlighted as a priority to diffuse the pollution from agriculture and urban areas before entering the River Soar (2015).	Mineral Consultation Zones to east and west of Melton Mowbray. One designated RIGS.	2 National Nature Reserves.
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Seven SSSI – the majority are considered to be of a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition. Sheepy Meadows has been proposed but not yet confirmed as an additional SSSI. Baseline position is therefore a mix of good and average performance, but with positive trends.	River Sence at risk of increased pollutants from agricultural and urban sources (possible downward trend).	No designated RIGS or SSSI designated for their geological value.	National forest and Charnwood forest Covers part of Borough. Ashby Canal (SSSI) acts as a major recreational route and ecological source.
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	Two SSSI of an unfavourable no-change condition.	River Sence has a 'moderate' ecological health (2009).	One RIG site at Kilby Bridge Pit (2010).	Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSI.
Summary	The condition of SSSIs is varied, with some districts displaying a strong baseline position of favourable units, but others experiencing several SSSIs in unfavorable condition. The general trend is positive though, with most SSSIs in an unfavorable condition showing recovery.	There is a need to improve water quality, with poor or moderate classifications being recorded for numerous watercourses. Catchments are at risk of pollution from diffuse sources, agriculture and development.	There are relatively few SSSI designated for their geological interest. There are several RIGs across the HMA, with broadly good condition.	

4. Health and Wellbeing

4.1 Policy context

National

4.1.1 National planning policy is clear that one of the roles of a development plan is to help create sustainable inclusive and mixed communities. The **NPPF** states that “The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities” (paragraph 69). In particular there is a need to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends (paragraph 50).

4.1.2 **Fair Society, Healthy Lives** ('The Marmot Review') (2010) investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: 'overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities'. To ensure that the built environment promotes health and reduces inequalities for all local populations there is a need to:

- Fully integrate the planning, transport, housing, environmental and health systems to address the social determinants of health in each locality;
- Prioritise policies and interventions that both reduce health inequalities and mitigate climate change by improving active travel; good quality open and green spaces; the quality of food in local areas; and the energy efficiency of housing; and
- Support developments which provides high quality social infrastructure, including education, skills and sports facilities.

4.1.3 **The Public Health Outcomes Framework for England 2016-2019** builds upon these principles and seeks to achieve two key outcomes:

- Increased healthy life expectancy - Taking account of health quality as well as length of life; and
- Reduced differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities - through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.

4.1.4 **The National Rural Proofing Guidelines** (2017) set out some important principles and actions for ensuring that rural areas are not disadvantaged including:

- Allow for higher rural unit delivery costs in funding formulae of allocations;
- Looking for alternative ways of delivering services in rural areas;
- Reducing the need to travel;
- Better integration and improvement of transport links;
- Allow local delivery bodies flexibility to find the best local solution(s);
- Make use of rural networks and meeting points such as post offices, parish halls, etc;
- Address the needs of smaller businesses;
- Use small area based data to identify issues and impacts; and

- Engage with rural stakeholders to identify the impact of proposals.

4.1.5 **Natural solutions for tackling health inequalities** (2014) sets out some important challenges and priorities for reducing health inequalities and childhood obesity, while improving mental health and the quality of life through interaction with the natural environment which include:

- Improving coordination and integration of delivery by ensuring interventions are user-led, through working in partnership with the public (education sector, health sector, public engagement);
- Building a stronger evidence base to ensure programmes are evidence-led;
- Proportionate and universal approaches to improving use of, and access to, the natural environment - ensuring sustainable delivery of services that use the natural environment; and
- Increasing the quality, quantity and use of natural environment assets that benefit people's health and help prevent ill health.

Regional

4.1.6 **Leicestershire Together** is a partnership made up of the county's major public service budget holders such as local councils, the police and the health service. It has been established for a number of years and as defined by the partnership itself, its aim is to work to improve the schools, colleges, businesses, shops, hospitals, roads, parks, homes, villages and towns in the county. The principle aim is to help make people in Leicestershire feel included, "richer, safer, better trained, healthier and happier".

4.1.7 **The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act** (2007) places a joint statutory duty on upper tier local authorities and local NHS to undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for their area. A JSNA was prepared in 2012 and updated in 2016 and was used to inform the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

4.1.8 This **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy** (2017-2022) aims to "add years of healthy life" by improving health throughout people's lives, reduce health inequalities and focus on the needs of the local population. Primarily this related to health service provision but includes objectives relevant to spatial land use planning. Including:

- Putting health and wellbeing at the centre of all public policy making by influencing other agendas such as economy, employment, housing, environment, planning and transport.
- Supporting the ageing population, including providing appropriate housing and adaptations to enable the frail elderly to live longer in their own homes.

4.1.9 The **Safer Leicestershire Partnership** brings together a number of agencies to reduce crime and disorder in Leicestershire including Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service, local housing associations and others. The focus is on three key priorities:

- Tackling crime
- Focus on anti-social behaviour
- Supporting our communities.

4.1.10 The **Adult Social Care Accommodation strategy for older people 2016-2026** reflects the adult social care vision to prevent need, reduce need, delay need and meet the need for health and social care services within Leicestershire. It considers the demands of an increasingly older population and how accommodation can be provided in order to meet the demands and requirements of this demographic into the future.

Local

4.1.11 Within the adopted and emerging Local Plans across the HMA, there are a number of policies and principles relating to health and wellbeing. The common themes are drawn out and summarised in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Key messages for Health and Wellbeing

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Maintain and improve access to Green Infrastructure	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS14
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS12
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS8
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 19 and Policy 20
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy 13
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - EN3
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 8
Maximise Open Space, Sport and Recreation opportunities	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS15
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS15
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 19
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy 13
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN7
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy IF3
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 9
Develop Healthy Communities	All Local Authorities have recognised this as a key issue.
There is a need to plan for an ageing population	All Local Authorities have recognised this trend as a key issue.

4.2 Strategic baseline

- 4.2.1 According to the Leicestershire Health Profile⁵ (2015), the health of the population within Leicestershire is generally better than the England average, with a higher life expectancy for both men and women, and lower than average levels of deprivation. This applies to all Boroughs and Districts apart from Leicester City, as shown in Table 4.2.
- 4.2.2 The health profile shows that, in 2012, the rate of alcohol related harm hospital stays, self-harm hospital stays, smoking related deaths, and levels of adult physical activity within Leicestershire were all better than the England average. Likewise, the rates of hip fractures, sexually transmitted infections, people killed and seriously injured on the roads, and TB were better than average.
- 4.2.3 In terms of wellbeing, the Leicestershire Health Profile also shows that rates of statutory homelessness, long-term unemployment and drug misuse are also better than the England average⁵.
- 4.2.4 All districts across Leicestershire are experiencing an ageing population, and subsequently the demand on health care facilities over recent years has altered to reflect this demographic shift. Following the abolition of the Primary Care Trusts in April 2013, the East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group (ELR CCG) took on full responsibility for commissioning healthcare services for residents of East Leicestershire and Rutland, including Blaby District. Other local authority areas are covered by the West Leicestershire CCG, the Leicester City CCG⁶,
- 4.2.5 Obesity within Leicestershire fluctuates between Boroughs; however it is relatively aligned to the England average (Table 4.2). More specifically, obesity within children (Year 6) is slightly better than the England average, whilst obesity within adults is slightly worse.
- 4.2.6 Crime levels across Leicestershire are relatively low to those experienced across England, with six out of the eight LPAs recording steady decreases in crime over recent years. However this is not represented in Leicester City Centre, which has a predominantly higher crime rate than the England average and the surrounding districts (Table 4.2). In the administrative area of Leicester, perceptions of anti-social behaviour are also high with more people concerned by drug and alcohol related behaviour in their area than people nationally.
- 4.2.7 Access to open space and leisure facilities varies across Leicestershire, both in terms of its accessibility and its typology. Whilst there is a lack of formalised open space and sport ground provision in North West Leicestershire (Table 4.2), the National Forest is likely to offer green infrastructure which could be used for recreational purposes. Other local authority areas also suffer from unequal access to green infrastructure and open space. In Charnwood, this projects as an inadequate provision of parks in Loughborough and a lack of sports pitches for young people. Redundant quarry sites across Leicestershire, such as those in Blaby, offer recreational opportunities.

⁵ Leicestershire Health Profile (2015), Available: <http://psnc.org.uk/leicestershire-and-rutland-lpc/public-health-county/>

⁶ Sustainability Appraisal Main Report (2016) Blaby District Council, Available: <http://www.blaby.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-plans-policies/environment-and-planning/local-plan/local-plan-delivery-dpd/>

4.3 Future baseline, key Issues and opportunities

- 4.3.1 With population expected to both continue rising and ageing, the challenges associated with this demographic shift are likely to be exacerbated (such as increased pressure on services, providing adequate housing, and providing the health care required for this population). However, policies within the emerging and adopted local plans do make reference to the ageing population, with measures in place to help adapt to changes.
- 4.3.2 All local authorities express a desire to increase access to open space, sport and recreational facilities. With awareness and investment, increased provision could be delivered.
- 4.3.3 Whilst potential transport improvements could improve access to health services, population growth is likely to create additional pressure on health service provision. Discrepancies' of health across Leicestershire as a whole, but also within individual Boroughs, is therefore likely to be exacerbated unless accessibility is improved.
- 4.3.4 Accessibility within rural areas, housing affordability, and access to specialist housing for the elderly have been highlighted as potential concerns from several LPAs.

4.4 Strategic trends

- 4.4.1 The table below outlines strategic trends and issues relating to health and wellbeing across the Plan area.

Table 4.2: Key Health and Wellbeing issues across Leicester and Leicestershire.

Key issues / trends				
Authority	Health and Life Expectancy	Access to open space/ leisure facilities	Crime	Access to health facilities ⁷
Leicester City	Life expectancy lower than England average. Deprivation above England average. Disparity exists between the inner city areas and outer estates (2016).	District parks are accessible within the city; however there is a lack of public space serving the city centre (2016).	The city has a higher rate of domestic burglary, robbery, vehicle crime and violent crime than the national average (2016).	
North West Leicestershire	Shows an older population profile than national average putting certain demands on healthcare services (2016).	Shortfall in the provision of recreation grounds and open space (2007).	Crime is falling from a relatively low starting point (2016).	Majority of the district is within 2.5 miles of a GP (2012).
Blaby District Council	Life expectancy lower than England average. Deprivation is lower than average (IMD 2015) Health is generally good. 7.03% people stated that their health is 'Not Good' compared to 9.03% in England (2012).	There is an undersupply of children's and young persons-play space, informal open space and allotments (2015).	Reported crimes and anti-social behavior declined from 2007-2015. However, levels have risen slightly in 2016 and 2017 (2017).	Vast majority of district within 2.5 miles of GP (2012).
Charnwood Borough Council	Varied health across the Borough. Deprivation is lower than the England average (IMD 2015). Life expectancy above national average (2016).	Relatively good access to open space, but deficiency of access to natural green space sites across the Borough (2013).	Violent crime levels better than England average (2015). Antisocial behavior perceived as one of the main threats (2013).	Majority of Borough within 2.5 miles of GP. North east is less well served (2012).
Harborough District Council	Higher life expectancy than the national average (2011 Census). But lack of services in rural areas which could be exacerbated with an ageing population (2014 ⁸).	Has a higher percentage of green space than the national average. (2005). Deficiency in the provision of certain types of GI (Parks and Gardens, Allotments, children's).	District performs better than the violent crime levels as experienced compared to the England average.	Mixed access to facilities. Two small hospitals. Some reliance on Leicester and Kettering for healthcare services. Rural areas would struggle to support additional demand (2014).

⁷ Figure 3.7 Map of GP Practices (data taken from 2012), North West Leicestershire SA/ SEA Scoping Report (2016), North West Leicestershire District Council

⁸ Harborough Local Plan SA Scoping Report (2014)

	Health and Life Expectancy	Access to open space/ leisure facilities	Crime	Access to health facilities
Melton Borough Council	Health better than national average (2015).	Lack of open space for amenity and recreation in the north and east of Borough (2015). Slightly less satisfaction with facilities than the national rate.	Motor vehicle theft and records of violent crime have reduced from 2001-2011. Crime on the whole has remained stable from 2012-2017 (2017).	Maternity hospital with one ward for general rehabilitation. GPs in rural areas. Majority of areas located 5- 7.5 miles to services within Borough (2012).
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Mixed health compared to national average. Life expectancy higher for males and females. Mortality rates are lower than the England Average (2017).	Wide resource of recreational activities, including Market Bosworth Country Park. (2014).	Overall levels of crime reduced from 2006- 2010 and has fluctuated between 2012 and 2017, but fear of crime still identified as a significant issue (2017).	Access to facilities considered an issue particularly in rural areas. Some local services at risk of closure (2014).
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	Health indicators are varied compared to the England average (2014), however life expectancy higher than England average.	There is a deficiency of various open space and recreational typologies (2013).	Violent crime levels significantly below England average (2013). Best performing district with regards to satisfaction with policing (2013).	Concentration of services within key settlement areas/ within 2.5 miles (2012).
Summary	Performance against indicators of health and wellbeing varies across the HMA. In broad terms, most authorities have relatively low levels of deprivation and higher than average life expectancy. Leicester City is the exception, as well as there being pockets of deprivation and poorer health across the County.	Though there are a range of recreational facilities, open space and leisure facilities, most authorities experience some shortage of open space of different typologies.	Levels of crime are broadly low across the County, with a general reduction in overall crime rates. However, the fear of crime remains a problem, and there are still areas of higher crime and anti-social behaviour such as Leicester City and other urban areas.	The majority of areas across the HMA are within 2.5 miles to a GP or health centre. However, accessibility in some rural areas is not as good.

5. *Housing*

5.1 Policy context

National

- 5.1.1 In February 2017, the Government published a housing white paper entitled “Fixing our broken housing market”. This establishes the government’s plans to reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes in England through a series of four proposals. These include:
- Planning for the right homes in the right places
 - Building homes faster
 - Diversifying the Market
 - Helping people now
- 5.1.2 In November 2011 the Government launched a national housing strategy entitled ‘**Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England**’. This sets out measures to support the delivery of new homes and aspirations, support choice and quality for tenants, tackling empty homes and providing better quality homes, places and housing support. Actions include the following:
- Establishment of the Growing Places Fund to support infrastructure that unblocks stalled housing and economic growth;
 - Launch of ‘Get Britain Building’ investment fund to support building firms in need of development finance;
 - Support a new build indemnity scheme to provide up to 95 percent loan to value mortgages;
 - Putting in place incentives for housing growth through the New Homes Bonus, Community Infrastructure Levy and proposals for local business retention;
 - A simplified National Planning Policy Framework;
 - Supporting choice and quality for tenants through supporting growth and investment in the private rented housing market;
 - Reform of social housing through the Localism Act 2011;
 - Considering how to encourage more affordable housing; and
 - Support, protections and opportunities for struggling households, including prioritisation for the vulnerable.
- 5.1.3 One of the principle roles of the **NPPF** (2012) is to deliver housing, based on an evidence base to ensure that enough housing is identified for development that will meet housing needs, both for market and subsidised ‘affordable’ homes.
- 5.1.4 The NPPF focuses on sustainable development and the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles including a social role “supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations” (paragraph 7).

- 5.1.5 Section 6 of the NPPF relates to housing delivery, stating that: “To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:
- use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period;
 - identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land;
 - Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
 - For market and affordable housing, illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a housing implementation strategy for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target; and
 - Set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.”
- 5.1.6 Paragraph 50 relates to the type of housing that should be delivered, identifying that “to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:
- Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);
 - Identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and
 - Where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need.”
- 5.1.7 NPPF is also clear that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance the vitality of rural communities, although isolated dwellings in the countryside are only permitted subject to certain circumstances (paragraph 55).
- Regional
- 5.1.8 The **Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) for Leicester and Leicestershire** (2017) provides an integrated assessment of future housing needs, the scale of future economic growth and the quantity of land and floorspace required for B-class employment development across the various authority areas for the period between 2011 and 2031/36.
- 5.1.9 The **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Leicestershire** (2015) identifies that local housing strategies across the Leicestershire county have identified the following issues affecting the housing needs of vulnerable people:

- A need to identify non-decent homes occupied by vulnerable people;
- Higher demand for disabled adaptations to homes in the private sector;
- Unsuitable housing due to special needs / mobility needs;
- An increased need for smaller, suitable units of accommodation to meet the national trend of an increasing proportion of older households and to meet the accommodation needs of young single people – especially relevant with proposed benefit changes;
- A lack of move-on accommodation and tenancy support; and
- It is anticipated that with the proposed reforms for welfare benefits coupled with the impacts of the Localism Act 2011 there will be a much greater need for on-going housing advice and support coupled with financial inclusion initiatives.

5.1.10 **The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014)** sets the housing need recommendations for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA). The HMA covers all the authorities of Leicestershire County.

Local

5.1.11 Table 5.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for housing across the HMA.

Table 5.1: Key messages for housing

Strategic approaches	Source / Authorities
Sustainable Urban Extensions	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS3 (land west of the M1, Lubbethorpe SUE 4,250 new homes)
Strategic Regeneration Area / Ashton Green SUE	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policies CS19, CS20, CS21 and CS22 (propose several urban extensions to accommodate housing growth)
Strategic Development Areas	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) (Potential Strategic Development Areas for large scale housing development (at least 1000 homes) at Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Scraptoft)
Sustainable Neighbourhoods	<p>Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS4 and CS5 (mixed use led redevelopment guided by masterplans and SPDs. The Waterside is to be a large residential development close to the city centre. Plans for 3,500 new homes at Ashton Green, Leicester)</p> <p>Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy SS4 and Policy SS5 (details the South Melton Mowbray Neighbourhood, 2000 new homes and Mowbray North, 1700 new homes of which 1500 will be delivered before 2036)</p> <p>North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy H3 (details land north of Ashby de la Zouch for around 2,050 homes and large scale residential development in Coalville, Measham and Kegworth)</p>

Strategic approaches	Source / Authorities
<p>Housing distribution: The distribution of housing is based on the ability of settlements to accommodate additional growth.</p>	<p>Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS5 (Strategy of 5750 across principal urban areas including a new SUE and proportion of dwellings to individual or groups of settlements by type)</p> <p>Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policies 6-13 (outlines requirements for individual settlements from key urban areas to rural hamlets)</p> <p>Melton (Policy SS2 outlines the development strategy including the proportion each settlement type).</p> <p>North West Leicestershire (Policy S2 Settlement Hierarchy sets out the best serviced settlements which will be the focus of growth).</p>
<p>Affordable housing: - To optimise the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs;</p>	<p>Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS7 (25% on sites of 15+ dwellings).</p> <p>Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS3 (target 20-40%)</p> <p>Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy H2 (target 40% on sites with 10+ dwellings)</p> <p>Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 15 (target urban 20% and rural 40%)</p> <p>Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS7 (target from 15% to 30% on sites of 15+ dwellings)</p> <p>Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy C4 (target of 37% on sites of 11+ units or where floorspace exceeds 1000m²)</p> <p>North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy H4 (target 5%-30%)</p> <p>Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - (target 10%-30%)</p>
<p>Mix of housing: - To provide the appropriate quantity and mix of housing;</p>	<p>Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS8</p> <p>Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS3</p> <p>Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy H5</p> <p>Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 16</p> <p>Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS6</p> <p>Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy C2</p> <p>North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy H6</p> <p>Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 12</p>

Strategic approaches	Source / Authorities
Deliver appropriate Gypsy and Traveller Provision	All authorities include policy on Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision.

5.2 Strategic baseline

5.2.1 The whole of Leicester and Leicestershire has been defined a 'housing market area' (HMA), across which people travel to work and move house. The 8 local authorities have worked together alongside the Local Economic Partnership to commission a 'Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment'⁹ (HEDNA) (2017) which addresses elements of the 'Duty to Cooperate'. The HEDNA calculates the 'objectively assessed needs' (OAN) for housing both up to 2031 and to 2036. Overall, the HEDNA identifies an objectively assessed need for 117,900 dwellings across the area between 2011 and 2036.

5.2.2 Table 5.2 shows the OAN of additional housing needed until 2031 and 2036 for each area as set out in the HEDNA.

Table 5.2 Objectively assessed housing need (2017) Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment

Area	Number of houses 2011 to 2031	Number of houses 2011 to 2036
Blaby	7400	9025
Charnwood	20620	24850
Harborough	10640	12850
Hinckley and Bosworth	9420	11350
Leicester City	33840	41700
Melton	3720	4250
North West Leicestershire	9620	11200
Oadby and Wigston	2960	3875
HMA TOTAL ¹⁰	96580	117900

5.2.3 According to the 2017 HEDNA for Leicester and Leicestershire, the median house price within the HMA was £166,500 in 2015. The following table lists the median house price for all the partner local authorities.

Table 5.3 Median House Price 2015

Local Authority	Median House Price 2015
Leicester City	£132,000
Blaby	£171,500

⁹ Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment , Main Report Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Final Report, January 2017

¹⁰ The Total received OAN for the HMA is lower than the sum of the OAN for individual authorities because the OAN for Melton BC and North West Leicestershire DC has been increased to meet economic needs locally.

Local Authority	Median House Price 2015
Charnwood	£175,000
Harborough	£228,995
Hinckley & Bosworth	£169,995
Melton	£172,000
NW Leicestershire	£165,000
Oadby & Wigston	£166,000

Source: HEDNA 2017, GLH Analysis, Land Registry Price Paid Data

- 5.2.4 As can be seen from the house price table above, Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Blaby, and Hinckley & Bosworth are noted as having comparatively higher median prices than the overall HMA median value.
- 5.2.5 Delivery of annual housing targets fluctuates between the local authorities, and on an annual basis. **Table 5.4** illustrates the latest available information with regards to housing completions by local authority. Various sites are highlighted as development opportunities by each LPA, with particular mention to the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA).

5.3 Projected baseline, Issues and opportunities

- 5.3.1 For the period 2006-2036, there is a projected household increase of 20.7% within Leicester and Leicestershire, totalling 106,625 dwellings¹¹. The projections indicate a need for an average of 4,265 dwellings per annum to 2036 across the county.
- 5.3.2 In order to ensure that all households who require financial support are able to meet their housing need, in the period 2011 to 2036, 2,238 affordable homes per annum will also need to be developed. The evidence presented in the 2017 HEDNA highlights delivery of affordable housing as particularly necessary in Oadby and Wigston and Blaby, where the need for this housing tenure is considered to be acute.
- 5.3.3 There is also expected to be a significant increase of older person headed households to 2036. The HEDNA predicts that between 2011 and 2036, the total number of people aged 65 or more will increase by 75%. Housing units will therefore need to be delivered both in terms of quantity and also in terms of specialist requirements, in order to cater to these demographic forecasts.
- 5.3.4 As currently exists, there is variance across the local authorities in terms of completions and their ability to meet the housing requirements of their administrative areas. There is potential scope to absorb housing development across local authority borders.
- 5.3.5 Absorbing unmet need into neighbouring local authorities would need to be complemented with cross-border infrastructure improvements, such as highways development, in order to serve the population distribution.

5.3.6

¹¹ Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment , Main Report Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Final Report, January 2017

- 5.3.7 Housing developments should value watercourses as an asset to the development as they provide multiple benefits if incorporated into local green spaces with adequate space and appropriate enhancements. This can raise the value of the housing, build resilience for flooding, provide space for sustainable transport routes, increase biodiversity and provide important recreational spaces for residents which can also benefit the health of the residents.

Table 5.4: Key issues and trends for housing

Key issues / trends				
Authority	Current housing target	Delivery of housing target	Indicative supply	Key developments
<i>Leicester City</i>	Target of 1280 per annum.	Unlikely to be able to meet its housing need; the extent of which will be identified through the plan making process. Net completions in 2010/11 were 977, in 2015/16 this had increased to 1,131.	21,462 built and committed 2011-2016 3,018 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Strategic Regeneration Area, including Leicester Waterside. Ashton Green SUE
<i>North West Leicestershire</i>	Target of 520 per annum.	Increase in completions from 2010/11 (186) to 2016/17 (731).	12,015 built and committed 2011-2016 14,286 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	South East Coalville Urban Extension (3,500 dwelling units) Urban extensions at Coalville and Ashby
<i>Blaby District Council</i>	Target of 380 per annum.	Consistent increase in annual completions since 2008/09 (218) to 2016/17 (743).	8064 built and committed 2011-2016 15,682 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Lubbesthorpe SUE under construction along the A47 (4,250 dwellings), with the first completions expected in the 2016/17 monitoring year 12 PUA - Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester Forest East, Braunstone Town and Glen Parva
<i>Charnwood Borough Council</i>	Target of 820 per annum.	Housing completions have increased from 697 in 2011/12, to 903 in 2016/17.	17,146 built and committed 2011-2016 16,435 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	SUE 4,500 dwellings to north east of Leicester (delayed), SUE 3,000 to west of Loughborough (delayed), Focus dev in PUA, Loughborough and Shepshed (market towns) + Service Centres considered appropriate. Smaller settlements not considered appropriate for development.

¹² Blaby District Council Site Selection Paper – Site Assessments for Housing September 2016.

Key issues / trends				
Authority	Current housing target	Delivery of housing target	Indicative supply	Key developments
<i>Harborough District Council</i>	Target of 475 per annum.	Consistently not delivered housing target in the period 2011/12- 2013/14. Delivered above the target for 2014/15 and 2015/16. Average annual completions of 398 units between 2011/12 and 2015/16.	7,103 built and committed 2011-2016 23,350 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Areas adjoining the PUA (Thurnby/ Bushby, Scraptoft). Potential Scraptoft SDA (1,202 units) Lutterworth East SDA Market Harborough
<i>Melton Borough Council</i>	Target of 245 per annum.	Housing completions have increased from 2012/13 (64) to 2016/17 (147). However, a considerable shortfall means that 282 dwellings per annum are needed to meet the local plan target within the plan period.	1,518 built and committed 2011-2016 35,132 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Melton North and South Sustainable Neighbourhoods as mentioned earlier in the report to meet the major bulk of need within the Plan period. The completion rate is significantly lower than the rate provisionally set by the Council. The new Melton Local Plan will release additional sites to meet the strategic housing requirement to 2036.
<i>Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council</i>	Target of 450 per annum.	Fluctuations over previous year. Significant increase in completions between 2012/13 (227) to 2016/17 (556).	9,334 built and committed 2011-2016 15,984 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Barwell SUE (2500 dwellings) East Shilton (1,550 dwellings) The latest RLA (2015/16) states that initial completions on both sites are anticipated to be in the monitoring year 2018/19.
<i>Oadby and Wigston Borough Council</i>	Target of 90 per annum.	Delivered under target in the period 2010/11 to 2013/14, however in the last three years of monitoring the delivery has been in excess of the target. 175 units were delivered in 2016/17.	1,425 built and committed 2011-2016. 1,384 (SHLAA) capacity 2036	Local Plan Preferred Options propose a number of key sites including Oadby Sewage Treatment Works, and the Wigston Direction for Growth Area which is carried over from the existing Core Strategy.

6. *Employment and the Economy*

6.1 Policy context

National

- 6.1.1 The importance of the economy in achieving sustainable development is reflected in the **NPPF**. At paragraph 7, it states the economic role of the planning system is:
- 6.1.2 “Contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure”.
- 6.1.3 A key theme of the **NPPF** is ‘Building a strong, competitive economy’. This makes clear the role of the planning system in delivering sustainable economic growth. This includes setting criteria for the delivery of strategic employment sites and support of existing business sectors (paragraph 21).
- 6.1.4 The **NPPF** also supports the role of town centres in securing economic growth and as the focus community activity. Town centres should be promoted to provide a diverse retail offer and should be the focus of retail activity (paragraph 23). Office development should also be focused in town centres.
- 6.1.5 Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development (paragraph 28). To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:
- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas
 - Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas; and
 - Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages.
- 6.1.6 Building our Industrial Strategy (Green Paper, 2017) makes it clear that we need a modern industrial strategy. Its prime objective is to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country. The paper sets out 10 pillars for the economy; investing in science, research and innovation, developing skills, upgrading infrastructure, supporting businesses to start and grow, improving procurement, encouraging trade and inward investment, delivering affordable energy and clean growth, cultivating world-leading sectors, driving growth across the whole country, creating the right institutions. The strategy mentions regionally important schemes such as Midlands Rail Hub, and outlines that transport projects will be more closely linked to economic growth and priorities.
- 6.1.7 The **UK Broadband Impacts Study** addresses what economic, social and environmental impacts are likely to be seen from improvements in broadband performance and what return is likely to be seen from substantial public funds going into upgrading the UK’s broadband infrastructure. The report finds that these interventions are likely to yield:

- A projected return of approximately £20 in net economic impact for every £1 of public investment;
- A total net employment impacts from faster broadband to rise to about 56,000 jobs at the UK level by 2024, with about 20,000 jobs are attributable to the publicly funded intervention;
- A material impact on reducing the digital divide for both households and businesses;
- 60 million hours of leisure time through teleworking facilitated by faster broadband per annum in the UK with total household savings rising to £270 million p.a. by 2024 by avoiding commuting costs (£45 million of which are attributable to intervention); and
- 1.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) savings per annum, by 2024, through reduction in predominant car usage due to increased telework, video and online collaboration tools, and more energy efficient public cloud platform data storage.

Regional

- 6.1.8 The **Leicestershire Local Economic Partnership (LLEP)** has been established to provide vision and strategic leadership to drive economic growth. The LLEP prepared the Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2020 (SEP). This contains the vision to “create a vibrant, attractive and distinctive place with highly skilled people making Leicester and Leicestershire the destination of choice for successful businesses. It identifies growth areas including the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway, the Coalville Growth Corridor, Loughborough, South West Leicestershire and the Leicester Urban Area. It also identifies the potential for the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, identified as a 250 acre distribution and logistics development.
- 6.1.9 The LLEP is currently in the process of refreshing its strategic economic plan.
- 6.1.10 The LLEP is currently consulting on a Strategic Growth Plan that outlines a shared vision for housing, employment and economic growth throughout Leicestershire. It proposes a need for infrastructure investments and reaffirms the importance of strengthening Leicester as the central core city for the region.
- 6.1.11 The **Midlands Engine for Growth Propectus (2016)** sets out how the east and west midlands will come together to achieve a collective approach to the delivery of 300,000 jobs and £34 billion of growth in the next 15 years. There is a focus on five key themes; promotion for inward investment, Midland Connect for improving transport infrastructure, research and innovation growth, providing finance for business, developing skills.

Local

- 6.1.12 Table 6.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for biodiversity within the adopted and emerging local plans across the HMA.

Table 6.1: Key messages for employment and economy

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Promote quality, quantity and mix of employment opportunities	All authorities
Support appropriate education and training opportunities.	All authorities

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Support city / town centre regeneration	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS13
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS9
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy RT1 and RT2
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 1, 2 and 3
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS1 and CS4
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EC8 - EC12
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 27 and 28
Support rural economic development – diversification, leisure, tourism	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS6
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS10
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 7
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EC2 and Policy EC8 (which is specifically for 'sustainable tourism')
Support and promote tourism	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS7
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 22, Policy 23 and Policy 27
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EC8
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EC13
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 17

6.2 Strategic baseline

6.2.1 Across Leicester and Leicestershire there are notable percentage shares for manufacturing, education, transport and storage and mining and quarrying which exceed the average for

England. Growth in the economy in these and other priority sectors is encouraged through the Strategic Economic Plan.

- 6.2.2 In terms of economic activity, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) is a strategic body which operates in the area led by a board made up of local government and business leaders as well as senior education and third sector representatives.
- 6.2.3 The LLEP covers the City of Leicester and County of Leicestershire which together, make up the largest economy in the East Midlands. This economy is "*Worth £19.4bn a year...is central to the prosperity of the Midlands, providing 435,000 jobs and hosting 33,000 trading businesses – many of which are in the manufacturing and logistics sectors*"¹³.
- 6.2.4 Between November 2014 and January 2015, the LLEP undertook a business survey¹⁴. The headlines included that business confidence in both profitability and turnover has remained at the high levels seen previously, with a net of 55% of respondents expecting profits to rise over the following year and a net 65% predicting an increase in turnover.
- 6.2.5 It also found that 64% of the business in the LLEP had recruited in 2013-2014 and also that 31% of workforces had grown over the same period.
- 6.2.6 Whilst there are strong performances in some areas, there are also issues of lack of job opportunities (for skilled workers) in some of the authorities outside of Leicester. This is partly because it is difficult to retain some types of skills given the range of jobs and salaries available in Leicester City or other larger settlements in the Midlands such as Northampton or Nottingham.
- 6.2.7 The occupational structure of Leicester and Leicestershire is dominated by manufacturing, public administration, defence, health and educational employment. In particular, transport and storage, mining, and quarrying activities exceed the England average. With regards to the East Midlands, the Leicester and Leicestershire economy is the largest of the surrounding counties.
- 6.2.8 Some authorities (For example, Hinckley and Bosworth) have expressed that there is an over reliance on manufacturing, particularly in the urban areas. This could present issues should there be a decline on certain manufacturing sectors. Diversifying the economy and developing the role of certain 'growth sectors,' such as high value manufacturing, service and creative industries, and tourism, is therefore desirable.
- 6.2.9 In terms of employment, there have been positive trends in all authorities, with a reduction of unemployment across the board (ONS, 2011-2016). This has led to a relatively good position in all authorities, though levels remain higher in Leicester City compared to the other authorities.
- 6.2.10 In terms of qualifications and skills, there is considerable variation across the local authority areas. Notably, graduate retention in the region is low following the completion of undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
- 6.2.11 Various strategic employment locations are highlighted within Table 6.2, notably the East Midlands Gateway, Magna Park, Meridian Business Park, Grove Park, the Watermead regeneration corridor, Optimus Point, the proposed Lubbethorpe SES, and several of the larger settlement areas. The table also shows that unemployment figures across Leicestershire are falling from their 2011 levels whilst more people are gaining qualifications within the same period. Such trends have the ability to affect future employment patterns.

¹³ LLEP (2016) About us - <https://www.llep.org.uk/about-us/>

¹⁴ DNLCC, Quarterly Economic Review, Quarter 2, 2014

6.2.12 Blaby District is now being marketed as one of the prime locations for manufacturing industries, distribution warehouses and offices in Leicestershire. New economic development is centred mainly around the M1 and M69 junction¹⁵.

6.3 Projected baseline, key issues and opportunities

- 6.3.1 Many of the major economic generators are located on the periphery of the Leicester and Leicestershire area, and as such may not be considered accessible or particularly sustainable sites for local employment within the county. This is particularly the case with East Midlands Airport, strategic logistics and distributions at Magna Park, and the Horiba MIRA (Motor Industry Research Association) enterprise park. Public transport links to these areas could improve with investment, but they are likely to remain car-dominated without substantial intervention and investment.
- 6.3.2 Given the central location of Leicester and Leicestershire within the 'Golden Triangle', and competitive daily-drive times to the majority of the UK population, the county is particularly catered to the strategic and logistics sector. There is potential to capitalise on this offering and to distribute the benefits of these services across the Leicester and Leicestershire area.
- 6.3.3 With this in mind, several authorities have highlighted the need to deliver land for rail and non-rail strategic distribution across the HMA. Development of this kind could also offer an opportunity to develop cross-border relations with surrounding areas (such as Coventry and Warwickshire). The area around the East Midlands Airport is particularly attractive to logistics operators.
- 6.3.4 The M1 corridor and associated junctions intersects Leicestershire from the north to the south, acting as a key transport route which is attractive to economic development. The A5 trunk road also holds economic appeal as it runs along the southern border of Leicestershire, through Harborough, Blaby and Hinckley and Bosworth.
- 6.3.5 Development of strategic distribution interchanges (both rail and non-rail served) could also offer an opportunity to develop cross-border relations with surrounding areas (such as Coventry and Warwickshire).
- 6.3.6 The majority of local authorities support the growth of the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA) and larger service centres, whilst seeking to protect and maintain the character of rural centres by safeguarding them from development which exceeds their need (urban expansion, rural restraint). Sites for smaller employment uses or the expansion of existing businesses are also supported in sustainable locations.
- 6.3.7 New business development should value watercourses as an asset to the development as they provide multiple benefits if incorporated into local green spaces with adequate space and appropriate enhancements. This can raise the appeal of the development as place to work by providing important outside space for workers; improving their health & wellbeing. Such design would also improve the sustainability credentials of the business by building resilience for flooding, supporting local biodiversity and providing space for sustainable transport routes.

¹⁵ Sustainability Appraisal Main Report (2016) Blaby District Council, Available: <http://www.blaby.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-plans-policies/environment-and-planning/local-plan/local-plan-delivery-dpd/>

Table 6.2: Strategic issues and trends for economy and employment across Leicester and Leicestershire

Key issues / trends			
Authority	Unemployment ¹⁶	Education	Key employment locations
Leicester City	Falling, unemployment figure now at 5.2% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 11.4% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 38% to 28%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 16% to 21%) (2011).	City Centre and regeneration areas. Leicester and De Montfort University Global Space Technologies Hub
North West Leicestershire	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3.5% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 5.5% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 33% to 26%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 16% to 24%) (2011).	East Midlands Gateway. Regeneration of Coalville Urban Area.
Blaby District Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 4.8% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 27% to 22%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 17% to 24%) (2011).	Meridian Business Park, Grove Park at J21. Optimus Point, Glenfield Proposed Lubbesthorpe SES
Charnwood Borough Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3.6% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 6.7% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 22% to 18%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 19% to 26%) (2011).	Watermead Regeneration corridor. Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park. Sustainable Urban Extensions North of Birstall, West of Loughborough, Northeast of Leicester.
Harborough District Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 4.4% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 33% to 26%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 23% to 31%) (2011)	Magna Park, Lutterworth Market Harborough Strategic Development Areas
Melton Borough Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 4.2% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 5% Jun 2011)	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 27% to 21%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 18% to 26%) (2011)	Agri-food and drink processing at Melton Mowbray

¹⁶ Taken from ONS Annual Population Survey

Key issues / trends			
Authority	Unemployment	Education	Key employment locations
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3.5% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 6.4% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 30% to 24%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 15% to 24%) (2011)	Horiba MIRA enterprise park, Hinckley Centre for Connected Autonomous Vehicles
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	Falling, unemployment figure now at 3.3% (Jun 2017). (For reference: 6.7% Jun 2011).	Improving, fewer people with no qualifications in 2011 than 2001 (from 28% to 22%), and more with Level 4 Qualifications (from 17% to 24%) (2011)	Leicester Principal Urban Area Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston
Summary	Unemployment is relatively low across the HMA with rates falling in all authorities between 2011 and 2017. Although, a closer inspection of the results reveals a small increase in most authority areas between 2016 and 2017.	Between 2001 and 2011 there has been a reduction in the number of people with no qualifications across each of the authorities. There has also been an increase in the number of people with Level 4 qualifications in each of the authorities over the same time period.	Key employment locations include the City Centre, market towns, regeneration corridors and strategic business parks linked to the road and rail networks.

7. *Transport and Access*

7.1 Policy context

National

- 7.1.1 The **NPPF** identifies that: “Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel.” (Paragraph 29)
- 7.1.2 The NPPF (paragraph 30) is clear that there is not only the need to find transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion, but also in preparing Local Plans that support a pattern of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.1.3 All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure.
- 7.1.4 Paragraph 35 states that: “Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should:
- Be located and designed where practical to accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;
 - Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;
 - Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;
 - Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and
 - Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.”
- 7.1.5 There are plans to bring the new High Speed 2 (HS2) route through the county as part of the Phase 2 Eastern leg connecting the East Midlands, South Yorkshire, Leeds and the North East.

Regional

- 7.1.6 The **Leicestershire County Council Local Transport Plan 3** (LTP3) covers the period 2011 to 2026. The LTP3 is the key mechanism for delivering integrated transport at a local level, and they help to promote transport as an enabler of other things, such as economic growth. LTP3 follows the earlier plans of LTP1 and LTP2.

The long-term vision for the transport system over the course of LTP3 incorporates six goals.

Goal 1: A transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth

Goal 2: An efficient, resilient and sustainable transport system that is well managed and maintained

Goal 3: A transport system that helps reduce the carbon footprint of Leicestershire

Goal 4: An accessible and integrated transport system that helps promote equality of opportunity for all our residents.

Goal 5: A transport system that improves the safety, health and security of our residents.

Goal 6: A transport system that helps to improve the quality of life for our residents and makes Leicestershire a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

- 7.1.7 It states “Leicestershire [is] to be recognised as a place that has, with the help of its residents and businesses, a first class transport system that enables economic and social travel in ways that improve people’s health, safety and prosperity, as well as their environment and their quality of life.”
- 7.1.8 The **Leicester Local Transport Plan** (2011) also covers the period from 2011 to 2026, and offers a strategy for the administrative area of Leicester City Council rather than the County. It sets a transport vision which seeks to *‘help transform Leicester into Britain’s sustainable city that will be a great and prosperous place to live but also somewhere that does not place a burden on the planet in future years.*
- 7.1.9 To achieve this vision, the Leicester Local Transport Plan has established the following goals:
- Economic Growth Supported – Leicester is more prosperous
 - Carbon Emissions Reduced – Leicester’ carbon footprint is reduced
 - Equality of Opportunity Promoted – Leicester’s people are more confident
 - Better Safety, Security and Health – Leicester’s people are more healthy, safe and secure
 - Population Growth is supported – Leicester’s Population is increased in a sustainable manner
 - Overarching Goal - Quality of Life and a Healthy Natural Environment are Improved - Leicester is a more attractive place
- 7.1.10 The **Midlands Connect Strategy** (March 2017), outlines the vision for the midlands to become an engine for growth through investment in transport infrastructure. The strategy identifies four strategic economic hubs of which Leicester-Coventry is one. It also identified intensive growth corridors including Nottingham – Leicester – Coventry – Warwick and Thames Valley, and includes connections from Leicester to Birmingham. Targeting investment to these areas aims to tackle congestion, support housing growth and improve the transport user experience.
- 7.1.11 The **East Midlands Airport Sustainable Development Plan** (2015) acts as an update to the airport masterplan. It sets out the strategic context for the long term development of East Midlands Airport, and addresses the economic and governmental changes which have occurred since 2006. The objectives of the plan are:
- Set out the long-term opportunities for the growth of East Midlands Airport, and the vision for the development of the site
 - Inform the plans and strategies of others across Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire
 - Identify the land, the uses and facilities required to support the operation of an airport capable of handling 10 million passengers annually and 1.2 million tonnes of cargo;

- Set out a policy for the use and the development of the airport land that is integrated with the Community Economy and Saracen Access and North West Leicestershire [Local Plan];
- A substantial increase capacity and redevelopment of the passenger terminal and new buildings and extensions to the cargo facilities; and
- Proposals for the Pegasus Business Park.

7.1.12 The **Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy** (2016) sets four priorities for the Leicester and Leicestershire area with regards to its rail network. These will help to guide development going forward, and are:

- To maximise the benefit from the Midland Main Line services.
- To achieve the best result from the implementation of HS2 Phase 2
- To radically improve direct fast connectivity to key regional and national destinations.
- To ensure that rail access and economic development are planned together.

7.1.13 Local

7.1.14 Table 7.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for transport and access.

Table 7.1: Key messages for transport and access

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Locate development to existing higher order settlements / centres where there is better access to services and existing infrastructure.	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS1, CS5, CS6, CS10 and CS13
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS1
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS5
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policies 2, 3 and 4
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS1 and CS12
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy SS2
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy S2 and Ec8
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 1, 2 and 16
Encouraging Sustainable and public Travel	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS10
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS17
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS5
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policies 1, 5 and 14

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS1, CS2, CS14 and CS15
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy IN1
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policies H3, IF1 and IF4
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 4 and 12
Secure transport Network Improvements	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policies CS3, CS10 and CS13
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS18
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 5 and Policy 14
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS14 and Policy CS13
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policies IN1, IN2 and EN3
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policies S3, IF4 and EN4
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 4 and Policy 6
Enhancement of multi-user access routes	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS10
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 20 and Policy 22
Strategic allocation sites (employment and housing) with transport commitments included as part of delivery).	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS3 and Policy CS4
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS19, CS20, CS21 CS22 and CS23
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS13, CS14, CS15 and CS16
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS6 and Policy CS10
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy SS4 and SS5
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy Ec2, Ec4 and Ec7
Requirement for transport assessment / travel plan to support	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS10
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policies CS17, CS18, CS19, CS22 and CS23

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
significant proposals	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Spatial Objective 13
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy 15
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy IN1
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy IF4
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 4

7.2 Strategic baseline

- 7.2.1 According to the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy (2016), Leicester and Leicestershire have relatively poor rail connectivity compared with similar areas. Whilst the service to London is frequent from Leicester, the strategic connectivity to regional and national centres of economic activity is weak. Travelling from north to south is relatively easy, though congested at times, but links from east to west are slow and unreliable.
- 7.2.2 The rural character of the majority of the authorities across much of Leicestershire represents significant issues with regards to accessibility to key services and facilities. Adding to this situation, within rural areas public transport is more likely to be less frequent, and so forcing the need for community transport services. Figure 7.2 shows the key transport infrastructure in the region.
- 7.2.3 Whilst car ownership rates are generally high throughout Leicestershire for those households without or with limited car availability, access to basic services and facilities, particularly within rural areas is poor.
- 7.2.4 Leicestershire as a whole is well connected to the national transport network. Besides motorways, there is a network of A-roads cross the County including well used routes such as the A45 and A46; the M1 divides the County north to south and the M69 enters the County to the south at Hinckley. The East Midlands Airport is located in North West Leicestershire and East Midlands Trains operate through North West Leicester (although no stations are located here) and Hinckley, the Midland Mainline passes through the Leicester City Centre north to south and links to London, Loughborough, Nottingham and Derby there are 10 rail stations within the County.

7.3 Projected baseline, key issues and opportunities

- 7.3.1 There is heavy reliance on the private car for commuting and travel across many parts of the County. Consequently, there are opportunities to expand the role of public transport, walking and cycling.
- 7.3.2 The Leicester Travel to Work Area, defined by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) based on 2011 Census data, extends across much of Leicestershire and includes all of the main towns within the County supporting the definition of common housing and functional economic market

areas. Around 78% of commuting flows are contained within the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities.¹⁷

- 7.3.3 Congestion is an ongoing issue in certain parts of the Plan area with known hotspots identified in some areas (Leicester City and the PUA for example). Congestion can have knock-on effects on the environment, the health of the local population and on the economy. The increased levels of emissions will have negative effects on local air quality and in turn effecting human health; congestion could also deter inward investment from an area.
- 7.3.4 In response to this there is a consistent ambition across the Authorities to encourage the reduction in reliance on the private car as the preferred transport mode. Public transport and active transport modes (i.e. cycling and walking) are encouraged throughout the County.
- 7.3.5 Infrastructure improvements are likely to be secured through new development, particularly for strategic development which requires substantial upgrades to the system.
- 7.3.6 Throughout the County the Authorities are each concentrating development towards the main centres and then local centres, with the aim that these centres will be more accessible to wider communities.
- 7.3.7 There is heavy reliance on the private car for commuting and travel across many parts of the County. Consequently, there are opportunities to expand the role of public transport, walking and cycling.
- 7.3.8 Several authorities (Harborough, Oadby and Wigston, Charwood) have highlighted that there may be constraints to the amount of development that can be accommodated on the edge or near the Leicester urban area in light of a poor orbital road network. This could exacerbate Congestion along A6 / A453 (Ring Road) for example.
- 7.3.9 The M1 will be the subject of a major programme of works to the strategic highways, including the M1 and motorway junctions. This is associated with the Roxhill development.
- 7.3.10 At the same time as the Roxhill motorway works, the Highways Agency will be undertaking SMART motorway works, so the area around East Midlands Airport will be experiencing roadworks for a number of years.
- 7.3.11 The route of the High Speed 2 will also run across the area, and will need to be factored into future growth strategies. In particular, there will be a new station at Toton, which will bring growth opportunities and improved connectivity close to the East Midlands Airport.
- 7.3.12 Rail travel is strong through Leicester and Leicestershire in a north south direction; however, it is much weaker in an east west direction and scope exists to strengthen rail connectivity in this east west direction to support the delivery of future growth. There are planned improvements to the Midland Main Line, including electrification.

¹⁷ Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment , Main Report Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Final Report, January 2017

Figure 7.1: Transport infrastructure across Leicester and Leicestershire

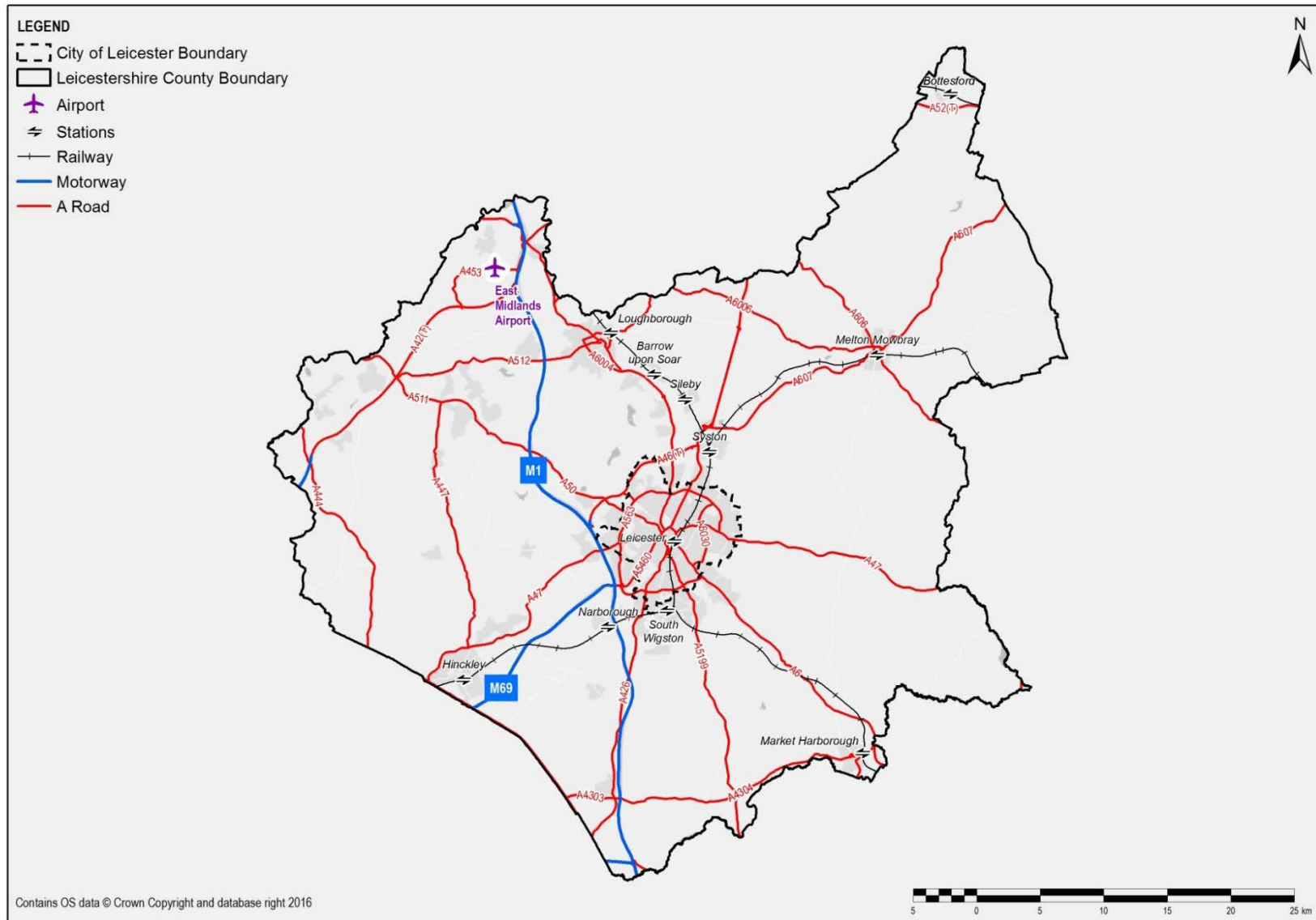


Table 7.2: Strategic issues and trends for Transport

Key issues / trends			
Authority	Accessibility to jobs, retail and services	Sustainable/public transport use	Networks, traffic and congestion
Leicester City	The city centre is very accessible by bus, with 96% of Leicester’s population living within 400m of a bus stop. Accessibility likely to remain good.	Whilst the city is well served by bus and rail, areas outside the centre are not as well served by public transport.	Congestion on roads in the urban area is worse than most comparator cities in England.
North West Leicestershire	Predominantly rural with the majority of the population in rural/semi-rural areas with more limited access to services by non-car means.	Larger settlements are best served by public transport service, though rail links are lacking. 74% of the District travel to work by car – higher than the national average.	Congestion is noted on roads surrounding Donnington Park
Blaby District Council	Fewer services / facilities available in smaller settlements in south-west leading to accessibility issues for those without transport.	Car ownership in Blaby is significantly higher than the East Midlands average. 87% of households have at least one car.	Key road links include M1, M69 and A46. The M1 junction 21 has significant congestion problems
Charnwood	Roads and public transport is good for larger settlements; accessibility poor in rural areas, with a reliance on private car.	42% (2011) of Charnwood households are car owners.	Traffic levels in Charnwood are predicted to increase by 19% by 2026 and congestion by 120%.
Harborough	Poor IMD scores indicate rural access to key services / facilities remains an issue. Trends indicate that this remains an ongoing issue.	Car ownership is higher (88% in 2010) than the regional average. Infrequent bus services with reliance on support services in rural areas. Rail links from Market Harborough are good, but there are no other stations in the borough.	Harborough has good road and rail links (from Market Harborough). Congestion presents issues in Lutterworth town centre and M6 Junction 21.
Melton	Access to services/facilities is limited in the more rural areas of the Borough.	Access to bus services is an issue for many in the Borough. There are rail links from Melton.	Melton Mowbray town centre has congestion problems.
Hinckley and Bosworth	Bosworth Community Plan (2007-2012) identifies access to facilities/services to be a problem particularly in rural areas.	Car ownership is significantly higher than the East Midlands average. Frequency of public transport in the rural areas is a problem.	Road links including the M1, M69 and M42. Congestion is an issue within the Borough.
Oadby and Wigston	Smaller settlements have more limited access to services and facilities.	Accessibility within the Borough via public transport is an issue.	Good transport links including M1 and M69, direct rail services and bus links. However, congestion is an issue at peak times.
Summary	Though access to services, jobs and facilities is good in the City Centre and for larger towns, it is generally more limited in rural areas (though high levels of car ownership mean that facilities ought to be accessible by this mode of transport).	There are generally high levels of car ownership, and access to public transport is an issue, particular in rural areas.	There are strong road networks, but some locations experience peak congestion issues, particularly town centres and key motorway junctions.

8. Air Quality and noise

8.1 Policy context

National

- 8.1.1 The **Air Quality Strategy** (2007) establishes the policy framework for ambient air quality management and assessment in the UK. The primary objective is to ensure that everyone can enjoy a level of ambient air quality which poses no significant risk to health or quality of life. The Strategy sets out the National Air Quality Objectives (NAQOs) and government policy on achieving these objectives.
- 8.1.2 Part IV of the **Environment Act** (1995) introduced a system of Local Air Quality Management (LAQM). This requires local authorities to regularly and systematically review and assess air quality within their boundary, and appraise development and transport plans against these assessments. The relevant NAQOs for LAQM are prescribed in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 and the Air Quality (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2002.
- 8.1.3 Where an objective is unlikely to be met, the local authority must designate an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and draw up an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to introduce in pursuit of the objectives within its AQMA.
- 8.1.4 The **Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance** (2009) (LAQM.TG (09)) issued by Defra for Local Authorities provides advice as to where the NAQOs apply. These include outdoor locations where members of the public are likely to be regularly present for the averaging period of the objective (which vary from 15 minutes to a year). Thus, for example, annual mean objectives apply at the façades of residential properties, whilst the 24-hour objective (for PM10) would also apply within garden areas. They do not apply to occupational, indoor or in-vehicle exposure.
- 8.1.5 The NPPF in relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment states in Paragraph 17 that: “Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should.....contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.”
- 8.1.6 Paragraph 109 states that: “The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.”
- 8.1.7 Paragraph 124 states that: “Planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan.”
- 8.1.8 The NPPF goes on to advise at paragraph 123 that: “Planning policies and decisions should aim to:
- Avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development;
 - Mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development, including through the use of conditions;

- Recognise that development will often create some noise and existing businesses wanting to development in continuance of their business should not have unreasonable restrictions put on them because of changes in nearby land uses since they were established; and
- Identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.”

8.1.9 The NPPF indicates that the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) should be used to define the “significant adverse impacts”.

Local

8.1.10 The ‘**Healthier Air for Leicester**’ Action Plan is Leicester’s Air Quality Action Plan (2015-2026). The Action Plan contains “far reaching actions over the period to 2026 intended to significantly reduce air pollution to a level lower than we are required to achieve by law.” This will be done by committing to four themes:

- Theme 1: Reducing Transport Emissions;
- Theme 2: Promoting Sustainable Transport;
- Theme 3: Improving Traffic Management; and
- Theme 4: Enhancing Planning and the Environment.

8.1.11 **Lutterworth Air Quality Action Plan** (2013) - Measures still considered as ongoing with the aim to achieve:

- Cleaner vehicles in the town centre with Low Emission Zone
- Planning controls to reduce traffic impact of new development on AQMA
- Land Use Planning for no unnecessary additional traffic through the town centre.

8.1.12 In North West Leicestershire, there is an **Air Quality Action Plan Framework** (2014) for all 5 AQMA’s. There is ongoing assessment of progress against action plan objectives:

- Reducing Vehicle emissions
- Improving the Road Network to reduce congestion
- Using Area Planning Measures to Reduce Traffic Volumes;
- Reducing Air Pollution from Industry /Commerce and Residential Areas;
- Changing Levels of Travel Demand / Promotion of Alternative Modes of Transport

8.1.13 **Blaby Air Quality Annual Status Report** (2016) sets out a number of measures to improve air quality.

- Traffic Management
 - Smart Motorways
 - Painted Chevrons
 - Traffic Management Methods;
- Vehicle Fleet Efficiency
 - Eco Driving training for Blaby District Council Staff
- Policy Guidance

- o Integration of Air Quality into planning policy

8.1.14 Table 8.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for air quality within the adopted and emerging local plans across the HMA.

Table 8.1: Air quality policies

Key policies & principles	Source / Authorities
Promoting Green Infrastructure	All authorities have identified this as a key policy principle and have developed policies in response.
Combatting Climate Change	All authorities have identified this as a key issue and have developed policies in response.
Managing the transport network	All authorities have identified this as a key issue and have developed policies in response.
Managing demand for car use	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS10
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 5 and Spatial Objective 13
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS15
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy CS2
Air quality management	Blaby District Council emerging Local Plan Delivery DPD - Policy on land Contamination and Pollution
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 8
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policies CS12, CS15 and CS14
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy En6

8.2 Strategic baseline

8.2.1 Air quality is a major environmental factor which can affect health and ecosystems. Several factors contribute to air pollution with a particular issue being with emissions relating to transport and subsequent pollutants. The Government’s National Air Quality Strategy outlines a major role for local authorities in helping to tackle local pollution areas of concern caused by road transport, known as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Councils undertake AQMA assessments annually.

8.2.2 There are various AQMAs across Leicester and Leicestershire. There are none in Oadby and Wigston, Hinckley and Bosworth and Melton, with two in Harborough (Lutterworth and Kibworth). North West Leicestershire has five, whilst Charnwood and Blaby have four. Leicester has a large section of the City Centre and along a number of radial roads and sections of the ring road.

8.2.3 There are contributors to noise pollution throughout Leicester and Leicestershire including large sources such the East Midlands Airport, and more localised sources such as industrial sites, housing developments and roads.

8.3 Projected baseline, issues and opportunities

- 8.3.1 Improvements to transport infrastructure are likely to reduce exposure to poor air quality within the County. In particular, the introduction of rail lines, investment in public transport, and improvements to green infrastructure should help to reduce congestion and traffic levels. However, population increase is likely to counter such efforts, and whilst per capita emissions may decrease, total emissions may still contribute to poor overall air quality in some areas.
- 8.3.2 The development of large scale employment sites and logistics development may also contribute to poor localised air quality in some areas.
- 8.3.3 Given the cross boundary nature of air quality, there is a need for strategic approaches to the management of air quality.

Table 8.2: Strategic issues and trends for air quality and noise

Key issues / trends		
Authority	Air quality trends and management areas	Congestion and noise causing pollution
Leicester City	Exceeds the NO ₂ target levels in a number of areas within the administrative boundary (2016). The outer ring road and radial routes into the city centre are concentrations for congestion and poor air quality (2016).	The outer ring road and radial routes into the city centre are concentrations for congestion.
North West Leicestershire	Five AQMAs identified, all related to exceedance on NO ₂ ; M1 Mole Hill Kegworth, High Street Kegworth, Stephonson Way/ Bardon Road Coalville, High Street/ Bondgate Castle Donington and Copt Oak Road (2017). The performance of these AQMAs is mixed.	Noise pollution concentrated around the motorways, major trunk roads and East Midlands Airport. Donnington Park also a source of noise during seasonal events (2016).
Blaby District Council	Four AQMAs declared. In all cases the major source of emissions of NO ₂ is traffic on roads close to the AQMAs. Concentrations of pollutants generally decreasing except for AQMA 3 (M1 corridor). Mill Hill, Enderby also found to have high concentrations of NO ₂ (2017).	Noise pollution associated with road traffic.
Charnwood Borough Council	Four AQMAs within the Borough at Loughborough, Syston, Great Central Railway Area, and Mountsorrel (2017). Congestion and traffic appeared to be getting worse in 2013, however the opening of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road saw a significant reduction in NO ₂ levels in 2014 (2016). Work at Mountsorrel Quarry is expected to have a positive effect on air quality in this area (2016).	The highest levels of disturbance (noise and other) are likely to be experienced within the main urban centres of Loughborough, Shepshed, the Leicester fringe and the Soar Valley, and also along the M1 corridor 18.
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	No AQMAs and The National Forest contributes towards improving local air quality (2017). Diffusion tube monitoring of local developments and existing sources has not identified any impacts on air quality which requires further action (2017).	The A5 corridor is considered a particular problem area for congestion which could contribute to noise pollution.

¹⁸ Charnwood Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2017), Charnwood Borough Council.

Key issues / trends		
Authority	Air quality trends and management areas	Congestion and noise causing pollution
Harborough District Council	<p>Very good air quality with the exception of Lutterworth and Kibworth where it exceeds the national air quality objective for NO₂. (2017).</p> <p>Some improvement may be expected in Lutterworth resulting from priorities in AQMA Action Plan (2013).</p>	<p>Lutterworth town centre presents congestion issues. Proposals for an SDA would deliver a strategic bypass that could alleviate congestion. Magna Park remains a major source of traffic and this is likely to increase. Poor air quality in Kibworth is derived from traffic on a small section of the A6.</p>
Melton Borough Council	<p>The air quality is currently not exceeding limits (2017). Relatively low population density and low concentrations of development has resulted in good air quality (2017).</p> <p>There is potential for changes to occur depending on future development patterns, but trends are uncertain.</p>	<p>Significant levels of congestion experienced within Melton Town Centre, leading to higher levels of delay per mile than any other area in the County (2016).</p>
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	<p>There are no AQMAs and concentrations at relevant receptors are all consistently below the nationally recognized thresholds (2017).</p> <p>Previous AQMAs were revoked in 2008 and there have been no developments since which are considered to have had a significant effect upon air quality (2017).</p>	<p>A lack of joined up transport infrastructure has had a detrimental impact upon congestion on the roads (2015).</p>
Summary	<p>Air quality performance is mixed across the district. In some areas, air quality is very good, and there have been improvements. However, there remain hotspots of poor air quality associated with exceedances in NO₂ relating to traffic and congestion.</p>	<p>Transport corridors, large scale employment sites and town centres are the main sources of congestion and noise pollution across the HMA.</p>

9. Climate Change and Energy

9.1 Policy context

National

9.1.1 In its 2007 strategy on climate change, the **European Commission** assesses the costs and benefits of combating climate change and recommends a package of measures to limit global warming to 2° Celsius. On energy, the Commission recommends that the EU's energy efficiency improves by 20% and the share of renewable energy grows to 20% by 2020. This was followed up by the 2011 report 'A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050'.

9.1.2 Key messages from the **NPPF** include:

- Support transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate as a 'core principle'.
- There is a key role for planning in meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. Specifically, policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:
- Planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GHG emissions;
- Actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
- Setting local requirements for building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy;
- Positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable areas for their construction; and
- Encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reducing congestion.

9.1.3 To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. They should:

- Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources;
- Design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts;
- Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources;
- Support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and
- Identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

9.1.4 The **NPPF** states that Local Plans are to take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development is to be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the impacts arising from climate change. New development in areas vulnerable is to have adaptation measures, including green infrastructure to manage the risks.

9.1.5 With regards to energy, local authorities are to:

- Have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources;
- Design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts;
- Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources;
- Support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and
- Identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

9.1.6 With regards to low-carbon district heating networks, the **DECC** report the ‘**Future of Heating**’ states that around half (46%) of the final energy consumed in the UK is used to provide heat. The Government’s vision is one of: buildings benefiting from a combination of renewable heat in individual buildings, particularly heat pumps, and heat networks distributing low carbon heat to communities.

Regional

9.1.7 The Carbon Reduction Target for Leicestershire, as set out in the **Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire 2013-2020** is to reduce emissions by 23% between 2005 and 2020 as measured by the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

Local

9.1.8 Table 9.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for climate change within the adopted and emerging local plans across the HMA.

Table 9.1: Key messages for climate change

Key messages	Source / Authorities
Development to incorporate sustainable design; i.e. well located, sustainable design principles,	All authorities have identified this as a key issue and developed relevant policies accordingly.
Encourage an increase in renewable and low carbon energy.	All authorities have identified this as a key issue and developed relevant policies accordingly.

9.2 Strategic baseline

9.2.1 Climate refers to the average weather experienced over a long period. This includes temperature, wind and rainfall patterns. The climate of the Earth is not static, and has changed many times in response to a variety of natural causes. The Earth has warmed by 0.74°C over the last hundred years. Around 0.4°C of this warming has occurred since the 1970s. In general, the UK climate is expected to become hotter and drier in the summer and warmer and wetter in the winter.

9.2.2 According to climate change predictions (DEFRA), key changes include:

- Average UK annual temperatures may rise by 2 to 3.5°C by the 2080s.
- Annual average precipitation across the UK may decrease slightly, by between 0 and 15% by the 2080s. However the seasonal distribution of precipitation will change significantly, with winters becoming wetter and summers drier.
- Increase in the prevalence of extreme weather events. High summer temperatures and dry conditions will become more common. Very cold winters will become increasingly rare and extreme winter precipitation will become more frequent. The summer heat wave experienced in 2003 is likely to become a normal event by the 2040s and considered cool by the 2060s.

9.2.3 With regards to renewable and low carbon energy generation, the current installed capacity varies across the County, but generally holds room for increased development. There is mainly a trend upwards in terms of the number and capacity of renewable/low carbon energy schemes being delivered across the County, though there is some way to go to meet ambitious energy and carbon emissions targets (see table 9.2).

9.2.4 Overall levels of carbon emissions per capita vary across the County, with per capita emissions recorded as the lowest in Oadby and Wigston and Leicester City. Higher levels are recorded in North West Leicestershire for example, with 10.4 tonnes in 2015. Such differences in emissions do not necessarily mean that residents and businesses are performing less well in some areas compared to others. Rather, large differences in emissions are reflective of certain industrial activities.

9.2.5 Overall, there is a continuing positive trend across all authorities in the Plan area that CO² emissions are reducing.

9.3 Future baseline, Issues and opportunities

9.3.1 Co2 emissions are likely to continue falling with the continuation and introduction of more stringent energy efficiency policies at a national and local level. Policies important to this include requiring sustainable design and encouraging renewable energy development.

9.3.2 In terms of possible renewable energy development, this is likely to be more prominent in Charnwood, Harborough, Melton and Hinckley where feasibility studies have shown the greatest potential. Where wind potential areas have been identified (such as in North West Leicestershire, these areas may also experience a more rapid implementation of low carbon energy schemes.

9.3.3 It would be beneficial to identify strategic opportunities for energy development, making links with planned development and existing infrastructure.

Table 9.2: Strategic issues and trends for climate change across Leicester and Leicestershire

Key issues / trends		
Authority	Potential for renewable energy development	Carbon Emissions
Leicester City	Potential for using renewable through passive solar design and solar technologies. Also likely to extend green heat networks within the city after winning government funding (2016).	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 6.9t in 2005 to 4.1t in 2015.
North West Leicestershire	There is little renewable energy generated in the District currently (2016). Potential for this to increase with identification of wind opportunity areas in the Local Plan.	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 14.2t (2005) to 10.4t (2015).
Blaby	Some small scale potential is possible; however wind energy is limited given the settlement spread of the District (2016).	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 8.9t (2005) to 6.9t (2015).
Charnwood	Feasibility study suggests the greatest technical potential for renewable energy is for large scale wind (2011 Land Use Consultants).	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 7.8t (2005) to 5.1t (2015).
Harborough	District offers the greatest potential for wind energy out of Leicestershire. 32 applications for wind turbines (2006-2013). Some potential for short rotation coppice and other energy crops (2014).	Road emissions account for 48% of total emissions. Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 10.1t (2005) to 7.3t (2015).
Melton Borough Council	Wind energy generation increased to 278kw in 2012/13. Opportunities, installation and demand for wind energy exceed the demand and installation of biomass and hydro sources significantly in the Borough.	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 9.3t (2005) to 6.9t (2015).
Hinckley and Bosworth	Based on technical potential, there are substantial opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy especially with regards to wind, solar PV and heat pumps for electrical generation (2014).	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 9.0t (2005) to 6.3t (2015).
Oadby and Wigston	There may be some small wind development possible at the edge of settlements (2015)	Per capita CO ² emissions reduced from 5.4t (2005) to 3.7t (2015).
Summary	Opportunities to increase installed capacity of renewable and low carbon energy generation exist; but levels of implementation remain relatively low.	Per capita CO ² emissions are falling in every Local Authority area.

10. Landscape and Land

10.1 Policy context

National

- 10.1.1 **Local Green Infrastructure: Helping Communities Make the Most of their Landscape** (2011) provides suggestions and guidance for local authorities on how they can contribute to a multi-functional green infrastructure network.
- 10.1.2 The **European Landscape Convention (ELC)** (2000) promotes the planning, management and protection of landscapes, and is the first international convention with a specific focus on landscape.
- 10.1.3 The **NPPF** states that Local Planning Authorities should set out strategic policies within the Local Plan for the “*conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape*” (paragraph 156).
- 10.1.4 The **NPPF** states that the planning system should protect and enhance valued soils and prevent the adverse effects of unacceptable levels of pollution. This is because soil is an essential finite resource that provides important ‘ecosystem services’, for example as a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, as a store for carbon and water, as a reservoir of biodiversity and as a buffer against pollution. Also, the NPPF expects local planning authorities to take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. This is particularly important in plan making when decisions are made on which land should be allocated for development. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality
- 10.1.5 **Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England** (2009) sets out a vision for the future of soils in England. This is:
- “By 2030, all of England’s soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully. This will improve the quality of England’s soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations”.
- 10.1.6 Planning decisions need to take sufficient account of soil quality in particular in cases where significant areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land may be lost to development.
- 10.1.7 **Nature Nearby, Accessible Green space Guidance** (March 2010) sets guidance on how to provide high quality access to the natural environment in green spaces close to home, proving example sites for parks and greenspace practitioners, visitor service and quality standards to meet:
- An Accessibility and Quantity Standard – to ensure equitable provision both close to home and within sustainable transport distances;
 - Service Standards – for core services and facilities for each site type
 - A national Quality Standard – i.e. the Green Flag Award scheme.
- 10.1.8 The **Government Forestry and Woodlands Statement** 2013 seeks to maximise the environmental, economic and social benefits of trees and woodland forests across the country by:

- Ensuring that trees, woods and forests are resilient to, and mitigate the impacts of climate change;
- Protecting and enhancing the environmental resources of water, soil, air, biodiversity and landscapes;
- Protecting and enhancing the cultural and amenity values of trees and woodlands;
- Increasing the contribution that trees, woods and forests make to the quality of life; Improving the competitiveness of woodland businesses and promote the development of new or improved markets for sustainable woodland products.

10.1.9 The **National Forest Strategy 2014-2024** sets to protect and secure the future of the Forest through:

- Sensitive achievement of the landscape change, with increased targeting to get the greatest benefits;
- Making on the most of forest sites (woodlands and other habitats, attractions, connections and views)
- Increasing engagement, enjoyment and well-being by the widest range of people
- Effective partnership taking the forest to the next stage
- Bringing new income and investment
- The national exemplar role, research, and being a centre of excellence

Regional

10.1.10 At a regional level, objective 12 of the **East Midlands 6C’s Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy** (2010) states:

“Promote the protection and management of landscape character to provide enhanced landscape settings for the built environment and to ensure that new development and GI relates to landscape character, place and context.”

Local

10.1.11 Table 10.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for landscape and land.

Table 10.1: Key messages for Landscape and Land

Strategic policies / priorities	Source / Authorities
Areas protected to maintain separation between settlements	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS16 and Policy CS17
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS11
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 6
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN4 and Policy EN5

Strategic policies / priorities	Source / Authorities
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN5
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 6
Enhance and maintain local landscape character and quality	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS18
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS11
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS17
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Spatial Objective 10
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN1 and Policy EN6
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy EN6
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 7 and Policy 15

10.2 Strategic baseline

- 10.2.1 There are a variety of landscape character areas within the Leicester and Leicestershire boundary (Figure 10.2). The most prominent of these is the Leicestershire Vales, located in the south, but also High Leicestershire in the east, and the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds to the north-east. More variance occurs to the north-west of the county, as the Mease/Sence Lowlands adjoins the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield, which itself is adjacent to Charnwood and the Melbourne Parklands. The Trent Valley Washlands intersects the north of the county. Charnwood Forest also straddles Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth and North West Leicestershire.
- 10.2.2 The Leicestershire and East Midlands region has a long history of coal mining linked to its extensive coal reserves. Given the major contraction of this industry since the early 1990s, a legacy of infrastructure and dereliction is present across the landscape, such as mines, bell-pits, and railway yards, especially in the north west. The establishment of The National Forest is considered to be linked to the wider regeneration of some of these former colliery sites and communities¹⁹.
- 10.2.3 Between 1960’s and 2007, the proportion of areas which suffered from visual and noise disturbance within the East Midlands increased by approximately 48%, from 674km² to 1239km²²⁰. Leicestershire itself was shown to have 59.45% of its total area disturbed by noise and visual intrusion, ranking it 27th out of England’s Counties and Unitary Authorities.
- 10.2.4 The East Midland region previously had a low proportion of woodland cover (5%) compared to the national average of 12% (LDA, 2010). However, since 1995, several hundred hectares of new woodland planting has taken place as part of The National Forest initiative, located

¹⁹ East Midlands Region Landscape Character Assessment (2010), Natural England , Available: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5635681403535360>

²⁰ Campaign to Protect Rural England (2007) East Midlands Fragmented Countryside: East Midlands- intrusion statistics. Available: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/tranquil-places/item/1762-englands-fragmented-countryside-east-midlands-intrusion-statistics>

between Walton-on-Trent (Derbyshire) and Bradgate Park / The Outwoods (Charnwood). This is thought to have added considerably to the wooded character of the landscape, increasing woodland cover to 20% in 2014 (National Forest, 2014).

- 10.2.5 Charnwood Forest Regional Park is an area within the east of the National Forest. This park is considered to have a distinctive upland landscape, with geology of international importance and a rich biodiversity.
- 10.2.6 The National Forest also acts as a popular tourist attraction alongside other landscape parks such as Bradgate Park country houses and reservoirs at Thornton, Swithland, Cropston and Blackbrook.
- 10.2.7 There are areas of sensitive landscape identified in some authorities that perform an important role in managing the coalescence of settlements. As such, parcels of land have been designated as/ or proposed for allocation as 'Areas of Separation' or 'Green Wedges' by Local Planning Authorities. This includes land between Coalville and Whitwick, land between Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby. Settlement separation is also an issue for Charnwood – particularly those towns and villages along the River Soar and River Wreake valleys.
- 10.2.8 Leicester city's Green Wedges provide important strategic open space links between the city and the surrounding areas. District parks provide much of the public open space in the city and are reasonably accessible by most of the population. However, there is a lack of public open space serving the city centre, which with increasing numbers of population living in the city centre is becoming an issue.
- 10.2.9 As shown in Figure 5.1, the majority of land within Leicestershire falls under Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grade 3. Concentrations of ALC Grade 1 and Grade 2 are located in the north and the north-west of the county alongside intermittent dispersal of ALC Grade 4. Urban settlements are clearly shown within the figure, most notably being the Leicester City boundary within which there is little land of agricultural value.
- 10.2.10 The total net residential completions in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland between 1996 and 2008, 56% (23,645 dwellings) were located on previously developed land (PDL) compared to 44% (18,414 dwellings) on greenfield land in the area²¹. This rate improved in the year 2009/10 with 63% of housing completions on PDL. However, during 2011/12, the rate of housing completed on PDL had fallen to 36%.

10.3 Future baseline, issues and opportunities

- 10.3.1 Climate change is likely to have an effect on the use of land for agricultural purposes in the future. With population growth, pressure for land resources may rise, and variations in climate conditions could also have an effect on growing seasons, and disrupt agricultural activities as a result of increased erosion, changing pest loads, and changes in vegetation growth. Warmer weather may also present opportunities to grow different crops and improve yields. These are likely to influence the use of land across Leicestershire, and may exacerbate, or reduce, threats to available land supply depending on the circumstances.
- 10.3.2 Villages and towns may be under increasing pressure from development. Infill development on available land within these areas, and development on settlement margins, has the potential to affect the character of these spaces, create visual intrusion, and extend the urban fringe into the surrounding countryside.

²¹ Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Residential Land Availability Monitoring Report (2008), Available: [http://www.lsr-online.org/uploads/residential-report-2007-2008-\(web\).pdf](http://www.lsr-online.org/uploads/residential-report-2007-2008-(web).pdf), Accessed: 30/11/16

- 10.3.3 The landscape parks and reservoirs of Leicestershire may experience increased visitor pressure and demand for associated infrastructure such as car parks and access. Growth could result in damage, loss and fragmentation of natural features, whilst additional visitor facilities could create visual intrusions and reduce the sense of tranquillity. Conversely, increased growth could bring with it the ability to enhance the landscape and improve accessibility to the countryside.
- 10.3.4 Each of the local authorities have specific policies with regards to the designation and maintenance of countryside and rural areas. Likewise, the majority of Boroughs and Districts have adopted an approach which safeguards the rural areas from dispersed development, and which instead supports development located around the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA), and other key settlements, helping to contain growth and restrict sprawl.

Figure 10.1 Agricultural Land Classification within Leicester and Leicestershire

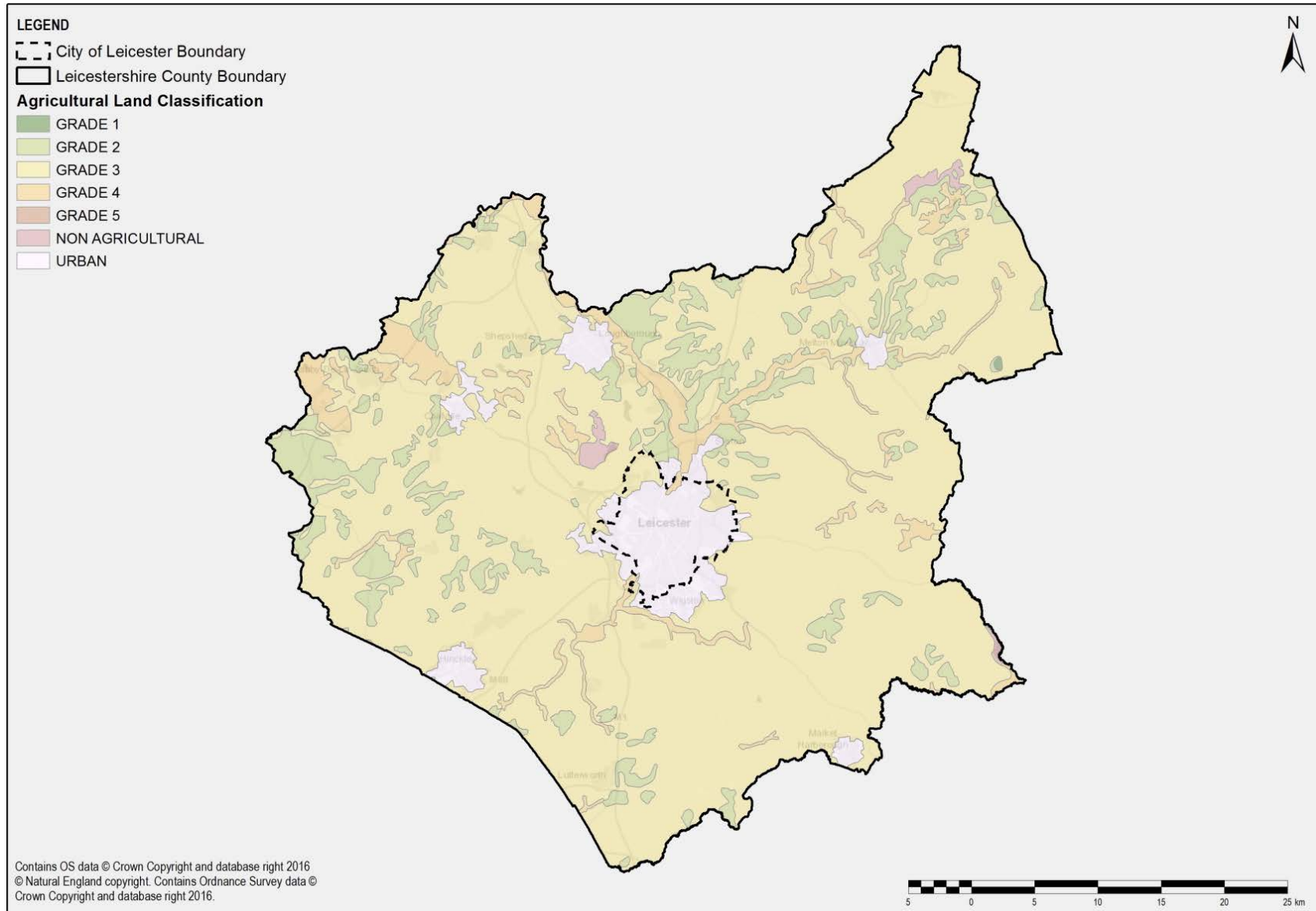


Figure 10.2 Landscape Character Area within Leicester and Leicestershire

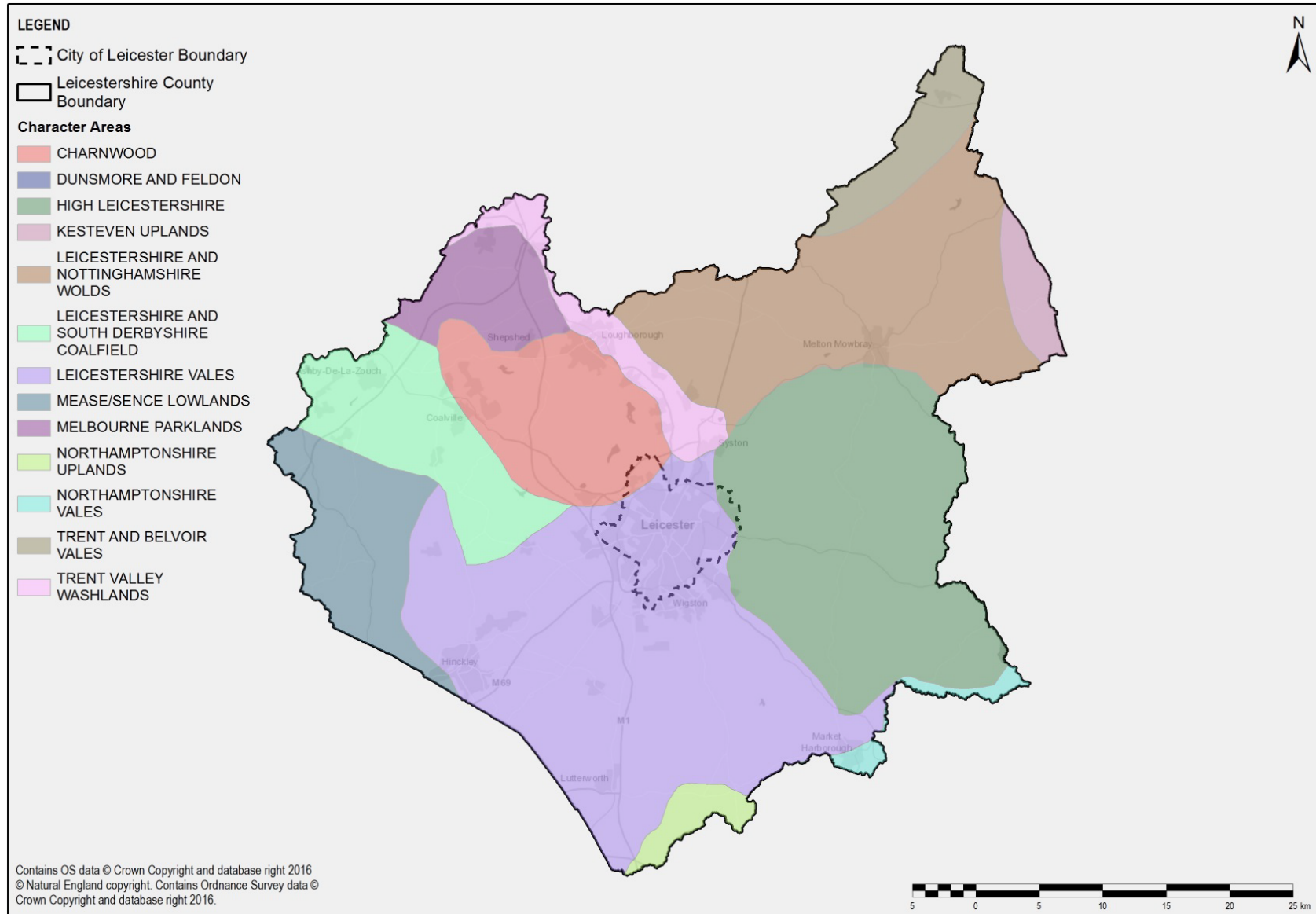


Table 10.2: Key Landscape and Land issues and trends across Leicester and Leicestershire

Key issues / trends			
Authority	Land pressures	Agricultural land classification	Character, sites and features
Leicester City	Nearly 90% of all new dwellings, and the majority of employment development, has been built on PDL in recent years (2016). However, there may be pressure to encroach on land with landscape value to meet increasing requirements for development.	The majority of the city is classified as ALC Urban. There is a slight overlap with ALC Grade 3 and ALC Grade 4 in the northern reaches of the authority area (2016).	Predominantly reflects the Leicestershire Vales landscape type.
North West Leicestershire	The presence and protection of sensitive landscapes across the borough helps to maintain a rural feel to the countryside. The National Forest Strategy should help to improve landscape character and function.	The majority of agricultural land in the district is Grade 3. Small areas of grade 2 (in the south west) which may need protecting, and grade 4 (centrally) (2016).	Two Areas of ‘Particularly Attractive Countryside’ in the west and the east of the district (locally designated) (2002). Five character areas within NWL. (2016).
Blaby	North and east of the District is predominantly urban and the south is more rural. Areas of urban fringe are at risk from development. A high proportion of the district is within a countryside or is Green Wedge.	The vast majority of agricultural land in Blaby is classified as Grade 3.	Within the Leicestershire Vales Landscape character area Quarrying is evident and offers potential recreational qualities Croft Hill is an important landscape feature (60m above surrounding land).
Charnwood	In 2011/12 100% of completed dwellings in Charnwood were built at densities of over 30 dwellings per hectare (2012), helping to contain development pressures on land. Charnwood identified as a target Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) area (2013).	The majority of agricultural land is classified as Grade 3 (15,800ha) with some Grade 2 (6,200ha) and some Grade 4 (3,300ha). There is no Grade 1 land.	4 National Character Areas within Borough. 6 different landscape character areas. No National Parks. No AONB. 6 Designated Green Wedges and 13 areas of Local Separation. Charnwood Forest likely to be the most tranquil area.
Oadby and Wigston	Predominantly urban land. Diverse range of landscapes. Green Wedges help to prevent coalescence.	Two thirds of Borough is urban land. Agricultural land is mainly classified as Grade 3	Within Leicestershire Vales LCA. Diverse landscapes. Influenced by the River Sence

	Land pressures	Agricultural land classification	Character, sites and features
Harborough District Council	Eastern countryside is recognized as being particularly high quality. Due to previous uses a lot of the land may potentially pose a health risk due to contamination. (2014). Eastern countryside designated as an 'Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside'. Most villages in visually sensitive locations.	Predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land, small areas of Grade 2 (around the A47 and A6) and grade 4.	2 National Character Areas (High Leicestershire' and 'Leicestershire Vales'. 5 LCA. No National Parks or AONB. Areas of Separation between Market Harborough and Great Bowden, Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby.
Melton Borough Council	Percentage of homes provided on PDL fell from 50.3% in 2011/2012 to 15.6% in 2012/13 (2015). Main changes in landscape in Melton Farmland Fringe LCA and fringe areas around Melton Mowbray.	Mostly Grade 3 quality with pockets of Grade 2, mostly in the north. May be difficult to avoid the loss of high quality agricultural land due to its extent across the borough and limited availability of brownfield sites.	Important views identified at Belvoir Castle and Burrough Hill. Escarpments on the southern edge of the Vale of Belvoir. 20 LCA identified. (2015)
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Predominantly rural landscape bound to the east by the urban fringe of Leicester city centre. Potential threat from the westward expansion of this fringe. Quality of some degraded land areas improving under National Forest Strategy (2014).	Majority of agricultural land classified as Grade 3. Pockets of Grade 2. Small area of Grade 4.	Open cast mining of the coal field has influenced landscape character. (2014)
Summary	Development on previously developed land has typically been at a high level across the County and within the City. However, as demand for housing and employment land continues, the availability of such land is reducing, and therefore pressure on greenfield land has increased.	There is very little Grade 1 agricultural land across the HMA, some pockets of Grade 2 agricultural land and larger swathes of Grade 3 land. It is unclear the extent to which Grade 3 land is best and most versatile (3a) or not (3b).	There are a variety of diverse landscapes across the HMA, including areas designated locally for their importance to settlement character.

11. Cultural Heritage

11.1 Policy context

National

- 11.1.1 Section 12 of the **NPPF** details measures for ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’. In particular paragraph 126 states:
- “Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.”*
- 11.1.2 The Government’s **Heritage Statement** (2017) sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life. It also outlines plans to develop an action plan to address issues in relation to heritage.
- 11.1.3 **English Heritage Cooperation Plan** (2011) helps to identify and protect the most important heritage assets in the country.
- 11.1.4 **Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management** (English Heritage 2011) identifies the key aspects of good practice that need to be taken into account by local authorities in managing their conservation areas.

Regional

- 11.1.5 At a regional level, objective 13 of the **East Midlands 6C’s Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy** (2010) states:
- “Promote the protection and management of natural and cultural heritage, including archaeological sites, historic landscapes, geodiversity and industrial heritage;”
- 11.1.6 **Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project** maps and describes the present day landscape of Leicestershire and records significant changes that can be observed through the study of historic mapping and aerial photography. The project has equipped Leicestershire County Council’s archaeological planning service with a detailed framework to aid the understanding of the landscape as a whole and provide an important tool that will contribute to the decision making process especially where issues affecting the landscape, both rural and urban are to be considered.

Local

- 11.1.7 There are a number of cultural heritage policies within Local Plans and strategies that have common approaches to the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage. These are summarised in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Key messages for Cultural Heritage

Strategic policies / priorities	Source / Authorities
Conservation and enhancement of Heritage Assets is a key objective	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS20
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS14
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy CS11
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - CS Policy 18
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (Nov 2016)-EN13
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy He1
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 15
Secure high quality Design in new developments	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS2
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS2
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - CS11
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS3
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy D1
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 14
Develop Cultural Facilities	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - CS Policy 16
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy IF2
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 16
Ensure effective conservation and management of the Grand Union Canal	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) - Policy CS12
	Harborough District Council Core Strategy (2011) - Policy RT4
	Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 15

11.2 Strategic baseline

11.2.1 As shown in Table 11.2, there are many heritage assets located within Leicestershire as a whole. In 2015, the County contained 186 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 14 Registered Parks and Gardens²². The numbers of designated assets have since increased to 378 Scheduled Monuments and 20 Registered Parks and Gardens in 2017²³.

²² Leicestershire County Council (July 2015) Minerals and Waste Local Plan Consultation Draft, Available: http://www.leics.gov.uk/minerals_and_waste_local_plan_consultation_draft_july_2015.pdf

²³ Listed heritage assets www.historicengland.org.uk (accessed 2018)

- 11.2.2 There is also a variety of non-designated buildings and features that contribute to the setting of settlements across the Plan area.
- 11.2.3 Whilst no World Heritage Sites are designated, a registered battlefield (Battle of Bosworth 1485) is located to the south-west, and is considered to be both a heritage, educational and tourist attraction for the whole county.
- 11.2.4 Various assets bridge across the local authority boundaries of the county. Most notably of these is the Grand Union Canal, which connects London to Birmingham. Within the Leicester section, the canal stretches for 66 miles, with 59 locks and two tunnel passages. Although shorter in length, the Ashby Canal and the Grantham canal are also present within Leicestershire.
- 11.2.5 The settlement pattern of the county reflects both its old and recent history. Leicestershire, particularly in the east, is considered to have a settlement pattern of medieval origin, namely one which is dominated by nucleated clusters which are compact and have a regular plan to their arrangement. This is a reflection of the agricultural regime of the time. Whilst much of the settlement in the west of Leicestershire is also nucleated, there are also a significant number of dispersed settlements which are attributed to the modern coal industry²⁴.
- 11.2.6 Leicester city has a clearly defined historic core. This is the area within the town defences that were first established in the Roman period and adopted in the medieval period, along with areas outside those defences in which it is known that there were Roman cemeteries, Roman and medieval suburbs and medieval religious houses and hospitals.
- 11.2.7 Both the urban settlements and the natural landscape of Leicestershire highlight its rich and varied heritage, and its journey from medieval society to the more recent industrial development. The coalmining industry in particular has left a strong legacy in the north and the west of the County.
- 11.2.8 There were 46 assets recorded on the Heritage at Risk Register in 2017, many of which are in a 'Poor' or 'Very Bad' condition (Table 11.2). This is a reduction in the number of buildings at risk since 2015 (52) suggesting that there has been some improvement in the management of heritage assets identified at risk.
- 11.2.9 With regards to the built environment, many of the villages of Leicestershire are characterised by red-brick terraces and slate roofed houses. The skylines of older village settlements in particular are often defined by church spires.

11.3 Future baseline, issues and opportunities

- 11.3.1 Whilst various local and national policies act to protect cultural heritage assets, there is a threat that increased growth and development within Leicestershire, unless managed, could reduce the quality of the built environment, and may adversely affect the setting or condition of various cultural assets. This would particularly be a threat to assets where open landscapes at the edge of settlements form an important element of their character/setting.

A small number of assets are listed on the Heritage at Risk Register, and recognition on this platform could help in their safeguarding. However, further assets at risk which are yet to be analysed or have their value recognised could be at risk for decline (without proactive management).

²⁴ Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (2010), Available: [https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/the_leicestershire_leicester_and_rutland_historic_landscape_characterisation_project_2010/EB-ENV-24+-+The+Leicestershire+Leicester+%26+Rutland+Historic+Landscape+Characterisation+Project+\(2010\).pdf](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/the_leicestershire_leicester_and_rutland_historic_landscape_characterisation_project_2010/EB-ENV-24+-+The+Leicestershire+Leicester+%26+Rutland+Historic+Landscape+Characterisation+Project+(2010).pdf)

Key issues / trends				
Authority	Protection of settlement character	Archaeological and cultural heritage assets ²⁵	Heritage at Risk (<i>numbers and condition</i>) ²⁶	Key assets and features
Leicester City	24 Conservation Areas covering approximately 322 ha. Green Wedges are important for the protection of settlement character.	401 Listed Buildings; 9 Scheduled Monuments; 6 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	14 at-risk sites (4 Conservation Areas; 8 Listed Buildings or Structure; 4 Places of Worship). Of these, 5 are considered to be in a 'Very Bad' condition, 5 in a 'Fair' condition, and 3 in a 'Poor' condition (2017).	Clearly defined historic core to the city centre.
North West Leicestershire	23 Conservation Areas representative of rural, agricultural areas. Legacy of Coalmining and Industrial Revolution.	641 Listed Buildings; 23 Scheduled Monuments; 3 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017). Considerable Archaeological potential across the district (2017).	5 assets recorded at risk in 2015 (3 Churches, 1 Colliery and 1 Railway Station). The Churches are all in 'Poor' condition with slow decay. Rest in a 'Fair' condition and under repair (2016).	Mix of urban and rural settlements. Listed Buildings predominantly located along settlement high streets. Many Scheduled Monuments are remnants of the coal mining industry.
Blaby District Council	10 Conservation Areas.	186 Listed Buildings; 16 Scheduled Monuments; 0 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	In 2016, there was 1 asset at risk (Church) with a 'Fair' condition and repair scheme in progress. This asset has since been removed from the heritage at risk register (2017).	Large settlements around the south westerly border of Leicester, and a scattering of smaller settlements throughout the rest of the district. Quarrying heritage, Croft Hill. Grand Union Canal.
Charnwood Borough Council	39 Conservation Areas.	785 Listed Buildings; 22 Scheduled Monuments; 3 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	11 at risk assets (various types). 6 in 'Poor' condition with slow decay or deteriorating. 2 'Fair' condition in slow decay, 1 'Very Bad' in slow decay, 1 'Satisfactory' and declining, 1 'Extensive Significant Problems' and declining. (2017)	Concentrations of assets around urban settlements. Loughborough is the largest settlement with majority of Listed Buildings, Assets run in a north-west/ south-eastern trajectory across the centre of the borough. Quite urbanised compared to other districts within Leicestershire.

²⁵ Listed heritage assets www.historicengland.org.uk (accessed 2018)

²⁶ Heritage at risk register online: www.historicengland.org.uk (accessed 2018).

Table 11.2: Key Cultural Heritage issues and trends across Leicester and Leicestershire

	Protection of settlement character	Archaeological and cultural heritage assets/ Numbers	Heritage at Risk (numbers and condition)	Key assets and features
Harborough District Council	62 Conservation Areas Areas of Separation between Lutterworth and Magna Park, and Scraptoft within the Leicester urban area.	1,270 Listed Buildings; 64 Scheduled Monuments; 6 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	6 assets recorded at risk (4 churches, 1 moated site and 1 Hall). 3 churches in a 'Very Bad' condition with immediate risk or slow decay, 1 church in a 'Poor' condition with immediate risk, Moated site has 'Extensive Significant Problems' and is declining (2017).	Nevill Holt Conservation Area parish church spires considered an important landmark. Grand Union Canal significant asset. Views of interest from Hallaton Road into East Norton. (2014)
Melton Borough Council	44 Conservation Areas. Fringe landscapes around town under increasing pressure from development.	707 Listed Buildings; 34 Scheduled Monuments; 2 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	4 churches recorded at risk (3 very bad condition, with slow decay or immediate risk, 1 in fair condition with slow decay). There has been a reduction in assets recorded at risk from 2015 - 2017.	Melton Heritage trail through Melton Mowbray within the Town Centre. Grantham Canal
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	28 designated Conservation Areas	338 Listed Buildings; 21 Scheduled Monuments; 0 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens; and 1 registered Historic Battlefield (Battle of Bosworth 1485) (2017).	5 at risk (3 conservation areas, 1 church and 1 stable). 2 are 'Very Bad' and 3 are in a 'Poor' condition (2017).	Bosworth Battlefield registered as a Historic battlefield. Entire length of Ashby Canal is a Conservation Area.
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	10 Conservation Areas	37 Listed Buildings; 0 Scheduled Monuments; 0 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (2017).	No heritage assets recorded at risk (2017).	Grand Union Canal Conservation Area.
Summary	There is a rich diversity of cultural heritage across the HMA, exemplified by a number of historic market towns, Leicester City's historic core, rural settlements and linear features such as the Grand Union Canal.			

12. Water

12.1 Policy context

European and National

- 12.1.1 The EU's '**Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources**' promotes the use of green infrastructure, such as wetlands, floodplains and buffer strips along watercourses to reduce vulnerability to floods and droughts. It also emphasises the role water efficiency can play in reducing scarcity and water stress.
- 12.1.2 The **European Water Framework Directive** (WFD) (2000/60/EC) promotes an integrated and coordinated approach to water management at the river basin scale. One of its key objectives is the requirement to prevent deterioration in status and achieve at least Good Ecological Status in inland and coastal waters following deadlines ranging from 2015 to 2027. The WFD also requires all Artificial or Heavily Modified Water Bodies to achieve Good Ecological Potential.
- 12.1.3 In response to the Water Framework Directive (WFD), England and Wales are divided into 10 River Basin Districts, each of which is managed through a River Basin Management Plan. Leicestershire is situated within the Humber River Basin District.
- 12.1.4 The **NPPF** states that:
- Local Planning Authorities should set out strategic policies to provide infrastructure for water supply, waste water and flood risk (paragraph 156);
 - New development should be strategically located away from areas of high flood risk, not act to increase flood risk elsewhere and seek opportunities to reduce flood risk where possible (paragraph 100);
 - Local Plans should take into consideration climate change and the implication of this for flood risk, coastal change and water supply, with risk managed for development in vulnerable areas through appropriate adaptation measures (paragraph 99); and
 - New and existing development should be prevented from contributing to water pollution (Paragraph 109), and that Development should give "priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems" (Paragraph 103).
- 12.1.5 The **Flood and Water Management Act** sets out the following objectives regarding flood risk:
- Incorporate greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fit at risk properties (including historic buildings);
 - Utilise the environment, e.g. utilise land to reduce runoff and harness wetlands to store water; and
 - Identify areas suitable for inundation and water storage.
- 12.1.6 The act also introduces the requirement for developers to utilise Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS), which can have multiple benefits for the water environment. Lead Local Authorities are responsible for establishing a SUDS Approving Body, which will have a duty to adopt and maintain SUDS once completed.
- 12.1.7 The **Climate Change Risk Assessment for 2017** report prepared for the Committee on Climate Change set out the following key messages:

- Business as usual in managing flood risk: A 50% increase in expected annual damage (EAD) is projected under a 2°C climate change projection and 150% with a 4°C change with further increases due to population growth.
- Flood sources most important for risk today and in the future: Fluvial (river), contributing £560m (40%) of total UK EAD. Future change in groundwater flooding is dominated by flooding from permeable superficial deposits.
- Current levels of adaptation will not be sufficient to completely offset all of the projected increases under either a 2°C or 4°C climate change projection.
- Significant increases in flood risk are projected to occur as early as the 2020s. The need for early adaptation also reflects the long lead time required to implement policy change and the long lived nature of the decisions made today that influence future risk.

12.1.8 The UK strategy **Future Water** (2011) seeks to achieve a secure supply of water resources whilst protecting the water environment. This means greater efficiency in water use, application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), managing diffuse pollution from agriculture, tackling flood risk and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

12.1.9 The **Water White Paper** sets out the Government’s vision for a more resilient water sector, where water is valued as a precious resource. Measures must address poorly performing ecosystems and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources. Measures are put in place to encourage and incentivise water efficiency, with the aspiration to reduce average demand to 130 litres per head, per day by 2030.

12.1.10 Environment Agency’s **Groundwater Protection: Principals and Practice** (GP3) is intended to be used by anyone interested in groundwater and particularly by those proposing or carrying out an activity that may cause groundwater impacts, providing information on general requirements for groundwater protection including technical approaches to its management and protection, the EA position and approach to the application of relevant legislation, and technical guidance for groundwater specialists. The EA aims and objectives for groundwater include:

- Acting to reduce climate change and its consequences;
- Protecting and improving water, land and air;
- Working with people and communities to create better places; and
- Working with businesses and other organisations to use resources wisely.

Regional

12.1.11 The key issues identified in the **Humber River Basin Management Plan** (2015) include:

- Point source pollution from water industry sewage works;
- Diffuse pollution from agricultural activities;
- Diffuse pollution from urban sources;
- Physical modification of water bodies; and
- Disused mines; point and/or diffuse pollution source.

12.1.12 The **River Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan** sets an overview of the current flood risk and how it is currently managed, looking to the impact of climate change and future

direction of flood risk management. Proposed actions to implement the preferred policy for each sub area in the Trent catchment are mapped and listed, which include key messages such as:

- To work with others to minimise disruption to people and communities caused by flooding, taking into account future climate change, and urban growth in the policy unit area;
- To aim to minimise the increase in the cost of flood damage, which may occur as a result of future climate change.
- To sustain and increase the amount of BAP habitat in catchments; and
- Working with land managers and farmers to reduce soil erosion from intensively farmed land.

12.1.13 **Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA)** across Leicester and Leicestershire also inform the planning context in relation to flood risk and development within the area and outlines the responsibilities of those involved with future development.

12.1.14 Leicester City Council is currently in the process of updating the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Leicester City. The baseline information and findings will need to be considered.

12.1.15 The **Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015)** sets out seven objectives for managing local flood risk across the County. These are listed below:

- Work collaboratively
- Improve understanding and awareness
- Enhance the natural and historic environment
- Improve resilience
- Encourage sustainable development
- Uses resources efficiently
- Promote riparian responsibilities.

Local

12.1.16 There are a number of policies relating to water contained within Local Plans and strategies that have common approaches to flood risk and the protection and enhancement water. These are summarised in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: Key messages for Water

Strategic policies / priorities	Source / Authorities
Increasing implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs).	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS22
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS2
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy EN12
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy CC3
Limit impact on water resources with new development	Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) - Policy CS22
	Blaby District Council emerging Local Plan Delivery DPD - Policy on Land Contamination and Pollution
	Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) – Policy CS2 and Policy CS16
	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (2009) - Policy 20
	Leicester City Council Core Strategy (2014) - Policy CS2
	Melton Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2016) - Policy E11
	North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan (2017) - Policy CC2 and Policy CC3
Oadby and Wigston Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (2017) - Policy 9	

12.2 Strategic baseline

- 12.2.1 Leicestershire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Leicestershire. In that role, Leicestershire County Council is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses for all Local Authorities in the District, aside from Leicester City Council (which is also a Lead Flood Risk Authority). The Environment Agency is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from Main Rivers, reservoirs and estuaries.
- 12.2.2 Local Flood Risk is defined as surface water flooding, ordinary watercourse flooding, main river flooding and groundwater flooding.
- 12.2.3 There is a history of flooding within Leicestershire, with the most significant and recent events occurred in 2012 and 2013²⁷. Flood zones are illustrated in figure 12.1.
- 12.2.4 The Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Strategy (2015), Strategy has identified that any settlement that has more 100 properties shown to be at risk of Surface Water Flooding have been classed as a 'Priority Settlement'. There are forty areas that have been classed as a priority settlement

²⁷ Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Strategy (2015)

across Leicestershire²⁸. This includes the following settlements in the ‘top ten’: Loughborough (as the most at risk), Blaby, Narborough and Whetstone, Market Harborough, Wigston, Melton Mowbray, Hinckley and Burbage and Oadby.

- 12.2.5 The whole of the Leicester and Leicestershire county area is designated as a nitrate vulnerable zone for surface water. Groundwater Nitrate Vulnerable zones are also present in parts of Melton Mowbray, North West Leicestershire, and an area of Eutrophic Nitrate Vulnerable Zone is allocated to the North West of the Leicester City urban area.
- 12.2.6 Water supply is generally good²⁹, with some capacity to expand, but in some areas this is only at low flows. With regards to water resources, Severn Trent Water identifies that several areas across the HMA are under ‘moderate water stress’. In the longer term, Severn Trent Water recognise that, future supply/demand pressures will lead to a need for additional water resources and treatment capacity.

12.3 Future baseline, issues and opportunities

- 12.3.1 Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding within low-lying areas of Leicester and Leicestershire, and may also affect availability during warm and dry periods. There is therefore a need to maintain and upgrade flood defences, especially in areas which are currently susceptible to flood events, and to adopt sustainable drainage systems into new developments. There is also a need to ensure future developments will be safe for the lifetime of the development taking into account the effects of climate change.
- 12.3.2 Trends suggest that authorities are experiencing moderate stress to water supply. This is likely to be exacerbated in the future under predicted population growth and the additional demand on supplies. There is a need to increase the capacity of waste water treatment plants and sewers in order to cater to this additional demand. Stress on water resources is likely to further increase due to increased demand from a growing population and potential lower river flows during dry periods as a result of climate change

²⁸ Leicestershire Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)

http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2015/12/8/flooding_strategy_plan.pdf

²⁹ Severn Trent Water (2014) Final Water Resources Management Plan 2014

Figure 12.1: Flood Risk in Leicester and Leicestershire

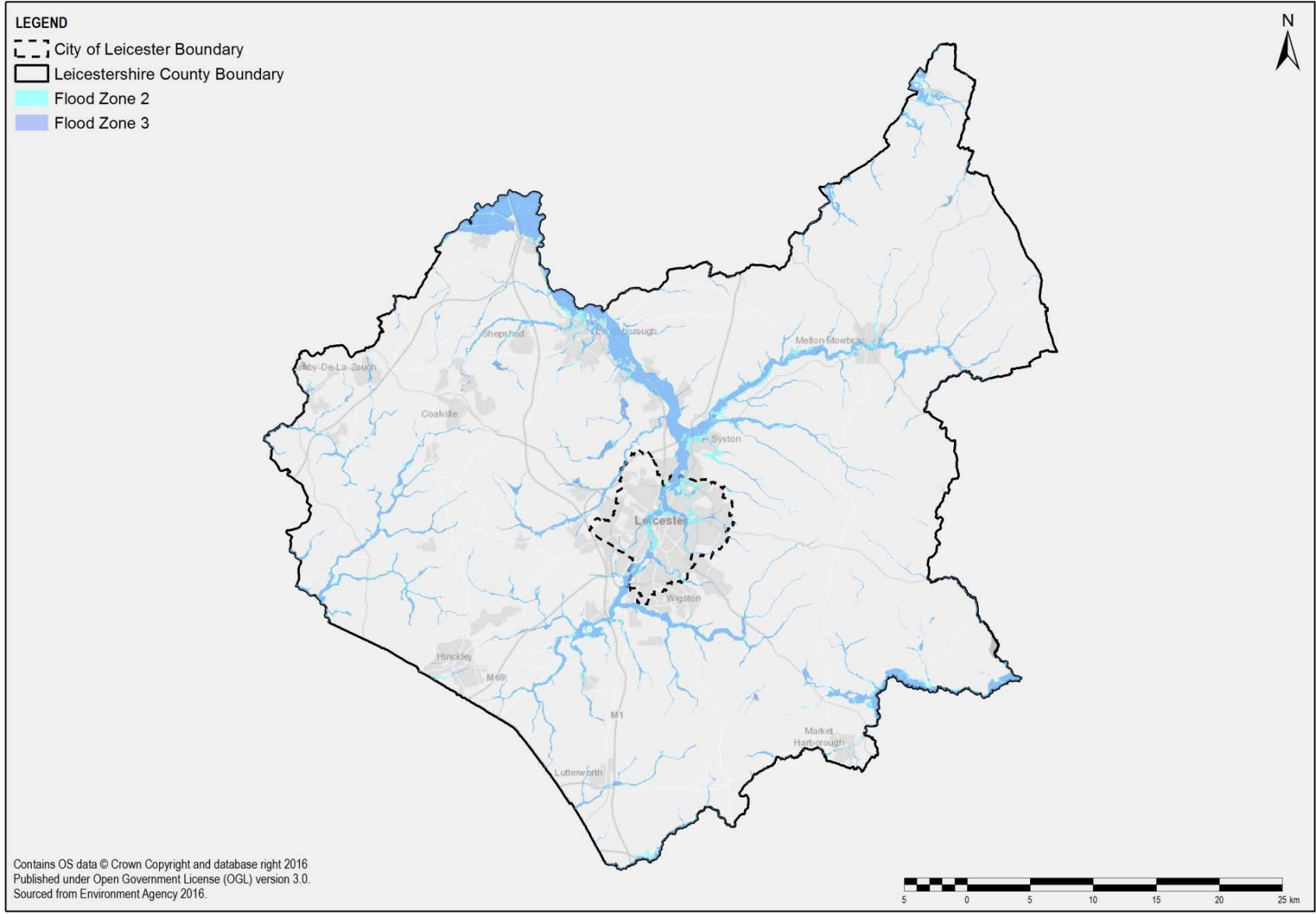


Table 12.2: Key water issues across Leicester and Leicestershire

Key issues / trends		
Authority	Flooding ³⁰	Water quality ³¹
Leicester	<p>Climate predictions indicate a potential increase of flood events (2016).</p> <p>Areas at risk of fluvial flooding include the River Soar, which is susceptible to flooding in parts of the City. Infrastructure needs to be assessed against demand (2016).</p>	<p>Biological river quality classified as good in 2009, which was an improvement from 2006.</p> <p>Chemical river quality classified as fair in 2009, with no change from 2006</p>
North West Leicestershire	<p>Areas at particular risk of fluvial flooding include Castle Donnington and Kegworth.</p> <p>There are 1028 properties in Flood Zone 3 within Castle Donnington, Lockington & Hemington.</p>	<p>The majority of watercourses continue to have poor to moderate ecological status (2010).</p> <p>A management plan has been prepared to tackle water quality issues in the River Mease which ought to improve quality and function over time.</p>
Blaby	<p>There are areas at risk of fluvial flooding associated with Rivers Soar and Sence, Rothley Brook.</p> <p>Blaby, Narborough and Whetstone identified as a 'priority settlement' with 646 properties at risk from fluvial flooding and 1702 from 1 in 100 surface water flooding (which is within the top 5 in Leicestershire).</p>	<p>2009 data demonstrated that 7 of 11 watercourses had 'poor' ecological status and four had 'moderate' status.</p>
Charnwood	<p>Areas at particular risk of fluvial flooding include Mountsorrel, Barrow upon Soar and Loughborough.</p> <p>There are 4461 properties in Charnwood located in Flood Zone 3a. Loughborough is in the top 5 priority settlements in Leicestershire for surface water flooding with 2743 properties at risk (1 in 100).</p> <p>No planning permissions were granted in flood risk areas (2012).</p>	<p>Most rivers in Charnwood are of good or moderate quality. There are some poor and one bad (2013).</p>
Hinckley and Bosworth	<p>Hinckley and Burbage identified as a 'priority settlement' with 54 properties at risk from fluvial flooding and 1496 from 1 in 100 surface water flooding (which is within the top 5 in Leicestershire).</p>	<p>In 2013, the Water Framework Directive status of watercourses in Hinckley was mixed. Normanton Brook was classified as bad along large parts of its length, and the River Sence classified as poor along much of its length. Markfield Brook on the other hand is classified as moderate.</p>

³⁰ 'Priority settlements' identified in Leicestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015)

³¹ Unless stated otherwise, data is from the Environment Agency (2009) – this data is no longer collected in the same format though.

Key issues / trends		
Authority	Flooding ³⁰	Water quality ³¹
Harborough	Frequent incidences of flooding have the potential to continue with current climate trends (2014). Market Harborough is in the top 5 'priority settlements' for surface water flooding with 2310 properties at risk (1 in 100).	Environment Agency data (2014) demonstrates that there are only two watercourses with good ecological status, both of which are canals. 10 watercourses have a 'moderate' status, 9 'poor' and 7 'bad'.
Melton	Flood zones 2 and 3 cover approximately 60 ha of the borough which could have the potential for further flooding incidences with current climate trends (2014). Melton Mowbray has 1081 properties at risk of surface water flooding (1 in 100) and 530 properties within flood zone 3.	River Wreake had very high levels of phosphates and nitrates (2009)
Oadby and Wigston	Flood plains particularly concentrated around the River Sence (2014). Wigston is identified as a 'priority settlement' with 320 properties at risk (within Flood Zone 3) from fluvial flooding and 1849 from 1 in 100 surface water flooding (which is within the top 5 in Leicestershire).	The main length of the River Sence From Burton Brook to Countesthorpe Brook has 'moderate' overall physico chemical quality (2009).
Summary	Flood risk presents an issue on floodplains as well as surface water flooding presenting an issue in particular settlements identified as 'priority settlements'.	Though there were exceptions, a large number of watercourses were classified as having poor biological / ecological status in 2009. Though this data is somewhat old, it suggests that there is a need for continued protection and enhancement of water resources.

13. Waste and Minerals

13.1 Policy context

National

- 13.1.1 **Waste:** Most UK legislation impacting on waste management is now implemented as a result of European Directives. The European Union's waste legislation includes:
- Directives providing frameworks for managing wastes, including the Directive on Waste ("the **Waste Framework Directive**"), as amended (and includes the European Waste Catalogue), and the Directive on Hazardous Waste, as amended;
 - Directives on the treatment of wastes, including the Directive in **Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control**, the Directive on Landfill of Waste and the Directive on Incineration of Waste;
 - The **EU Landfill Directive** sets a target to reduce the proportion of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled by 75% by 2035 compared to 1995, in England a commitment is made to meeting this target through the Waste Management Plan for England, 2013.
- 13.1.2 The Waste Framework Directive is transposed in England largely through the **Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011**, amongst others, which places emphasis on the waste hierarchy (**Figure 13.1**) to ensure that waste is dealt with in the priority order of: prevention, preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery and lastly disposal.
- 13.1.3 The **NPPF** does not contain specific waste policies as waste.
- 13.1.4 The **Waste Strategy 2007** contains aims including:
- To decouple waste growth (in all sectors) from economic growth and put more emphasis on waste prevention and re-use (Figure 13.1);
 - Meet and exceed the Landfill Directive diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste;
 - Increased diversion from landfill of non-municipal waste and secure better integration of treatment for municipal and non-municipal waste;
 - Secure the investment in infrastructure needed to divert waste from landfill and for the management of hazardous waste;
 - Get the most environmental benefit from that investment, through increased recycling of resources and recovery of energy from residual waste using a mix of technologies.
 - To recycle or compost at least 45% of household waste by 2015 and 50% by 2020.
- 13.1.5 The **National Planning Policy for Waste 2014** provides the planning framework to enable Local Authorities to put forward strategies which identify sites as being appropriate for new or enhanced facilities for waste management.
- 13.1.6 **Minerals:** In England, national minerals policies are set out in Minerals Planning Statements (MPS) and Mineral Policy Guidance Notes (MPG), although these are largely revoked as a result of the NPPG.
- 13.1.7 Minerals Planning Guidance Notes (MPGs) and their replacements, **Minerals Policy Statements** (MPSs), set out the Government's policy on minerals and planning issues and provide advice and guidance to local authorities and the minerals industry on policies and the operation of the planning system with regard to minerals.

- 13.1.8 Mineral planning authorities (MPAs) must take their contents into account in preparing their development plans. The guidance may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. Leicestershire County Council is the MPA for all the Districts of Leicestershire aside from Leicester, which has its own MPA.
- 13.1.9 The **NPPF** Section 13 includes advice in respect of 'Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals'. This identifies the importance of ensuring there is sufficient supply of material to provide for development and the economy. Paragraph 143 sets out detail of minerals considerations in preparing Local Plans, including:
- Policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance;
 - To take account of the potential for secondary and recycled materials before primary extraction;
 - To define Mineral Safeguarding Areas and protection policies.
- 13.1.10 The NPPG also sets out the role of the Minerals Planning Authorities and the LPAs
- Regional
- 13.1.11 Leicestershire County Council is in the process of reviewing its Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The **Minerals and Waste Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft (2016)** will replace various other documents which until now have dictated the approach of Leicestershire. Once reviewed, the new Waste and Minerals Local Plan will offer a spatial vision, strategy and objectives to guide the future working of minerals within the County of Leicestershire to the period until 2031.
- 13.1.12 The spatial vision of this plan is to 'enable the provision of sufficient minerals and waste facilities within Leicestershire in locations that meet the economic and social needs of present and future generations whilst seeking to protect and enhance the environment'
- 13.1.13 Leicester City Council as a unitary authority (and therefore waste planning authority and minerals planning authority) is responsible for planning policies for waste and minerals. The authority will be producing its own waste plan.
- Local
- 13.1.14 The **Leicester and Leicestershire Waste Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Management DPD** sets out a vision up to 2021 with three key elements:
- encouraging waste reduction;
 - increasing the reuse and recycling of waste; and
 - less reliance on landfill by increased energy recovery.
- 13.1.15 Table 13.1 below highlights the common messages, policy approaches and strategic priorities for waste and minerals.
- 13.1.16 The majority of policies which relate to waste and minerals, however, are covered in the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft (2016) which is currently emerging, and which offers a strategy for the whole of Leicestershire.

Table 13.1: Key planning policy messages for waste and Minerals

Emerging strategic policies	Source / Authorities
Encourage waste minimisation	All Local Authorities
Encourage renewable energy / less use of fossil fuels	All Local Authorities

13.2 Strategic baseline

- 13.2.1 Leicestershire is considered to be a mineral rich county, and one of the principal producers of minerals within England, particularly with regards to igneous rock. Many of the active mineral extraction sites are located, or have previously been located, within the north-western areas of the County as governed by naturally occurring geology. There are also areas of active and previously active mineral sites in the south west of Leicestershire.
- 13.2.2 Igneous rocks are currently extensively worked in and around Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire, producing in excess of 10 million tonnes of aggregate each year. The quarry at Mountsorrel is one of the largest aggregate quarries in the UK. Rocks quarried also include intrusive igneous rocks and Charnian volcanoclastic sediments, much of which is then exported around England³².
- 13.2.3 Small quarries which extract Carboniferous Limestone are located in the north- west of Leicestershire at Breedon Hill and Cloud Hill. The Marlstone Rock Formation has been extensively quarried for Iron ore in the area surrounding Holwell, also north of the county. Concentrations of red and green mudstones, siltstones and sandstones are found in west Leicestershire, where associated brick quarrying takes place.
- 13.2.4 There is a continuing demand for open-cast coal mining, although this has significantly declined since the 1990s. There are relatively few applications for deep-cast coal mining within the region. No safeguarded minerals sites have yet been identified in the County, although work is progressing on this for the County.
- 13.2.5 Various facilities are available within the County for the management of waste. These include materials recovery facilities (MRFs) at Whetstone and Melton; a mechanical biological treatment (MBT) facility at Cotesbach; anaerobic digestion plant at Wanlip and Huncote; 8 composting sites,;8 transfer sites; approximately 43 commercial and industrial (C&I) recycling operations; 14 Recycling and Household Waste Sites and landfills for non-hazardous waste and inert waste dispersed at various locations³³. A cluster of waste transfer and recycling sites are located to the south west of Leicester city. Beyond this point, sites tend to be concentrated in the north east of the Leicester city boundary, and surrounding the Hinckley and Loughborough areas.

³² East Midlands Region Landscape Character Assessment (2010), Natural England, Available: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5635681403535360>

³³ Leicestershire County Council (July 2015) Minerals and Waste Local Plan Consultation Draft, Available: http://www.leics.gov.uk/minerals_and_waste_local_plan_consultation_draft_july_2015.pdf

13.2.6 As recorded in 2013/14, the total municipal waste arisings in Leicestershire was 344,558 tonnes³⁴ with 48.1% (165,595 tonnes) sent for reuse, recycling or composting. Table 13.2 outlines the key strategic trends regarding waste and minerals across the Plan area.

13.3 Future baseline, Issues and opportunities

13.3.1 The emerging Leicestershire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan seeks to provide adequate waste management and mineral extraction/ processing facilities within Leicestershire to meet identified and predicted need. With the adoption and implementation of this plan, it is likely that increased waste services will be provided, enabling for more efficient waste management and increased recycling. Similarly, as a unitary authority, Leicester City will be preparing waste and minerals plans for the City, which will help to ensure that growth can be accommodated. These plans will need to be aligned to planned growth in housing and the economy, as identified within the Growth Strategy.

13.3.2 Whilst more efficient management of waste is likely to be achieved with technological improvements and ongoing behaviour changes, the volume of waste is expected to increase in line with population growth. By 2031, it is expected that the county will produce around 3.5 million tonnes of waste per year, and as such waste volume is likely to remain similar to current proportions.

13.3.3 Over the next 15 years, there should be sufficient reserves to meet demand for 231 million tonnes of crushed rock. Specific demand for minerals by type, however, remains unknown, as consumer and commercial trends in the energy sector may fluctuate under wider trends towards fossil fuels or, alternatively, to greener sources of energy. These issues would be dealt with in the waste and minerals Local Plans.

³⁴ Local authority collected and household waste statistics 2013 to 2014 (2014), Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables>

Table 13.2: Strategic trends for Waste and Minerals

	Key issues / trends		
Authority	Waste arisings and recycling ³⁵	Household recycling centers	Mineral resources
Leicester City	40.7% of municipal waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	Two household waste recycling centre's within the City with good accessibility for residents. Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Small areas of sand and gravel remain in the city but are considered commercially unviable for extraction. Limited potential sites of Gypsum and brick-clay also render these as unviable.
North West Leicestershire	46.7% of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	Two Recycling and Household Waste Sites.(RHWS) Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Many igneous rock resources within NWL. Bardon is an extraction site within NWL (2014).
Blaby District Council	47.9% of municipal waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	One household waste disposal and recycling centre. Kerbside recycling throughout the District.	Potential for River Soar and Sence valleys to contain sand and gravel. Likewise, potential for Igneous Rock deposits in the central area. Potential development restrictions. A number of disused quarries some of which are used for landfill but many remain derelict.
Charnwood Borough Council	48.4% of municipal waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017. Have adopted a 'Zero Waste' Strategy.	Three recycling and waste disposal sites. Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Sand and gravel deposits in River Soar and River Wreake valleys which intersect the borough- used as aggregates. Also oil reserves. Mountsorrel Quarry in the Borough.
Harborough District Council	53.6% of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	Three household waste and recycling facilities in Harborough . Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Two operational minerals sites and one extra permitted site (2013). Significant sand and gravel resources around Lutterworth.
Melton Borough Council	47.7% of municipal waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	Melton Mowbray Recycling and Household Waste site. Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Mineral Consultation Areas are spread throughout the borough and development will likely be close to them. Sterilisation could be an issue.
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	49.4% of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	One household waste disposal and recycling centre. Kerbside recycling throughout the District	Existing sand and gravel extraction sites in proximity to transport and infrastructure links.

³⁵ Waste Data Flow (2018)

	Key issues / trends		
Authority	Waste arisings and recycling ³⁵	Household recycling centers	Mineral resources
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	48.3% of municipal waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2016-2017.	One household waste disposal and recycling centre. Six safeguarded waste sites.	A sand and gravel mineral safeguarding site has been designated along the southern edge of the district (2016).
Summary	Waste generation and recycling rates vary across the County, some authorities are experiencing a recent decline but there is a general trend of improvement.	There are a range of household waste recycling centres that serve the population across the County. Accessibility is broadly good.	There are important mineral reserves across the HMA, some of which could overlap with potential development areas.

14. Key strategic issues

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 This section establishes a series of key issues, drawn from the baseline position and contextual review presented throughout this Scoping Report.

14.1.2 The key issues provide the context for the sustainability appraisal and have helped to inform the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

14.2 Sustainability appraisal framework

14.2.1 The SA Framework consists of a series of objectives and supporting criteria that form the basis for assessing the Plan policies and any reasonable alternatives.

14.2.2 The framework is deliberately focused on strategic sustainability issues, as this is appropriate to the nature and scale of the Strategic Growth Plan. However, the sustainability issues identified through each Local Authorities SA processes have been acknowledged, particularly where there are common themes.

14.3 Appraisal of the Growth Strategy

14.3.1 The SA will involve the appraisal of the growth strategy (quantum and distribution), including policies, allocations and any reasonable alternatives.

14.3.2 There is a need to present a transparent appraisal that clearly sets out how the significance of effects has been determined consistently in the appraisal of the Growth Strategy and any reasonable alternatives. At the same time the appraisal needs to remain accessible and should therefore be succinct and proportionate.

14.3.3 An example of how the findings for each SA objective could be presented below.

Figure 14.1: Example of how alternatives will be appraised and findings presented

Biodiversity	Alternative 1	xxx	Alternative 2	✓ x	Alternative 3	✓✓
Nature of effects						
Sensitivity of receptors						
Likelihood of effects						
Significance						

Major negative effect	xxx	Minor positive effect	✓
Moderate negative effect	xx	Moderate positive effect	✓✓
Minor negative effect	x	Major positive effect	✓✓✓
Neutral effect	-	Effects are unclear	?

Table 14.1: The SA Framework and corresponding key issues.

Key issues	SA Objective	Sub objectives / guiding questions
<p>Biodiversity and geodiversity</p> <p>The County has a relatively low level of designated biodiversity sites. However, these are in a mostly favourable or recovering position. Opportunities to strengthen ecological networks should therefore be taken advantage of.</p> <p>The quality of water could affect a range of biodiversity habitats and species across the County, making strategic river networks an important feature to protect, maintain and enhance.</p>	<p>1. Create new, protect, maintain and enhance habitats, species and ecological networks.</p>	<p>How will water environments be affected?</p> <p>How will the quality and connectivity of ecological networks be affected?</p> <p>Will there be a net increase in biodiversity?</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing</p> <p>The population is aging, with impacts for the delivery of health services.</p> <p>Also key issue due to rising ageing population is provision of sufficient and appropriate housing within the HMA / districts.</p>	<p>2. Maintain and improve levels of health, whilst reducing health inequalities</p>	<p>How will the health and wellbeing of an older population be affected?</p> <p>How will health inequalities be affected?</p> <p>Will good levels of health and wellbeing be maintained?</p> <p>How will access to open spaces be affected?</p>
<p>Housing</p> <p>There is a need to meet needs for housing as identified in the HEDNA (2017). In some districts it may be difficult to meet full needs 'locally' (i.e. within the district it arises). This could necessitate housing needs for some districts being met in other parts of the HMA.</p> <p>Housing affordability is an issue across the HMA. There is an increasing need to provide housing suitable for an ageing population.</p>	<p>3. Secure the delivery of high quality, market and affordable homes, to meet Objectively Assessed Need.</p>	<p>How will the delivery of housing be affected?</p> <p>What is OAN for HMA and for each district / borough?</p> <p>How does OAN relate to land availability and to likely delivery rates?</p> <p>How will issues of affordability be tackled?</p> <p>Will affordability issues in rural areas be tackled?</p>

Key issues	SA Objective	Sub objectives / guiding questions
		To what extent will housing be well related to employment opportunities and key services?
<p>Employment and economy</p> <p>The County is well positioned for growth in the strategic distribution sector; though there is a need to identify the appropriate distribution of growth opportunities.</p> <p>Unemployment rates are falling across the HMA, though remain the highest within the city.</p>	4. Support the continued growth and diversification of the economy.	<p>How will the rural economy be affected?</p> <p>Is there support for the growth of strategic distribution centres in accessible locations?</p> <p>How will levels of unemployment be affected, particularly in the City and pockets of deprivation?</p>
<p>Transport and travel</p> <p>Accessibility to services, facilities and jobs is poor in rural areas.</p> <p>Access to strategic employment sites by public transport is not ideal.</p> <p>There may be constraints to the amount of development that can be accommodated on the edge or near the Leicester urban area in light of congestion along parts of the orbital road network.</p>	5. Improve accessibility to services, jobs and facilities by reducing the need to travel, promoting sustainable modes of transport and securing strategic infrastructure improvements.	<p>Will development contribute to strategic infrastructure improvements?</p> <p>Will development help to tackle accessibility issues, particularly in rural areas?</p> <p>Will development contribute to a reduction in congestion along key routes into, out and around Leicester?</p> <p>Will developments reduce the need to travel, especially by car?</p>
<p>Though generally good, air pollution presents an issue in some parts of the County, typically within areas that suffer from higher levels of traffic and congestion.</p>	6. Minimise exposure to poor air quality, whilst managing contributing sources.	<p>Will development reduce the number/amount of receptors that are affected by poor air quality?</p> <p>Will development lead to increased or decreased exposure to poor air quality for new and existing communities?</p>

Key issues	SA Objective	Sub objectives / guiding questions
<p>Climate change</p> <p>There are opportunities to increase the amount of low carbon and renewable sources of energy above the relatively low baseline position</p>	<p>7. Contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and an increase in the use of low carbon energy</p>	<p>Is there potential for the development of low carbon and renewable energy schemes to be implemented?</p> <p>Will development lead to the ‘sterilisation’ of energy opportunities?</p>
<p>Landscape and land</p> <p>There are parcels of high quality agricultural land throughout the district that should be protected given the relatively low amount of Grade 1 and 2 land present.</p> <p>No nationally designated landscapes are present. But there are a variety of important landscapes which are important to the character of the countryside, preventing urban sprawl and supporting the natural environment. Whilst these are in relatively good condition, there are increasing pressures for from development that need to be managed.</p>	<p>8. Protect, maintain and enhance landscapes whilst promoting their value to sustainable growth.</p> <p>9. Protect high quality agricultural land from permanent development.</p>	<p>How will the rural and tranquil nature of the countryside be affected?</p> <p>Will access to the countryside be improved in a sustainable manner?</p> <p>Are there alternative locations for development on agricultural land of lower quality?</p> <p>Will topsoil be preserved?</p>
<p>Cultural heritage</p> <p>There is a wealth and variety of heritage features, many of which are designated for their heritage value. It will be important to protect the condition and setting of these assets.</p> <p>There may be cross border heritage assets.</p> <p>Though the number of ‘at risk heritage assets has decreased slightly from 2015-2017, the majority of heritage assets that remain on the ‘at risk’ register are declining in condition.</p>	<p>10. Conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.</p>	<p>How will the character of settlements be affected, particularly urban fringes?</p> <p>Will opportunities to enhance the fabric, function and setting of heritage assets and their settings be realised?</p>

Key issues	SA Objective	Sub objectives / guiding questions
<p>Water</p> <p>The quality of many water resources across the County is in need of improvement, yet could come under increased pressure from new development.</p> <p>SUDs should be encouraged to support the natural and sustainable management of water resources.</p> <p>There are areas across the County that are sensitive to and at risk of flooding (which could be exacerbated by climate change). There is a need to ensure that future development does not put more people at risk of flooding whilst ensuring that overall levels of flooding do not increase. This could/should constrain development in some areas, such as the flood plains of the River Soar and watercourses leading to and through Leicester City.</p>	<p>11. Steer development away from the areas at the greatest risk of flooding, whilst supporting schemes that reduce the risk and impacts of flooding.</p> <p>12. Protect, maintain and enhance the quality of water resources.</p>	<p>Has development been sited in accordance with the NPPF sequential and exception tests?</p> <p>Are there opportunities to secure strategic flood management and improvement schemes as part of development?</p> <p>Are there any opportunities to reduce flood risk downstream?</p> <p>Do the schemes combine flood risk management with delivering biodiversity and amenity benefits.</p> <p>Will development help to fund improvement and management schemes for water quality?</p> <p>Can development be accommodated by existing and planned water treatment facilities?</p>
<p>Waste and minerals</p> <p>Levels of recycling, reuse and composting are relatively high, and rates continue to improve. There has also been a general decrease in the amount of waste per capita.</p> <p>Growth in housing and employment is likely to generate more waste in terms of the overall volume. However, improved efficiency and continued drives to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill should help to reduce the amount of waste generated per capita.</p> <p>There are mineral resources across the County, some of which could be sterilised by development. It is important to protect such reserves from sterilisation.</p>	<p>Waste – Scoped out. The trends are generally positive, and the planning for growth ought to be managed through the Leicester and Leicestershire Waste Plan.</p> <p>13. Protect mineral resources from sterilisation, and support their sustainable extraction.</p>	<p>Will mineral resources be sterilised as a result of housing or employment land allocations?</p> <p>Will development be located on land that could be used for future minerals extraction or transport (for example freight terminals, disused rail lines etc.)</p> <p>Will development be located close to sources of building materials?</p>

15. *Next steps*

15.1 **Consulting on the scope of the SA**

15.1.1 Consultation on the Scoping Report provides the opportunity for statutory bodies and other stakeholders to influence the scope of the SA.

15.1.2 Formal consultation was undertaken with the statutory consultation bodies and other stakeholders between August 25th 2017 and September 29th 2017.

15.1.3 A series of questions were posed to help prompt responses to the Scoping Report.

- Have we captured the relevant baseline information?
- Have we captured the relevant policies, plans and programmes?
- Have we identified the relevant key issues?
- Are the SA Framework and proposed methodologies robust and appropriate?

15.2 **'Finalising' the scoping report**

15.2.1 Following the consultation period on the draft Scoping Report, updates were made in light of comments and feedback received (See Appendix A). These changes are presented in this 'final' version of the Scoping Report, which informed the appraisal of the Growth Strategy.

15.2.2 It is important to note that the scope of the SA is not fixed and will be updated over time to reflect new evidence and feedback from stakeholders. Ultimately, the scope of the SA must be presented as part of the SA Report.

APPENDIX A: Consultation feedback and responses

Comments received	Response
<p>Historic England: There is insufficient reference to baseline data for heritage. Particularly relevant to site allocations and designations could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating conservation areas appraisals • Undertaking characterisation studies • Producing setting studies • Local Lists • Leicestershire Stone Study • Assessment of landscape sensitivity. 	<p>No sites are being allocated in the growth strategy.</p> <p>As a strategic piece of work, the SA ought to focus on the pertinent issues at the correct geographical scale.</p> <p>The suggested updates / studies would be useful to assist in the appraisal process. However, undertaking the specific studies identified goes beyond the scope of the SA. Available information from emerging studies will be incorporated into the SA as appropriate if possible.</p>
<p>Historic England: Reference to non-designated heritage assets and archaeology should be included in Section 11.</p>	<p>Section 11 updated to include references.</p>
<p>Historic England: The SA Objective related to heritage should be reworded as follows:</p> <p><i>Conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings</i></p>	<p>Objective amended as suggested.</p>
<p>Historic England: What methodologies are to be used?</p>	<p>The SA Framework provides the basis for appraising the draft Plan and any reasonable alternatives</p>
<p>Historic England: Detailed site assessment criteria is required to comply with the NPPF and ensure a sound plan</p>	<p>No sites are being allocated in the growth strategy.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: Section 3 – suggested wording changes to 3.3.7</p> <p><i>In addition to river systems, green corridors and other recreational routes <u>will be</u> enhanced to enable species movement throughout Leicestershire.</i></p> <p>We propose a new paragraph, 3.3.8:</p> <p><i>Steps should be taken to enhance the ‘Blue Corridors’ approach with the aim of improving biodiversity value, water quality, public access, flood plain use and tree planting to restore connectivity and improvements to air quality in the long term.</i></p>	<p>Suggested amendments / additions incorporated into Scoping Report.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: Section 12 – suggested wording changes are made to clarify flood management responsibilities.</p>	<p>Suggestions incorporated into the Scoping Report.</p>

<p>Environment Agency: The following documents are suggested as part of the contextual review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UK National Ecosystem Assessment (June 2011) • The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature (June 2011) • Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (Aug, 2011) • Making Space for Nature (2010) • Climate Change Allowances (2016) • National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2011) • Future Water – The Government's water strategy for England (2011) • Sustainable drainage systems: non statutory technical standards (2015) • Flood Risk Management Plan for the Humber • CAMS: Soar Abstraction licensing strategy (2013) • Severn Trent Water's (STW's) Water Resource Management Plan 2015-40 • Severn Trent Waters Area Drought Plan (Leicester) Riverside Environmental Strategy • Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy 	<p>Documents included as deemed necessary.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: New paragraphs should be added to the future baseline, issues and opportunities for housing and employment to highlight the value watercourses have as an asset to new developments.</p>	<p>Suggested paragraphs added at section 5.3.6 and 6.3.7.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: We would advise that for those Local Planning Authority's containing significant amount of Flood Zone (Flood Zones 2 and 3) flood risk should be cited (bullet-pointed) as a Key Issue. This will be particularly pertinent during the Sequential Testing of proposed Allocation sites.</p>	<p>Flood risk included as a key issue at Table 1.1</p>
<p>Environment Agency: Table 12.2 - Climate change and its impacts is a key issue across all Local Planning Authorities (LPA) as well as the potential flood risk. Some authorities have listed the Rivers (such as Blaby) but others are very broad. A statement such as 'Areas at risk of fluvial flooding associated with Rivers....' should be included for each LPA to give an overview of the fluvial flood risk.</p>	<p>Suggestions incorporated into Scoping Report.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: Footnote 30 states data is from the Environment Agency (2009) (unless stated otherwise). It should be noted that the RBMP's published in 2009 have since been updated, in 2015. We acknowledge this is mentioned elsewhere (para 12.1.11).</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Environment Agency: SA Framework wording changes are suggested:</p> <p><u>Biodiversity</u></p>	<p>Suggested changes made.</p>

Create new and protect, maintain and enhance habitats, species and ecological networks.

Water

Climate change should be listed as a Key issue.

The following wording should be added to the 2nd Sub objectives / guiding questions, as follows:

Are there opportunities to secure strategic flood management and improvement schemes as part of development?

Are there any opportunities to reduce flood risk downstream?

Do the schemes combine flood risk management with delivering biodiversity and amenity benefits.

