

# **Sustainability appraisal of the Reg. 19 Leicester Local Plan**

**September 2022**

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## **Appendices**

- A. Detailed appraisal of alternatives
- B. Detailed appraisal of Local Plan sites
- C. Detailed appraisal of sites not in the Local Plan
- D. Detailed appraisal of Local Plan policies
- E. Recommended mitigation measures and their implementation in the plan

# 1. Non-Technical Summary

Leicester City Council is developing a Local Plan which includes:

- Targets for housing and employment growth in Leicester. The Local Plan must include enough housing sites to maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites;
- Sites for housing, employment, retail and open space;
- Development management policies; and
- Strategies for the implementation of sites and policies.

This sustainability appraisal (SA) assesses the likely social, environmental and economic impacts of the Local Plan. SA of emerging plans is legally required, and aims to ensure that plans are socially, environmentally and economically positive. This SA follows on from previous reports which described the city's sustainability status and assessed the impacts of the plan policies and development sites. In this report:

- Chapter 4 summarises and updates to 2022 information about social, environmental and economic conditions in the city;
- Chapter 5 assesses the impacts of the plan objectives;
- Chapter 6 identifies and assesses the impacts of alternatives to the plan, including alternative development sites;
- Chapter 7 assesses the impacts of the Local Plan;
- Chapter 8 discusses ways of avoiding and minimising negative impacts of the plan;
- Chapter 9 explains plans for monitoring the actual impacts of the Local Plan;
- Chapter 10 discusses next steps.

## **Current and likely future conditions without the plan**

Leicester faces the following social, environmental and economic problems:

- A large air quality management area, although air pollution is decreasing in the northern parts at Abbey Lane and Melton Road
- Large areas of deprivation, including low pay, poor health and low education
- Lower employment and higher unemployment than the regional and national average
- Greater expected population growth, and housing need, than can be sustainably accommodated within the city boundaries
- High levels of car use despite good facilities for public transport and cycling. As in other large cities, transport and highway pressures will continue to lead to congestion
- 'Moderate' water quality in the River Soar
- Leicester is in an area of 'moderate' water stress, with additional water resources and wastewater management likely to be needed
- Significant potential for flooding, with 37,000 properties possibly affected by surface water flooding.

An SA framework has been used as a structure for appraising the sustainability of the plan's objectives, alternatives, policies and sites:

SA Objective
1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs.
2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities.
3. To provide better opportunities for people to participate in cultural and recreational activities; and to protect the city's landscape and townscape
4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.
5. To support diversity, tackle inequality, reduce deprivation, and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities.
6. To increase biodiversity levels.
7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings
8. To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality
9. To protect water quality and resources, and minimise flood risk.
10. To reduce the potential impact of climate change by minimising energy usage, and to develop renewable energy resources, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources.
11. To encourage land use and development that optimises the use of previously developed land & buildings.
12. To make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure, help reduce the need to travel by car, improve accessibility to jobs and services for all, and to ensure that all journeys are undertaken by the most sustainable mode available.
13. To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recovery and recycling of waste materials.
14. To create high quality employment opportunities and develop a strong, diverse and stable local economy which attracts and retains investment.
15. To support the vitality and viability of the City Centre and other local centres
16. To raise the levels of educational achievement and develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation.

The key to the appraisal tables is:

Very positive compared to the present situation	++	Negative compared to the present situation	-	No direct link, insignificant impact	0
Positive compared to the present situation	+	Very negative compared to the present situation	--	Information not available	I
Unclear	?	Positive or negative depending on implementation			+/-

### Assessing the impact of the plan objectives

The plan objectives focus on delivering new homes and employment sites in a way that minimizes other impacts, and supports good health and communities. Some of the objectives are likely to harm the environment: building more homes and employment sites, which is socially and economically positive, will increase urbanisation, harm biodiversity, and use more resources.

## Identifying and assessing plan alternatives

The SA considered alternative plan policies and alternative development sites. Plan policy alternatives included

- The amount of housing and employment growth
- How much of the growth should be provided for in Leicester v. adjacent local authorities
- Whether existing employment land should be made available for other uses
- Types of development that should be allowed in shopping centres
- Whether to allow major leisure uses outside the city centre
- Whether to set car parking standards

Hundreds of sites were considered for possible development, and more than 300 of these were appraised for their sustainability. In some cases, the most seemingly sustainable sites are not included in the plan, for instance because of site constraints, or because it is a school playing field with inadequate surplus space for development. In other cases, seemingly unsustainable sites are included in the plan: typically this is because the site is large (and so more likely to have constraints such as archaeology or wildlife areas) and can make a significant contribution to development needs within the city boundary.

## Assessing the Local Plan

Table 1.1 summarises the impacts of the plan policies, and Table 1.2 summarises the impacts of the proposed development sites. Table 1.3 summarises the overall impacts of the Local Plan.

The Local Plan is broadly positive socially, in terms of housing, culture, recreation and diversity. It is broadly negative environmentally, as much new development will go on greenfield sites, including areas of biodiversity importance, and will use natural resources. It is very good economically, as it supports a varied and growing economy, a strong retail offer, and vital city and local centres.

Two areas will be significantly affected by the plan. In North West Leicester, strategic sites 2 and 3 plus already-approved development at Ashton Green will change a mostly open and green area into a new community with houses, jobs and services. The Central Development Area will also lead to many changes as many sites will be redeveloped: there, impacts on heritage, the river and canal, and access through the area will need to be carefully managed.

## Mitigating negative impacts of the Local Plan

Suggestions were made to the planning team about how the Local Plan could be made more sustainable:

Climate emergency, renewable energy: Leicester City declared a climate emergency in February 2019, but the plan said nothing about the climate emergency, and little about how development could help to reduce or adapt to climate change. This has led to a new climate change chapter, Chapter 6, in the plan.

**Table 1.1 Policy appraisal**

	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/recreation	4. Safety	5. Diversity	6. Biodiversity	7. Heritage	8. Natural resources	9. Water	10. Climate change	11. Land use	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education
<b>3. Vision for Leicester</b>																
VL01	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0
<b>4. Strategy for Leicester</b>																
SL01	+-	+-	0	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	++
SL02	++	+-	-	0	0	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	-	0
SL03	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-?	-	-	-	-	-	0	+	-	+
SL04	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-?	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	0
SL05	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	?
SL06	+	-	-	0	0	0?	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	+	0	0
<b>5. Housing</b>																
Ho01	++	+	0	0	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
Ho02	++	+	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	-	0	+	0
Ho03	++	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho04	-	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	+	0	+
Ho05	+-	+-	0	0	0	+	+-	0	+-	+-	0	+	0	0	+	0
Ho06	+-	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
Ho07	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho08	+	0	0	-	+	0	?	0	?	+-	0	+	0	+-	+	+
Ho09	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
Ho10	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho11	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho12	+	0	0	0	+	?	?	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6. Climate change and flood risk</b>																
CCFR01	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	++	0	0	0	+	0	0
CCFR02	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	++	+	0	+	+-	0	0
CCFR03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
CCFR04	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	++	0	0	+	+	0	0
CCFR05	0	+	0	0	0	0	-?	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0
CCFR06	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>7. Health and wellbeing</b>																
HW01	0	++	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+-	+	0	+	+	0
HW02	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>8. Delivering quality places</b>																
DQP01	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
DQP02	+	0	0	+	0	0	-?	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0
DQP03	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP04	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0
DQP05	+	0	0	+	+	-?	0	?	0?	+-	+	+	0	0	+	0
DQP06	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DQP07	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0
DQP08	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DQP11	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
<b>9. Central Development Area</b>																
CDA01	++	+	++	+	+-	+	+	-	-	+	++	++	-	++	++	+
CDA02	+-	+	++	++	-	+	+	0	-	-	++	+	0	+	++	0
CHA01-ORA05	++	0	++	0	+	-	+-	-	-	?	+	+	0	++	++	++
<b>10. Heritage</b>																
He01	+-	0	+	+-	0	0	++	0	0	+-	+	0	0	+	+	0
He02	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	+	0	0
<b>11. Culture and tourism</b>																
CT01	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	+	0	+	+-	0

	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/recreation	4. Safety	5. Diversity	6. Biodiversity	7. Heritage	8. Natural resources	9. Water	10. Climate change	11. Land use	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education
CT02	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0
CT03	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
CT04	0	0	+	0	0	-	++	0	0	+	-	+	0	+	0	0
CT05	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	?	+	0	0	?	0
<b>12. Employment</b>																
E01	0	-	-	0	0	-	-?	-	-	-	-	-	0	++	+	0
E02	0	0	+	+	+	-?	-?	-	-	-	+	+	0	+	+	+
E03	0	0	0	0	+	-	-?	-?	-	-?	+	-?	0	+	+	+
E04	-	+	0	0	0	+	0	-?	0	0	+	+	0	++	0	+
E05	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
E06	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+
E07	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	-	+	++	-?	+
E08	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
<b>13. Town centres and retail</b>																
TCR01	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	++	0
TCR02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	++	0
TCR03	?	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	++	++	+
TCR04	+	+	++	+	+	0	?	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	++	0
TCR05	0	0	0	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0
TCR06	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
TCR07	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
TCR08	0	0	0	0	+	0	-?	-	-?	?	?	+	0	0	-?	0
TCR09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>14. Open space, sports and recreation</b>																
OSSR01	-	+	+	0	0	-?	0	-?	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0
OSSR02	+	0	0	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
OSSR03	+	+	++	0	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0
OSSR04	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
OSSR05	-	++	++	0	+	0	0	0	?	0	0	+	0	0	0	+
OSSR06	0	++	++	0	+	-?	+	0	-?	-?	0	+	0	0	+	0
OSSR07	0	+	++	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0
<b>15. The natural environment</b>																
NE01	-	0	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
NE02	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
NE03	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0
NE04	-	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>16. Transportation</b>																
T01	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	0	+	+	0
T02	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	++	0	++	0	++	0	0	0	0
T03	0	+	+	+	++	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	0	+	+	0
T04	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	0	+	0	0
T05	+	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	0	+	0	++	0	0
T06	+	0	0	+	0	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	0	+	+	0
T07	+	+	0	0	0	-	-	+	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	0
<b>17. Future minerals and waste needs</b>																
FMWN01	0	0	0	0	0	-?	0	-?	-?	+	?	-	++	+	0	0
FMWN02	0	0	0	0	0	-?	0	-?	-?	+	+	0	++	0	0	0
FMWN03	+	0	0	0	0	-	-?	-	-	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
FMWN04	+	0	0	0	0	-	-?	+	-?	+	+	-	++	+	0	0
<b>18. Development and infrastructure</b>																
DI01	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+
DI02	0	0?	+	0	0	0	-?	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	0	+
<b>20. Planning enforcement</b>																
PE01	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

**Table 1.2 Site appraisal**

Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
CDA 1048																				
<b>Strategic sites</b>																				
261																				
262																				
309																				
464																				
579																				
580																				
702																				
718																				
<b>Other sites</b>																				
15																				
19																				
190																				
219																				
222																				
240																				
297																				
307																				
335																				
449																				
481																				
488																				
501																				
505																				
525																				
529																				
546																				
549																				
557																				
559																				
569																				
577																				
589																				
620																				
626																				
629																				
631																				
646																				
647																				



Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
648	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
669	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
684	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
715	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Grey	
960	Green	Green	Red	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Yellow	Green	Grey	
961	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Orange	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
962	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
963	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
992	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1001	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1007	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1030	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Grey	
1034	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1035	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1037	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1039	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1041	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1042	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1051	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Grey	

**Table 1.3 Total impact of the Local Plan**

SA objective	Cumulative impacts of the Leicester Local Plan on the SA objective
1. Housing	The plan is for 1,296 dwellings per year for 2020-2036 (total 20,730). Neighbouring authorities will provide another 18,700 dwellings to deal with the rest of Leicester’s housing need. This provides enough overall homes, but not the amount of affordable housing needed.
2. Health	The plan is broadly good for health because it provides new homes, green areas, places to walk and cycle, and traffic management. Construction will have short-term health impacts (e.g. noise, dust). The extra traffic caused by new development will affect health through air pollution, accidents etc. Five allotments will be affected.
3. Culture and recreation	The plan is good for culture and recreation because it supports the redevelopment of the Central Development Area, provides for new open space and a new railway museum, and redevelops the waterside. The development of 186 hectares of greenfield land, including 9 Green Wedges, will harm the landscape. Redevelopment of run-down areas will be good for the townscape.
4. Safety, crime	The plan is neutral on safety and crime. Redeveloping run-down areas will improve safety, but the population increase could lead to more crime.

5. Diversity	The plan is good for diversity because of its policies on, and development sites in, deprived areas. It also supports new places of worship and public open space.
6. Biodiversity	The plan will build on 7 Local Wildlife Sites (plus 4 already being built on), and will turn many of the city's other open spaces into built-up areas. Plan policies on biodiversity gain, green areas and waterways will reduce some of these impacts, but overall biodiversity will worsen.
7. Heritage	The plan aims to protect and enhance the city's heritage through protection of historic assets and heritage-led regeneration.
8. Natural resources	The plan supports walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicles which will help to cut air pollution. Building 20,730 homes and about 30ha of employment space will use natural resources, and will cause pollution.
9. Water	The plan will help to redevelop the waterways and promotes the use of areas to soak up water. This could help to improve water quality and reduce flooding. However flooding is likely to worsen because the plan will develop 186 hectares of greenfield land, and the new homes will use more water.
10. Climate change	The plan supports walking, cycling, public transport, electric vehicles, and renewable energy. However the large amount of growth proposed by the plan will increase carbon emissions.
11. Land use	The plan supports the redevelopment of built-up areas and infill development which will increase building densities. It helps to provide needed housing and employment in Leicester, where it is easier to get to services. The plan will lead to 186 hectares of greenfield land being built on.
12. Transportation	The plan supports walking, cycling and public transport; transport plans that encourage a move away from car use; limits on new parking; and the freight transport by canal and rail where possible.
13. Waste	The plan's 20,730 homes and 30ha of employment land will cause more waste. The plan supports good waste storage and management, and waste management facilities in the city.
14. Employment	There is not enough land within Leicester for all of the city's employment needs. The plan will deliver about half of what is needed through the Central Development Area, Pioneer Park etc. The rest will be provided by neighbouring areas. Other plan policies (e.g. jobs in textile and industry as well as high tech) support employment.
15. Vitality and viability	The plan is good for the vitality and viability of centres, with strong policies for town centres and retail. On the other hand, large development on the edge of the city, some of which will be car-focused, could draw people away from existing centres.
16. Education	The plan is good for education and innovation. The Central Development Area and Pioneer Park will support the types of business that encourage innovation. The plan also supports student accommodation.

Housing density: The plan originally promoted densities of 50+ dwellings per hectare (dph) in the Central Development Area, and 30+ dph in the rest of the city. These densities were low compared to other UK cities. In response to this SA and further evidence, this was raised to 75+dph in the Central Development Area and 35+ elsewhere. This helps to reduce the amount of land used to provide the new development.

Biodiversity net gain: Earlier versions of the plan did not include a 'biodiversity net gain', but this is now required by government policy. Policy NE02 discusses biodiversity gain.

Infrastructure needed for large development sites: New developments need water, wastewater, electricity and other infrastructure; and services such as doctor's surgeries, schools, and local shops. The plan does not identify what services and infrastructure are needed for the large development sites, in part because of a lack of evidence.

Public transport for NW Leicester: Generally the development sites in North West Leicester are far from the city centre and existing services, and located near the M1 and A46. Without very good public transport, these new sites are likely to be car dependent. Studies are still being carried out about public transport requirements for these sites, and how this can best be funded and delivered.

Other sustainability suggestions were made for individual plan policies, and led to changes in the plan. These include support for:

- Co-location of businesses where one business can use another business's waste as a resource
- Renewable energy at the Great Central Railway Museum and in Green Wedges
- The provision of public toilets at large shopping developments
- New built sports facilities to be easily accessible by walking and cycling
- Tree planting along waterways

### **Monitoring the impacts of the Local Plan**

The actual impacts of the plan will be monitored. This will include

- The number of homes, and affordable homes, delivered every year
- How people travel (walking, cycling etc.)
- Poverty levels (Index of Multiple Deprivation)
- Biodiversity net gain
- Air and water quality
- Carbon emissions
- Amount of green land developed
- Housing densities
- Employment levels

### **Next steps**

Please send any comments to [planning.policy@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@leicester.gov.uk).

## 2. Leicester Local Plan

The Greater Leicester area is a major economic hub in the Midlands and one of the UK's fastest growing areas. It supports some 650,000 people and is the 9th biggest city in the country. The Leicester area has generally good connectivity to national road and rail networks, East Midlands Airport and other cities in the region such as Birmingham, Coventry, Nottingham and Derby.

The more tightly drawn Leicester city council administrative area<sup>1</sup> supports a population of around 355,000. Leicester City Council is developing a Local Plan to 2036 which includes:

- Spatial policies which set targets for growth in Leicester linked to the vision and objectives for the area over the plan period.
- Allocations of land, including for housing, employment, retail and open space;
- Detailed development management policies;
- Detailed strategies for the implementation of sites and policies; and
- Indicators for Local Plan monitoring.

In particular, the Local Plan is required to contain sufficient housing land allocations to ensure that the Council meets its requirement to maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites within its administrative boundary.

To accommodate the growth required for the greater Leicester area to continue to develop and prosper, it is necessary to plan for homes jobs and infrastructure beyond as well as within the city boundary. The City has an ongoing agreement with adjacent authorities to meet some of City's needs in their areas. Map 2.1 shows the location of planned development in Leicester.

The objectives of the Local Plan are to:

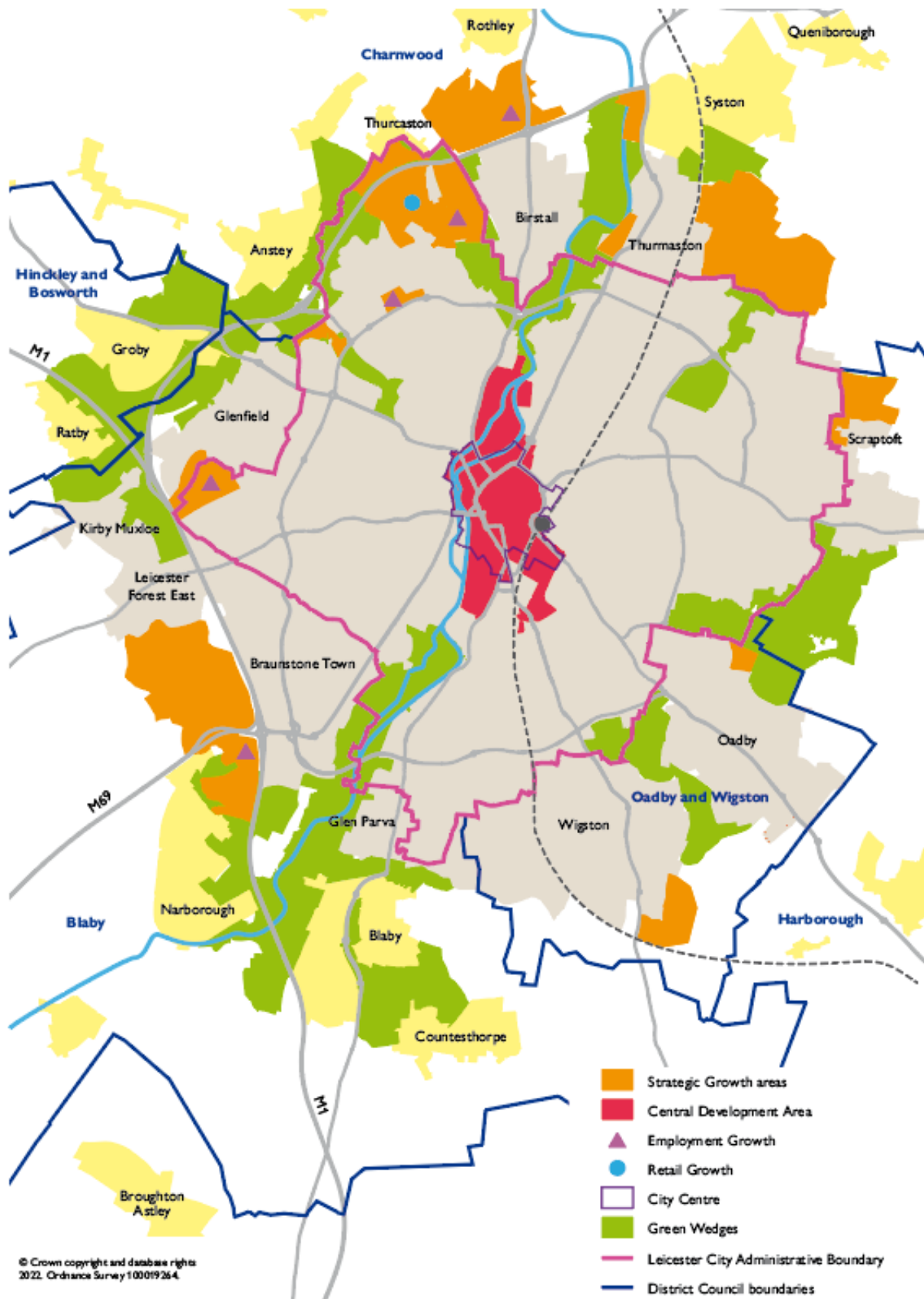
1. Support the delivery of new homes balanced with economic growth to meet the needs of all people
2. Prepare for, limit and adapt to climate change
3. Support economic growth, maximise employment opportunities and support businesses to grow
4. Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents
5. Ensure new development is of a high-quality design and layout which reflects local context and circumstances
6. Enable the right infrastructure for the city to grow and thrive
7. Conserve and enhance the identity, character and diversity of the city's built and heritage assets
8. Protect and enhance the natural environment including green infrastructure and biodiversity
9. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure by helping to reduce the need to travel by car and improve accessibility to jobs and services
10. Enhance the vitality and viability of our city centre, town centres and district and local centres.

Box 2.1 shows the plan's table of contents.

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<sup>1</sup> Where this report refers to 'Leicester', this means 'the Leicester city council administrative area'

Map 2.1 Location of planned development in the Leicester Local Plan 2020-2036



## **Box 2.1. Table of Contents of the Leicester Local Plan**

### **Foreword**

1. Introduction
2. A Profile of Leicester: A Spatial Portrait
3. Vision for Leicester
4. Strategy for Leicester
5. Housing
6. Climate Change and Flood Risk
7. Health and Wellbeing
8. Design Quality
9. Central Development Area
10. Heritage
11. Culture and Tourism
12. Employment
13. Town Centre and Retail
14. Open Space, Sports and Recreation
15. The Natural Environment
16. Climate Change and Flood Risk
17. Transportation
18. Future Minerals and Waste Needs
19. Development and Infrastructure
20. Neighbourhood Planning
21. Planning Enforcement
22. Monitoring

### **Appendices**

- 1 Housing trajectory
- 2 Heritage Local Lists
- 3 Retail Hierarchy and Neighborhood Parades
- 4 Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- 5 How the Policies will be Delivered
- 6 Site Allocations
- 7 Glossary

# 3. Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal

Sustainability appraisal (SA) incorporating strategic environmental assessment (SEA) predicts and assesses the social, economic and environmental effects of plans, and of other options considered while plans are being developed. It aims to ensure that sustainable development is integrated into the plan making process. This section describes the legal requirements for SA/SEA of the Leicester Local Plan, and how this SA/SEA has been carried out.

## 3.1 Strategic environmental assessment

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ('SEA regulations') require planning authorities to carry out an environmental assessment as part of the preparation of land-use plans (e.g. Local Plans). The regulations state that SEA must assess the likely significant effects of the plan on a range of factors. In this report, they are considered under the headings:

- Air Quality;
- Biodiversity;
- Climate Change Mitigation;
- Community & Wellbeing;
- Economy & Employment;
- Flood risk;
- Landscape & Cultural Heritage;
- Housing;
- Soil;
- Transport & Accessibility;
- Waste; and
- Water

Table 3.1 shows the legal requirements of the SEA Regulations, and where they are fulfilled in this report.

## 3.2 Sustainability appraisal

In addition, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all local planning authorities to carry out a sustainability appraisal (SA) of their Local Plans. SA is an iterative process to assist in the development of a Local Plan. It is used to appraise the emerging plan against the three elements of sustainability; the social, environmental and economic dimensions.

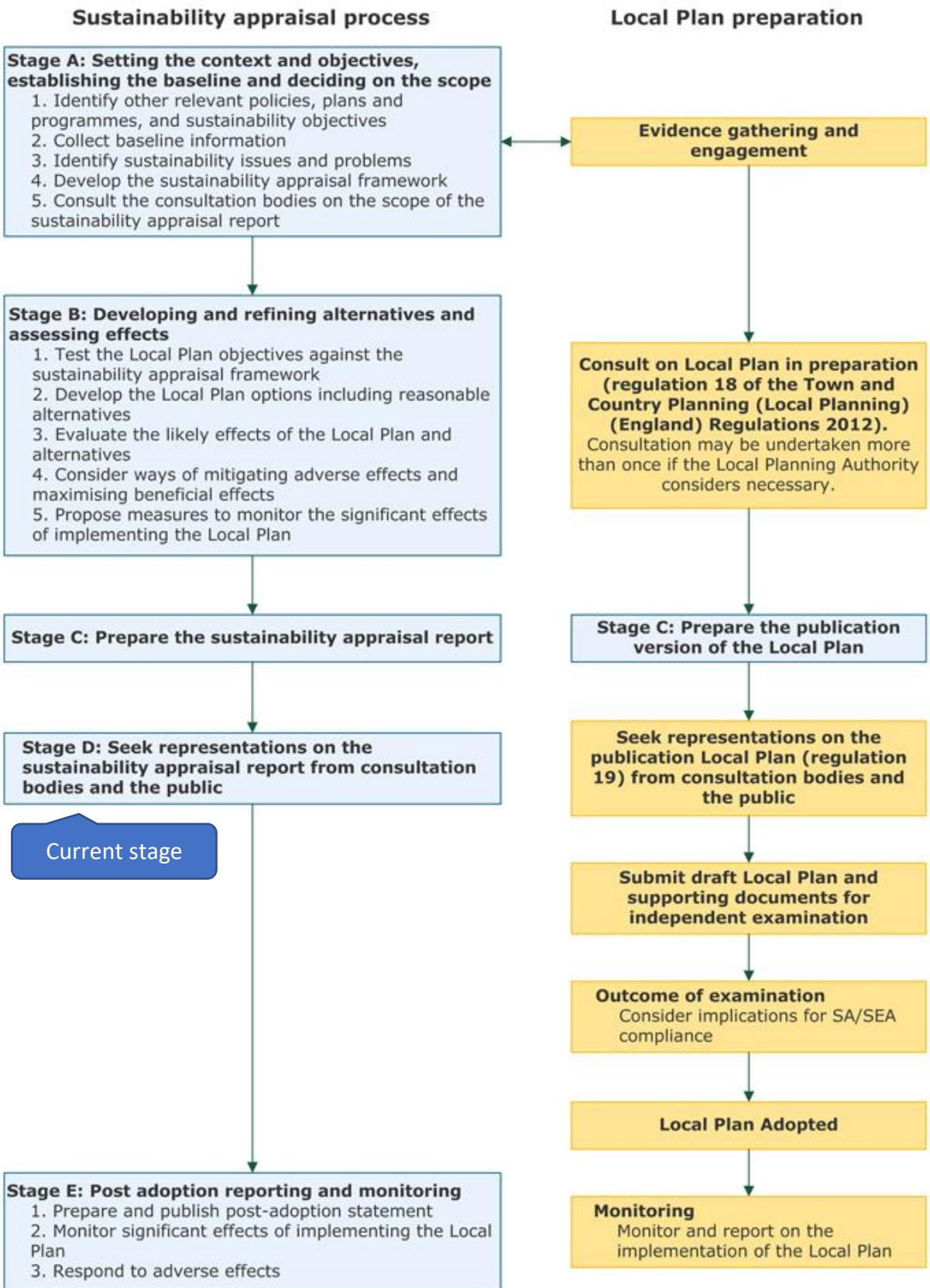
The SEA requirements can be integrated into the SA process, and that has been done for this plan. Where this report refers to SA, it also covers SEA. Figure 3.1 indicates the different stages involved in the production of the SA/SEA.

**Table 3.1 – Requirements of the SEA Regulations and where they are covered in the SA/SEA for the Leicester Local Plan**

<b>SEA Regulations requirements</b>	<b>Where covered</b>
a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme... ... and relationship with other plans or programmes	Ch. 2 Sec. 4.1, App. 1 of scoping report
b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	Sec. 4.2, App. 2 of scoping report
c) the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be affected	Sec. 7.3
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance;	Sec. 4.3
e) The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	Sec. 4.1 and 4.4, Sec. 16 of scoping report
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	Ch. 5 (plan objectives) Sec. 7.3-7.5 (plan policies, sites, and overall impacts)
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Ch. 8
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with... ... and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Ch. 6 Ch. 3
i) a description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring;	Ch. 9
j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	Ch. 1
<b>Consultation:</b>	Sec. 4.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authorities with environmental responsibility, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report</li> <li>• authorities with environmental responsibility and the public shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme</li> <li>• [transboundary consultation is not relevant for this plan]</li> </ul>	Sec. 3.4 discusses statutory consultees' and the public's opinions on the Reg. 18 SA report
<b>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making</b>	
When the plan or programme is adopted, the public and any countries consulted shall be informed and the following made available to those so informed:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the plan or programme as adopted;</li> <li>• a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report, the opinions of statutory consultees [transboundary consultation is not relevant] have been taken into account, and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and</li> <li>• the measures decided concerning monitoring</li> </ul>	
<b>Monitoring</b> of the significant environmental effects of the plan's or programme's implementation	Carried out after plan adoption



Figure 3.1. Local Plan/Sustainability Appraisal Production



### 3.3 SA/SEA reports produced to date

The SEA Directive requires “a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information” (Annex 1h)

An SA/SEA scoping report was prepared in October 2016, which covered the requirements of Task A from Figure 3.1. The scoping report was put out to consultation for six weeks, between 28 October and 5 December 2016. This report updates and revises the information from the SA/SEA scoping report in response to the consultation comments.

A report of July 2017 put forward 134 potential development sites of more than 0.5ha, and provided SA-related information on the flood risk, biodiversity designations, and heritage designations relative to those sites. In December 2017 the city council put out draft development management policies for consultation, accompanied by a SA of these draft policies<sup>2</sup>.

In February, consultation on the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan and an SA of that draft plan took place (see Section 3.4). This report brings together the findings of the previous reports and assesses the impacts of the publication version of the plan.

**Table 3.2 – Previous SA/SEA-related reports produced to date**

Report name	Date	Web-link to report
SA/SEA scoping report	October 2016	<a href="https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/city-development-and-neighbourhoods/scoping-report-consultation/user_uploads/sa-sea-scoping-report-consultation-draft-version-2-hi-res.pdf">https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/city-development-and-neighbourhoods/scoping-report-consultation/user_uploads/sa-sea-scoping-report-consultation-draft-version-2-hi-res.pdf</a>
Potential development sites (includes some SA-related information)	July 2017	<a href="https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/leicester-local-plan-reference-documents/user_uploads/sites-ref-doc.pdf">https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/leicester-local-plan-reference-documents/user_uploads/sites-ref-doc.pdf</a>
Sustainability appraisal (of draft development management policies)	December 2017	<a href="https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/leicester-local-plan-reference-documents/user_uploads/sa-ref-doc.pdf">https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/leicester-local-plan-reference-documents/user_uploads/sa-ref-doc.pdf</a>
Sustainability appraisal of the draft Leicester Local Plan ('Reg 18')	February 2020	

<sup>2</sup> An issues and options paper of October 2014, that was consulted on between October 2014 and January 2015, did not include specific alternatives that could be assessed. Rather it consulted on a limited range of scenarios.

### 3.4 Consultation comments on the sustainability appraisal of the Regulation 18 Local Plan

Consultee	Main points	Response to main points
Historic England	Recommended that the Sustainability Appraisal should explore the synergies between the natural and historic environments.	The scoping report now mention the links between the natural environment and Leicester’s historic past under “Landscape and cultural heritage”
Natural England	Concerned about the findings of the draft SA/SEA that the Plan is expected to result in a reduction of biodiversity. They suggested that further consideration should be given to retaining natural green spaces in a cohesive network across the city and that where development is allocated that Biodiversity Net Gain is applied.	The council will be providing future guidance on how Biodiversity Net Gain is to be implemented.
Low Carbon Planning and Housing	Felt that 6 of the categories in the SA Framework (Table 4.3) adequately covered climate change, but that most of the remaining 10 categories should also refer to climate change, particularly climate change adaptation	Criterion 10 on climate change covers minimization of energy use, provision of renewable energy, and resilience to the effects of climate change. Other criteria indirectly support low carbon development, e.g. promotion of the circular economy and of sustainable transport. help to minimise energy usage and encourage energy efficiency? Trying to make more criteria relate to climate change would skew the SA framework and make for some odd criteria.
	<p>Agreed with the draft SA conclusions:</p> <p>“1/. That the Local Plan should “extend the requirements for affordable housing to smaller sites, and increase the requirements for larger sites” p59, Sustainability Assessment.</p> <p>2/. That the Local Plan should require higher minimum housing densities both in the central development area and in the suburbs...</p> <p>3/. That given strategic development sites 1,2,3 and 4 there needs to be substantial development of the public transport network in the North West of Leicester</p> <p>4/. That the plan needs to increase its requirements relating to renewable energy generation.”</p>	<p>The plan now proposes higher building densities.</p> <p>It proposes specific policies on renewable energy projects. Renewable energy is also encouraged in plan policies in Chapter 6.</p>

Individual	Was disappointed in the SA. The individual is opposed “to every development, new building, roads, places of employment or education envisaged in the LP, and supported in the Sustainability Assessment, due to their addition to a legacy of carbon, energy & water costs, and health threats”.	Local Plans must set out a vision and framework for the future development of the area, including housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure. National government has set a standard method for calculating the housing that needs to be provided, and economic analyses identify the employment land needed. It is not legal to have a Local Plan that does not put forward new buildings, places of employment etc.
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### 3.4 Difficulties encountered in compiling the SA/SEA

Some difficulties were faced in assessing the sites. Leicester City Council’s GIS system – like most GIS systems – measures direct lines rather than actual travel distance. This means that impacts on sensitive sites and features is probably overestimated, since many impacts (e.g. recreational impacts on nature conservation sites) are unlikely to occur in straight lines. Similarly it means that the accessibility to services is overestimated, since travel from new housing to the GP, schools etc. is unlikely to be straight line<sup>3</sup>. The GIS system did not have information for local centres, so it was not possible to measure travel distance to local centres.

The coronavirus pandemic, together with ongoing changes to government planning policy, slowed down the development of the Local Plan to the point where some data – for instance on allotments, and the status of some of the development sites – changed. This report has attempted to reflect this, but there may be cases where some of the site-specific data in particular has become outdated and has not been updated. This also accounts for most of the ‘no data’ appraisals for sites that have not finally been included in the Local Plan. However overall the site appraisals will have identified the main strengths and weaknesses of each site.

### 3.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Habitats Directive requires that all plans produced by local authorities consider the impact of the plan on the integrity of:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- RAMSAR sites

Jointly these sites of international nature conservation importance are called Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of Leicester. Leicester City Council produced a screening report at the Core Strategy state, looking at any potential impacts to Natura 2000 sites close to the city, or where there is any potential link to a site by the city’s activities. This has been updated to take into account the impacts of the Local Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> The GIS now has layers for ‘walk to’ a range of services. .

## 4. Scoping: summary and update

The aim of the SA scoping stage is to provide background evidence for use at subsequent stages of assessment. It comprises four steps:

Task A1: Identifying other relevant plans and programmes and sustainability objectives: “policy context”

Task A2: Collecting baseline information: “sustainability context”

Task A3: Identifying key sustainability issues and problems

Task A4: Developing the SA/SEA Framework

A detailed scoping report for the Leicester Local Plan was prepared in 2016 (see Table 3.2). This chapter summarises the findings of the scoping report, and updates them to spring 2022 where appropriate.

### 4.1 Task A1: Policy context

The SEA Regulations requires a description of “[the plan’s] relationship with other plans or programmes” and “The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation” (Annex Ia and e)

Appendix 1 of the scoping report provides an extensive list of plans and programmes considered in the development of the Leicester Local Plan to 2016.

The most influential document on sustainable development at the international level is the **Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change** which commits parties to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In December 2015, as part of the ‘Paris Agreement’, European Union Member States committed themselves to a binding target of at least 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. The UK Parliament declared a climate emergency in May 2019, and in June 2019 the UK government committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The European Union has also produced several documents influencing planning policy in the UK, including the **Habitats Directive** (92/43/EEC), **Air Quality Directive** (2008/50/EC) and **Water Framework Directive** (2000/60/EC).

Other key plans and programmes that have emerged since 2016 and that have influenced the development of the Leicester Local Plan are as follows.

A revised **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) was published in July 2021, having been revised in July 2019 and updated in February 2019. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. It is supported by online National Planning Practice Guidance. Key NPPF requirements relevant to the Leicester Local Plan are to:

- Meet objectively assessed housing numbers using a standard methodology
- Assess the viability of affordable housing
- Provide at least 10% of housing requirements on small and medium sized sites



- Promote good design and well-designed places
- Promote sustainable transport
- Promote healthy communities
- Protect designated heritage assets
- Meet the challenge of climate change and flooding
- Conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment

The **Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan**<sup>4</sup> of December 2018 is a non-statutory plan that sets out a vision for Leicester and the county to 2050. This includes new economic growth areas mostly to the north of the city; road and rail improvements, notably an A46 expressway to the east of the city; and employment and housing land requirements for all of the local authorities in Leicestershire (Figure 4.1). The sustainability appraisal for the strategic growth plan<sup>5</sup> assessed and compared various options for this delivery. The expressway plans were dropped in October 2020.

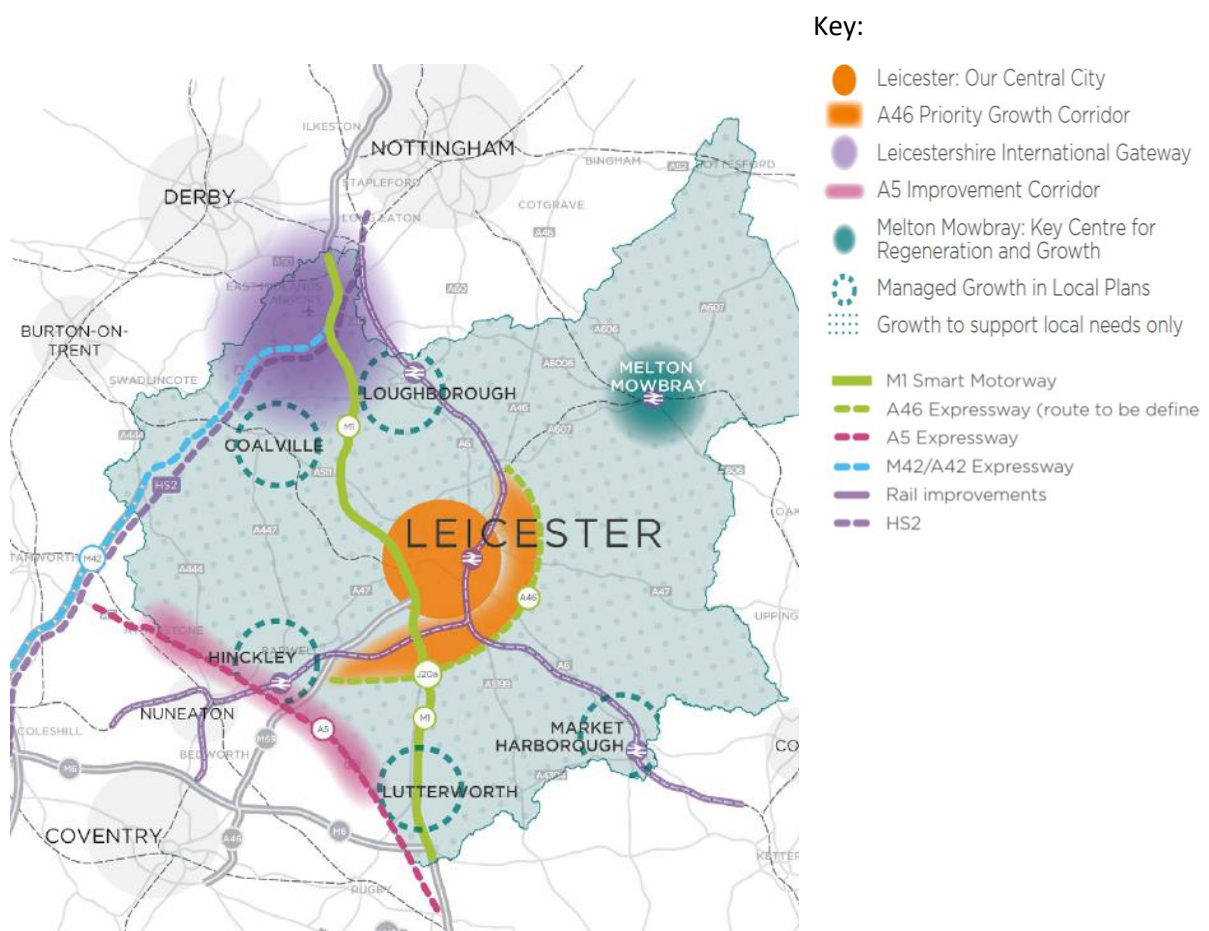


Figure 4.1 Key figure for the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

<sup>4</sup> Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (Dec. 2018), <http://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Final-LL-SGP-December-2018-1.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Sustainability of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (Sep. 2018) [https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic\\_growth\\_plan\\_sustainability\\_appraisal\\_final\\_for\\_governance/Strategic%20Growth%20Plan%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20%28September%202018%29%20%28Final%20-%20for%20governance%29.pdf](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic_growth_plan_sustainability_appraisal_final_for_governance/Strategic%20Growth%20Plan%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20%28September%202018%29%20%28Final%20-%20for%20governance%29.pdf)

The strategic plan was supported by a range of studies that inform, and form the basis for further studies for, the Leicester Local Plan.

- A **housing and economic development needs assessment** (HEDNA) of 2017 identified the ‘objectively assessed need’ for housing and employment land in the Leicestershire authorities to 2031, 2036 and 2050. In Leicester, the objectively assessed need is greater than the theoretical capacity of the city to provide for this need. The strategic plan thus allocates some of the city’s growth to the neighbouring local authorities.
- A **water cycle study**<sup>6</sup> of 2017 shows that the Leicester area is under ‘moderate’ water stress, and that additional water resource and wastewater treatment works will be required to cope with growth planned to 2050. Leicester City has commissioned a more detailed water cycle study to accompany the Local Plan.
- A **strategic flood risk assessment**<sup>7</sup> of 2017 shows that Leicester is at significant risk of flooding from surface water. Again, Leicester City has commissioned a more detailed assessment to support the development of the Local Plan.
- Additional studies supporting the strategic plan include a landscape and green infrastructure study, an assessment of transport impacts, and a utilities capacity study.<sup>8</sup>

The draft **Leicester Transport Plan**<sup>9</sup> of June 2021 aims to develop connected main transport corridors and stations; improve transport within local neighbourhoods; and manage demand for car use. Its ambitions by 2036 is to have:

- 100% zero emission vehicles
- More people regularly working from home and more responsible use of cars for necessary trips only
- Public transport, Park & Ride, cycling or personal e-mobility as first transport choice for most people (longer journeys)
- Active transport, cycling and walking as first transport choice for most people (shorter journeys)
- A thriving, accessible city centre that is easy to move around in and which supports economic growth in the whole city
- Healthier neighbourhoods, aiming for all local services to be available by walking or cycling within 15 minutes, with cleaner air and a safer local environment
- A rush-hour free city, gradually managing traffic to reduce peak hour demands

**Midlands Connect**<sup>10</sup> aims to improve transport in the East Midlands, including:

- Midlands Rail Hub, which would increase train journeys by two trains per hour between Leicester, Birmingham and Coventry;
- Turning the A46 into an expressway between the M5 and M40 (this has now been dropped);
- Improving rail links between HS2 at Toton and Leicester; and
- Introducing smart ticketing to travel in the region.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf\\_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf](https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/the-plan/stage-two/developing-the-evidence-base/leicestershire-leicester-city-level-1-strategic-flood-risk-assessment/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/the-plan/stage-two/developing-the-evidence-base/>

<sup>9</sup> [https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/ltp4/supporting\\_documents/Leicester%20Transport%20Plan.pdf](https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/ltp4/supporting_documents/Leicester%20Transport%20Plan.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/>

**Midlands Engine**<sup>11</sup> aims to strengthen the Midlands' economy through an investment fund, improved connectivity, an economic observatory, and strengthened leadership and management.

Leicester's **Sustainability Action Plan** of 2016 aims to improve the city's sustainability, including the city council ambitions to:

- halve city-wide carbon dioxide emissions and its carbon footprint by 2025
- meet EU target levels for air quality to create a healthier environment for city residents
- encourage healthier lifestyle choices, and double everyday cycling numbers by 2018 and again by 2024
- Engage with more individuals, households, schools and employers each year to improve environmental awareness
- Protect and enhance open space and improve connectivity to wildlife areas.

The action plan links to other Leicester plans, including the Air Quality Action Plan 2015-2026, Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2021, Carbon Footprint Statement 2017/18, Green Infrastructure Strategy 2015-2025, and Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022. These are discussed further at Table 4.2.

The **Leicester Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2023** has significant links to the Local Plan. It aims to:

1. Improve existing housing, workplaces and community buildings in the city to enable them to become carbon neutral, energy and water efficient
2. Improve environmental standards of new development towards a carbon neutral standard
3. Increase renewable energy generation and encourage storage of surplus to meet peak demand
4. Reduce carbon emissions from travel and transport towards our carbon neutral goals through walking, cycling, improved public transport and ultra-low emissions vehicles
5. Tackle carbon emissions from the city's use of goods and raw materials, including food and waste
6. Protect Leicester from increased risk of heatwaves and flooding by using nature-based solutions wherever possible
7. Enhance and protect biodiversity, green spaces and trees from climate change impacts
8. Increase the amount of carbon locked up in soil, trees and other vegetation
9. Respond to climate change impacts in ways that reduce poverty and inequality, improve health and wellbeing, and stimulate the local economy and green job creation
10. Engage meaningfully with residents, groups, organisations and businesses across the city and form effective partnerships to encourage everyone to play their part in tackling the Climate Emergency

The **Leicester Food Plan 2021-2026**<sup>12</sup> stresses the importance of allotments and community food growing projects. Leicester's **Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2031**<sup>13</sup> aims to conserve and enhance a range of habitats and associated species that characterise Leicester: it aims to create Nature Recovery Networks by identifying, creating and improving green corridors and by creating and enhancing ecological connectivity.

In mid 2022, the status of **adjacent local authorities' Local Plans** was:

- Blaby had delayed its Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation awaiting evidence on Leicester's housing need;

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.midlandsengine.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/swwbnpeo/leicester-s-food-plan-2021-2026.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/vgqddzdl/biodiversity-action-plan-2021-2031-part-1.pdf>



- Charnwood’s plan was at the examination stage;
- Harborough adopted its Local Plan to 2031 in April 2019, and began preparing a new Local Plan in July 2021 to take into account Leicester’s unmet housing need;
- Hinckley & Bosworth had started a review of its Local Plans to take it to 2039;
- Melton had adopted its Local Plan to 2031 in October 2018;
- The North West Leicestershire Local Plan (as amended by a Partial Review) was adopted at Council in March 2021; and
- Oadby & Wigston had adopted their Local Plans in April 2019.

In June 2022, all of the authorities except Hinckley signed up to a Statement of Common Ground on Duty to Cooperate<sup>14</sup>. Harborough will be taking it to their Full Council in January 2023.

## 4.2 Task A2: Sustainability context

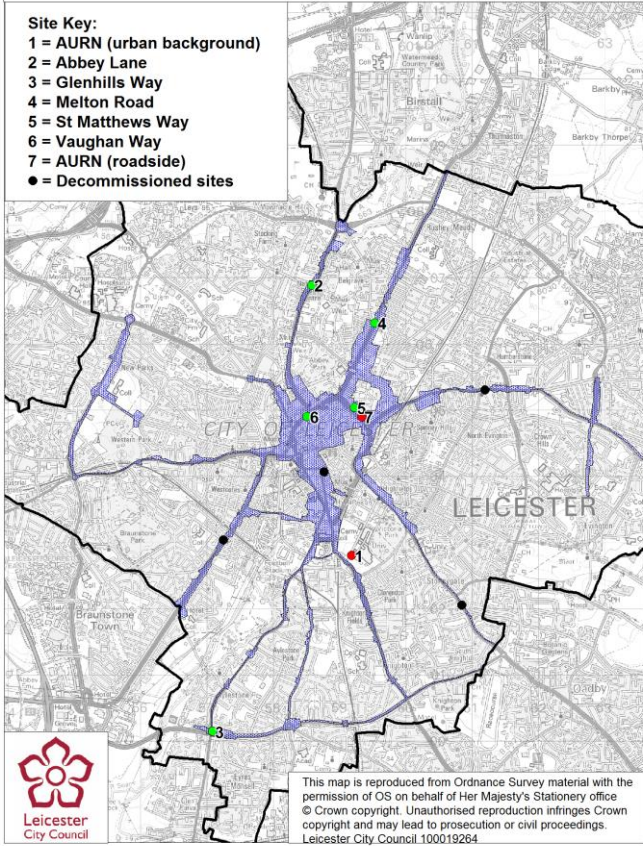
The SEA Regulations require a description of “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme” and “the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be affected”.

The Scoping Report of 2016 gives detailed information on the baseline conditions for Leicester. It is broadly organised by the topics shown at Table 4.1. Table 4.1 also shows how these topics match the themes of the SEA Directive. Table 4.2 summarises the data from the Scoping Report and updates it to 2022 where appropriate.

<b>Table 4.1 Links between background papers, SA objectives and SEA themes</b>		
<b>Scoping report / Table 4.2 topic</b>	<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>SEA theme</b>
Air quality	8.To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality.	Air
Biodiversity	6. To increase biodiversity levels	Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna
Climate change	10. To reduce the potential impact of climate change by minimising energy usage, and to develop renewable energy resources, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources	Climatic factors
Community & wellbeing	2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities 4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime 5. To support diversity, tackle inequality, reduce deprivation, and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities	Population, Human health
Economy	14.To create high quality employment opportunities and develop a strong, diverse and stable local economy which attracts and retains investment. 15.To ensure that the associated infrastructure (roads, public transport, broadband & other services such as electricity and gas), needed to support Leicester’s economy is provided in the most sustainable way possible 16.To raise the levels of educational achievement and develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation.	

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/latest-updates/publication-of-statement-of-common-ground-relating-to-housing-and-employment-land-needs/>

Housing	1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stocks meets the housing needs.	Material assets
Landscape & cultural heritage	3. To provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the City's heritage and participate in cultural and recreational activities; and to protect the city's landscape and townscape 7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings	Cultural heritage, Landscape
Soil	11.To encourage land use and development that optimises the use of previously developed land and buildings.	Soil
Transport & accessibility	12.To make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure, help reduce the need to travel by car, improve accessibility to jobs and services for all, and to ensure that all journeys are undertaken by the most sustainable mode available.	Material assets
Waste	13. To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recovery and recycling of waste materials.	Material assets
Water	9.To protect water quality and resources, and minimise flood risk.	Water

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information			
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan	
<b>Air quality</b>	<p>Leicester exceeds the EU threshold level of <math>40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3</math> for nitrogen dioxide in a number of areas. It has one large air quality management area (AQMA), shown in blue on the map, to manage this. Air pollution at Abbey Lane / Beaumont Lane has been below threshold levels since 2012, but continues to be a problem on the Inner Ring Road and at Glenhills Way.<sup>15</sup></p> <p>Levels of <math>\text{PM}_{10}</math> and <math>\text{PM}_{2.5}</math> are also of concern. About 80% of pollutants come from road traffic<sup>16</sup> which is why most of the AQMA is located around the outer ring road and main radial routes into the city centre. Leicester fares worse in terms of air and noise pollution compared to levels in the counties.<sup>17</sup></p>	 <p>Air quality management area</p>	<p>Air pollution in Leicester has decreased in the last decade<sup>18</sup>, and is expected to continue to decrease. Leicester's Air Quality Action Plan 2015-2026 includes introduction of a Low Emission Zone for the most polluting vehicles in the city centre (a Low Emission Zone for buses was implemented at the end of 2017); delivery of Phase II of 'Connecting Leicester' to extend pedestrianisation and remove vehicles from where they are not required; measures to significantly increase cycling; and encouraging bus, taxi and freight operators to use the cleanest vehicles as their first choice for fleet replacement.</p>

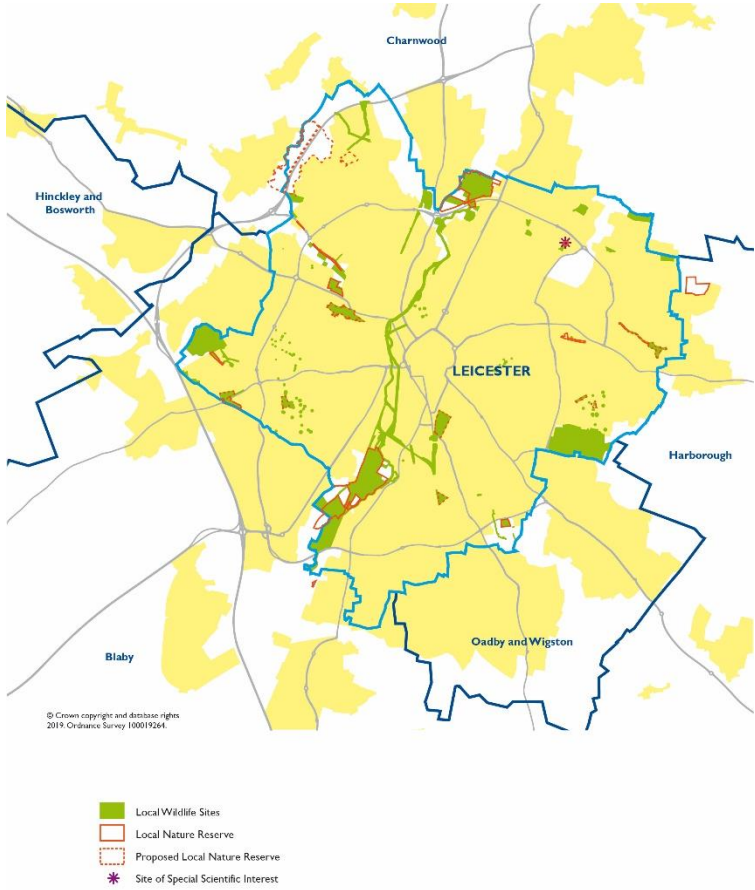
<sup>15</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/1vepbo1b/air-quality-annual-status-report-2020.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/180653/air-quality-action-plan.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Leicestershire-Rutlands-Vital-Issues-2017.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/environment-and-sustainability/air-quality/>

**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation		Likely future without the plan
<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p>	 <p>Local Wildlife Sites, local nature reserves and SSSI</p>	<p>Leicester has one nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Gypsy Lane Pit. This is in 'unfavourable declining' condition due to lack of management and the presence of illicit vehicles<sup>19</sup>. There are also 45 Local Wildlife Sites covering 532.9 hectares (7.2% of the city). Of these, eight sites are also Local Nature Reserves<sup>20</sup>. Leicester's green areas also include agricultural land, allotments, cemeteries, derelict land and parks.</p>	<p>Biodiversity in Leicester is under threat from habitat loss, climate change, fragmentation etc. Species living in isolated habitats will have limited escape routes if the climate changes, but a network of habitats connected by wildlife corridors will allow species to disperse naturally. Leicester's Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>21</sup> aims to maintain and improve the city's wildlife corridors, green wedges and biodiversity networks. The Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>22</sup> proposes a green network, which includes Biodiversity Enhancement Sites that do not meet Local Wildlife Site criteria but have the potential to be improved to enhance their biodiversity value.</p>

<sup>19</sup> <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ReportUnitCondition.aspx?SiteCode=S1004537&ReportTitle=Gypsy%20Lane%20Pit%20SSSI>.

<sup>20</sup> Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/113637/leicesters-biodiversity-action-plan-2011-21.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/183734/leicesters-green-infrastructure-strategy-2015-2025.pdf>

**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

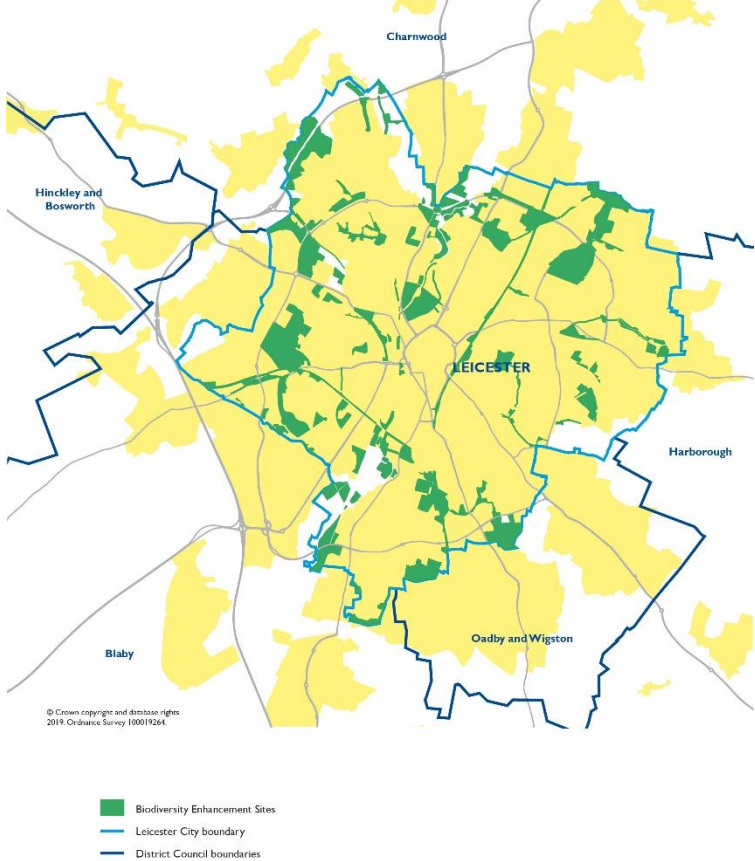
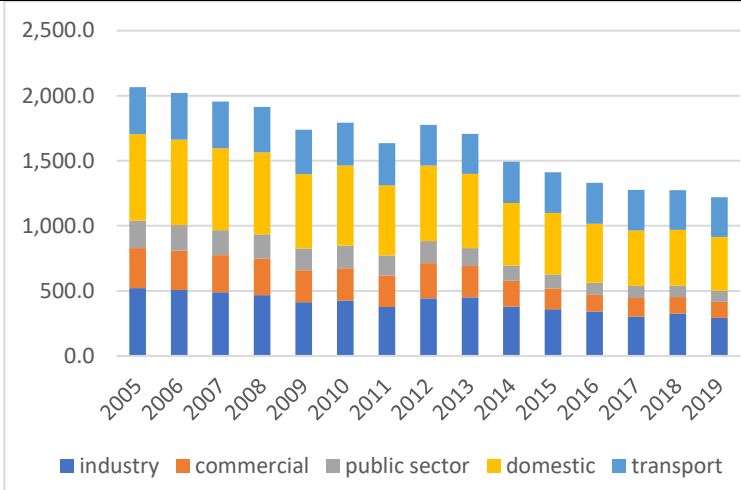
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	 <p data-bbox="621 1179 995 1208"><b>Biodiversity Enhancement Sites</b></p>	

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information			
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan	
<p><b>Climate change</b> energy use and renewable energy</p>	<p>Leicester has historically done well on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. City-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were 1.22m tonnes in 2019, compared with 2.39m tonnes in 1990: this 49% reduction almost achieves the city's aim of halving emissions by 2025. Per capita emissions dropped from 6.8t per person per year in 2005, to 3.4t in 2019<sup>23</sup>.</p> <p>Much of this has been due to a switch from fossil fuel to renewable energy. Since 2012, Leicester has had a district energy scheme which delivers heating and hot water to about 20 civic buildings, the University of Leicester and almost 3000 council homes<sup>25</sup>. In November 2018, Leicester City and Leicester County Councils launched Fosse Energy, which aims to provide affordable, 100% renewable energy to local residents. Small-scale photovoltaic panels account for most of the renewable electricity generated in the city<sup>26</sup></p> <p>One of the main contributors to carbon dioxide is road transport emissions which was responsible for 25% of all carbon dioxide emissions in the administrative boundary in 2019, and decreasing more slowly than the other sectors.</p>	 <p>Trends in Leicester's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, ktonne<sup>24</sup></p>	<p>Climate change has the potential to cause significant problems to Leicester. The UK is already experiencing changes to its climate, resulting in more extreme weather events. Leicester can expect to experience hotter, drier summers, and milder, wetter winters in future. The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events which are already currently experienced, such as heatwaves, flooding and drought, is also projected to increase. The national government has declared a climate change emergency and the UK is expected to be 'net zero carbon' by 2050. Leicester City Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019.</p>

<sup>23</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/996057/2005-19\\_UK\\_local\\_and\\_regional\\_CO2\\_emissions.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/996057/2005-19_UK_local_and_regional_CO2_emissions.xlsx)

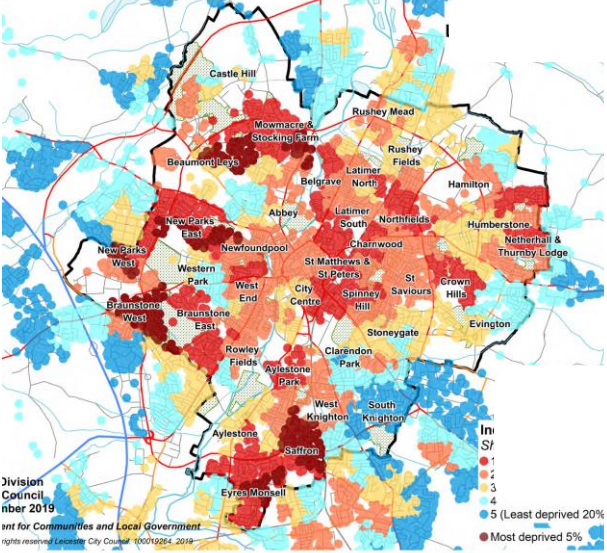
<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.engie.co.uk/energy/district-energy/leicester/>

<sup>26</sup> Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021



**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

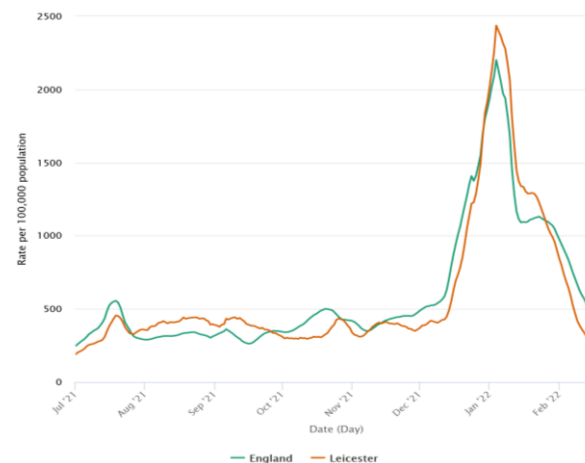
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
<p><b>Community &amp; wellbeing</b></p> <p>Population</p>	<p>In the 2021 census, Leicester’s population was 368,300: this has been the fastest growth of all core cities, at 11.8% since the previous census. The average age of residents is much lower than the national average. In part this is due to the younger age profile of the city in general but also the students of the city’s two universities. In 2017/18, together the University of Leicester and De Montfort University had 43,100 students enrolled<sup>27</sup>.</p>	<p>Leicester’s population is expected to grow by 21% between 2011 and 2036, with a 24% increase in households<sup>28</sup>. This is faster than the growth expected regionally and nationally. The number of elderly people (age 80+) is increasing.</p>
<p>Diversity</p>	<p>Leicester is a diverse city. About 51% of residents are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (2011 census), mostly from South Asia. Leicester has one of the largest ethnic minority populations in England. Leicester is similarly diverse in terms of religion.</p>	
<p>Deprivation</p>	<p>There are large areas of deprivation in Leicester, surrounded by areas of affluence outside the city boundary. Leicester is the 32<sup>nd</sup> most deprived local authority out of 317, according to the 2019 Indices of Local Deprivation. In 2019, 35% of people in Leicester lived in the 20% most deprived areas in England (shown in dark red on the map). Both measures have improved since 2015. The most deprived areas are concentrated in outer estates to the west, inner city areas to the north east and the old inner city areas directly abutting the city centre.</p>	 <p>Multiple deprivation in and around Leicester 2019<sup>29</sup></p>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/17-01-2019/sb252-higher-education-student-statistics/location>

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, based on 2014 population projections

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/pkgb4zin/the-indices-of-deprivation-2019-map-pack.pdf>

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
Community safety & crime	Leicester has a higher rate of domestic burglary, robbery, vehicle crime and violent crime than the national average. Fear of anti-social behaviour is also high, with more people concerned by drug and alcohol related behaviour in their area than people nationally.	
Health	<p>In 2019, Leicester was 49<sup>th</sup> of 317 local authorities in terms of health deprivation<sup>30</sup>. It is in the bottom 20% of districts nationally in terms of life expectancy at birth. On average, women live 1.3 years less than the national average and men 2.4 years less<sup>31</sup>. The main causes of death are cardiovascular disease (28%), cancer (25%), and respiratory disease (13%). In Leicester, much fewer adults are physically active, or use outdoor space for exercise or health reasons, than the Leicestershire average. One in four households include someone with a disability or long term illness.<sup>32</sup></p> <p>Life expectancy is highest in the traditionally more affluent areas of south east Leicester and lowest in the inner city areas and the outer estates in the west of the city. Life expectancy is 8 years lower for men and 6 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Leicester than in the least deprived.</p> <p>Coronavirus has affected Leicester's population broadly on par with the rest of England<sup>34</sup>.</p>	<p>Life expectancy is improving but not as fast as nationally. The Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022<sup>33</sup> aims to enable people to control their own health and wellbeing, reduce gaps between health outcomes for different people, and give equal priority to mental health and wellbeing.</p>



Coronavirus cases per 100,000 population: England (green) and Leicester (orange)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e06000016.html?area-name=leicester>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.leicestercityccg.nhs.uk/about-us/gppracticevacancies/the-health-of-the-population/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2016/10/11/Leics%20JHWS%202017-22v2.pdf>

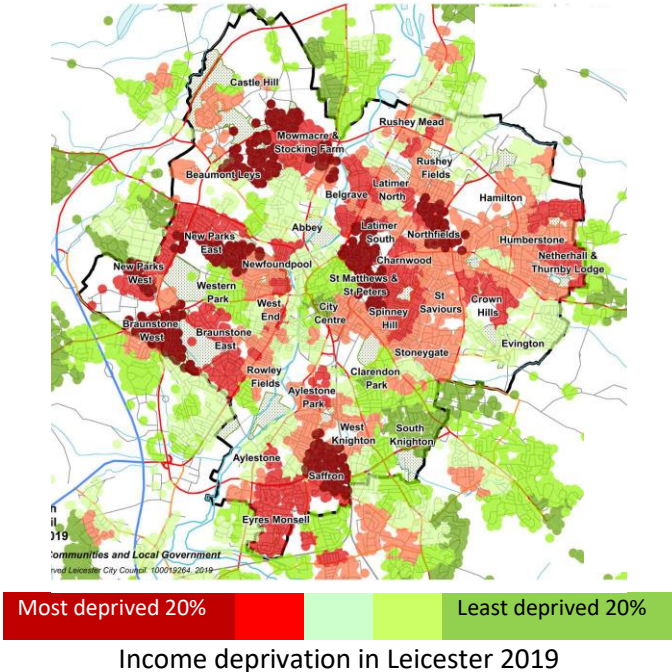
<sup>34</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/coronavirus/coronavirus-in-leicester-latest-news/coronavirus-data-for-leicester/>



Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
Open space	The City of Leicester has 1,102 hectares of open space. Using the current standard of 2.88 ha per 1,000 people, the total amount of open space required due to the population of Leicester is 948 hectares. Therefore there is currently more open space (154 ha) than is required by the standard <sup>35</sup> .	The Covid pandemic has increased people's use of, and interest in, green spaces. The expected increase in population will mean that the amount of 'excess' open space will reduce in the future.
<b>Economy</b>	The City's role in providing employment for the wider area is very significant. In 2014, some 37% of employment across the city and county area was provided for within the city council area. The city's employment deprivation has significantly improved, from 13th most deprived area in 2010 to 67th in 2019; and has slightly improved in terms of income deprivation, from 9th in 2010 to 18 <sup>th</sup> in 2019.	The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan envisages a range of future economic growth areas, primarily to the north of Leicester at
Employment and unemployment	The proportion of people of working age in employment in Leicester dipped to 61% in 2011, but rose steadily to nearly 67% in 2018 and 74% in September 2020, before falling to 66% in late 2021: it has consistently been significantly lower than the East Midlands and Great Britain averages.  Unemployment, which was at more than 12% in 2011/12, was down to 4.6% in early 2020, and was about 7.5% in 2020/21: it has consistently been higher than the East Midlands and GB averages <sup>36</sup> . Unemployment levels are lower in the suburbs south east of the city, and higher in the inner city and in the estates on the edge of the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fosse Park Retail Centre</li> <li>• City Centre and Strategic Regeneration Area</li> <li>• Leicester University</li> <li>• De Montfort University</li> <li>• Global Space Technologies Hub</li> <li>• Space Research Centre &amp; Earth Observation Centre</li> </ul>
Sectors and wages	Leicester has a strong manufacturing base and a high proportion of people employed in the public sector. However the service sector and managerial/professional occupations are under-represented compared to the national average. More than 98% of enterprises in Leicester employ fewer than 50 people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IBM Client Innovation Centre</li> <li>• Loughborough &amp; Leicester Enterprise Zone</li> </ul>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/183590/open-space-sport-and-recreation-study-report.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157130/report.aspx?town=Leicester#tabempunemp>.

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	<p>Average wages for full time workers are 88% of the national average, although only slightly lower than the East Midlands average<sup>37</sup>. Leicester was ranked 18<sup>th</sup> of 317 most deprived local authority for income deprivation in 2019. 12% of Leicester’s population reside in the most deprived 5% of areas nationally for income deprivation, and 40% reside in the most deprived 20% nationally for income deprivation. This can be linked to the type of employment that is available in the city.</p>	<p>Covid has led to an economic downturn in Leicester and nationally. The impact of Brexit is not clear, but could negatively affect Leicester’s economy. The cost of living crisis of summer 2022 is leading to a nationwide recession which is also affecting Leicester.</p>
	 <p>Income deprivation in Leicester 2019</p>	
Education	<p>Educational attainment in Leicester is low, with 11.2% of residents having no qualifications (GB average 6.4%), and fewer residents with higher education qualifications than the national average. Leicester is the 14<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in terms of education deprivation. The most deprived areas for education are on the west edge of the city.</p>	
Business premises and employment land	<p>The stock of business premises in Leicester is old, with 90% built before 1990, and over 80% of these premises industrial. Industrial floorspace in Leicester is 96.4% occupied, indicating that there is a lack of choice in supply. There is a perceived lack of quality, modern accommodation in good accessible locations. Both employment and retail floor space have been lost since</p>	<p>Leicester’s need for employment land 2021-2036 has been assessed as being 69.6ha<sup>39</sup>. Of the employment sites allocated in the</p>

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/latest-updates/publication-of-statement-of-common-ground-relating-to-housing-and-employment-land-needs/>

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information																																						
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan																																				
	the pandemic <sup>38</sup> .	previous plan, all but one site have been built out. The remaining site, Mountain Road, has been included again as an allocation in the Local Plan 2020-2036.																																				
<b>Housing</b>	<p>The Core Strategy of 2014 planned for 1280 dwellings/year for 2006-2026. Net completions in Leicester have consistently been lower than this:</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Estimated data from the graph</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>net completions</th> <th>Core Strategy</th> <th>HEDNA</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2011/12</td> <td>950</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>800</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>750</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/15</td> <td>900</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/16</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1300</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>1250</td> <td>1700</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017/18</td> <td>1950</td> <td>1700</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>1450</td> <td>1700</td> <td>1700</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	net completions	Core Strategy	HEDNA	2011/12	950	1300	1700	2012/13	800	1300	1700	2013/14	750	1300	1700	2014/15	900	1300	1700	2015/16	1300	1300	1700	2016/17	1250	1700	1700	2017/18	1950	1700	1700	2018/19	1450	1700	1700	Using the government's standard method, the Leicester authorities agree that, across Leicestershire, 91,408 homes will be needed 2020-2036, with Leicester City needing for 39,424. <sup>40</sup>
Year	net completions	Core Strategy	HEDNA																																			
2011/12	950	1300	1700																																			
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2014/15	900	1300	1700																																			
2015/16	1300	1300	1700																																			
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2017/18	1950	1700	1700																																			
2018/19	1450	1700	1700																																			
<b>Affordable housing</b>	<p>The current plan has a target of 150 affordable homes per year. In recent years, affordable housing completions have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2016/17: 133 (9% of net completions)</li> <li>• 2017/18: 81 (4% of net completions)</li> <li>• 2018/19: 224 (16% of net completions)</li> <li>• 2019/2020: 340 (23% of net completions)</li> <li>• 2020/2021: 137 (13% of net completions)<sup>41</sup></li> </ul>																																					

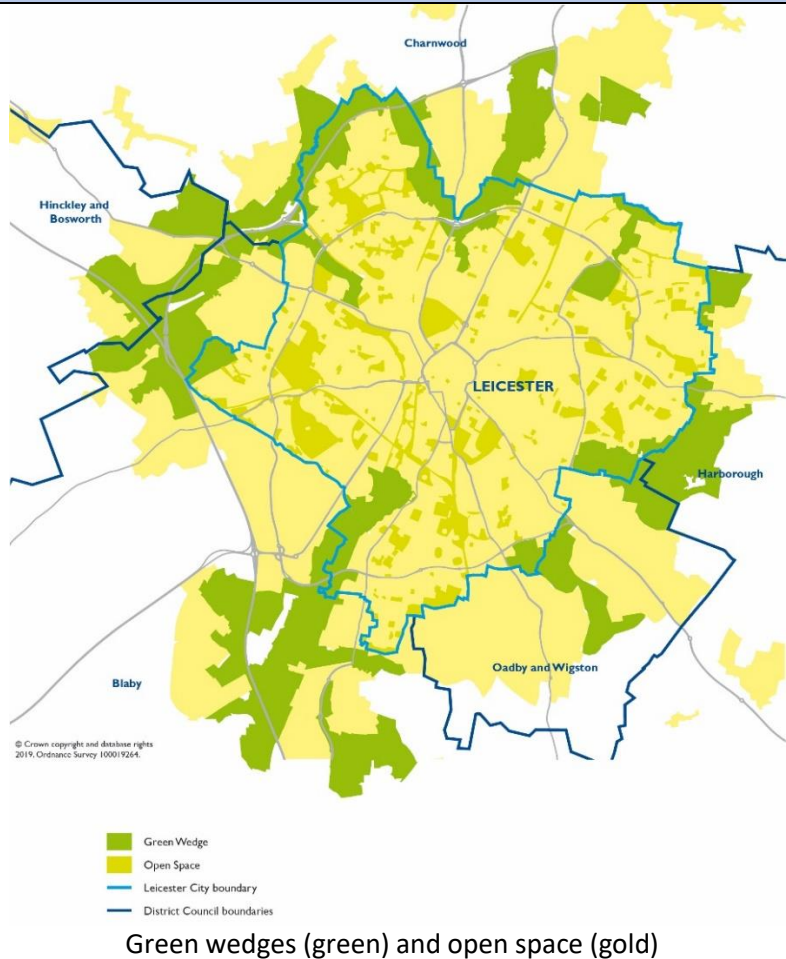
<sup>38</sup> Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.l1strategicgrowthplan.org.uk/latest-updates/publication-of-statement-of-common-ground-relating-to-housing-and-employment-land-needs/>

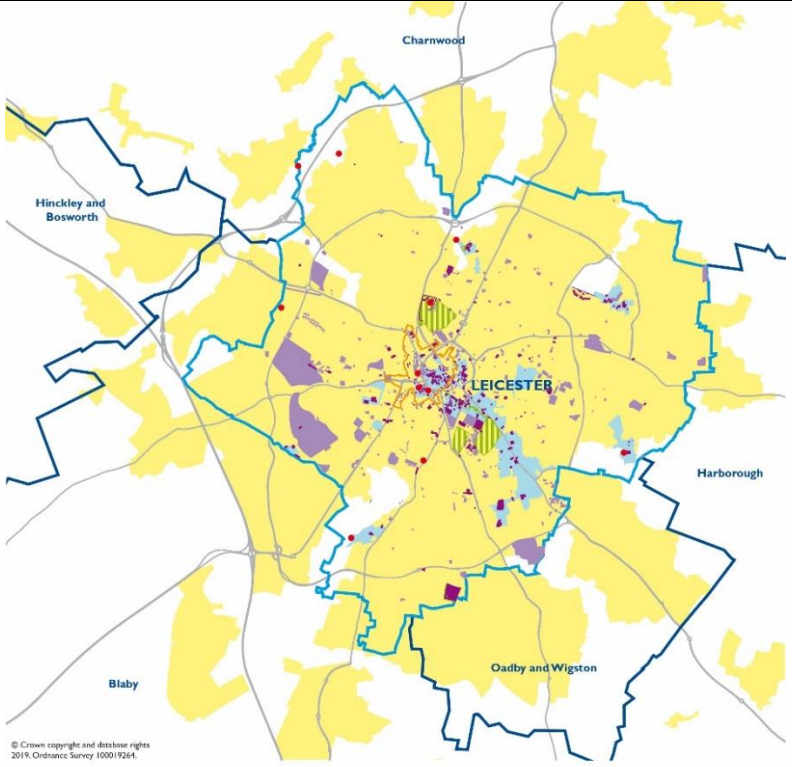
<sup>41</sup> [https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/186870/authorities-monitoring-reports\\_2017-2019\\_final.pdf](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/186870/authorities-monitoring-reports_2017-2019_final.pdf), Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021

**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
<p><b>Landscape and cultural heritage</b> Open space</p>	<p>Leicester’s Green Wedges provide important strategic open space links between the city and the surrounding areas, and a historic link to Leicester’s agricultural past. 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.</p> <p>With over 10 allotments per 1,000 residents, the city has the second highest number of allotments per person of the twenty largest cities in Britain.</p>	<p>Given the scale of projected population growth in and around Leicester, both the green wedges and the city’s cultural heritage will be under increasing pressure.</p>



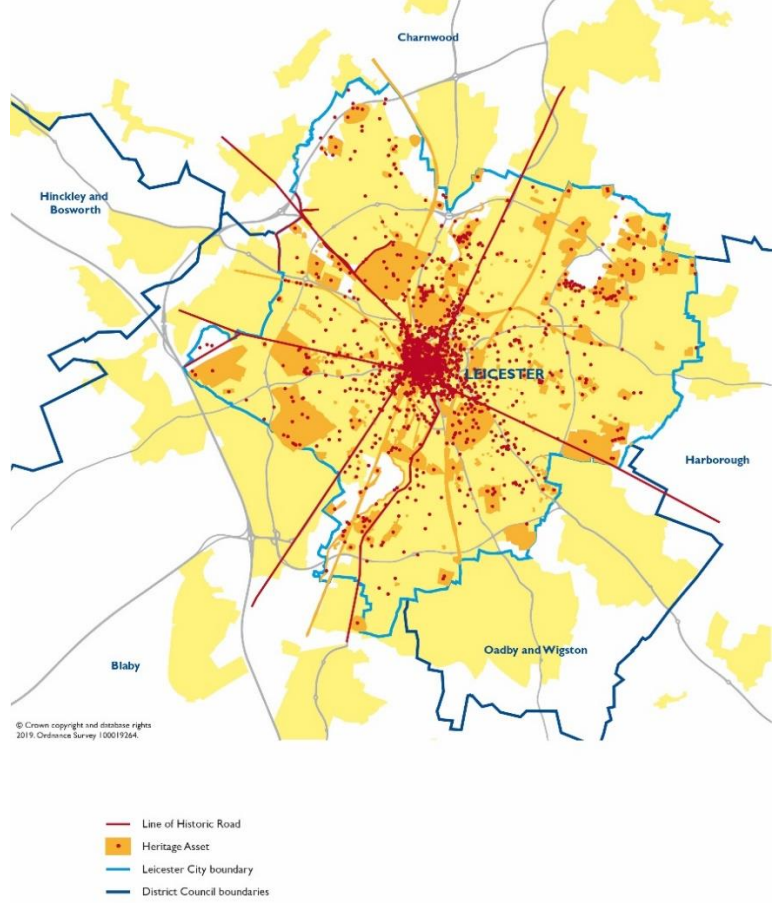
**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
Heritage assets	<p>There are ten Scheduled Ancient Monuments (including the Jewry Wall and Leicester Castle) and 398 Listed Buildings in Leicester. There are also 393 local heritage assets; six Registered Historic Parks and Gardens; 11 Scheduled Monuments; and 24 designated Conservation Areas covering approximately 322 hectares (about 4.4% of the total area of the city). There are also links between Leicester’s natural areas and the city’s agricultural heritage.</p> <p>12 heritage assets and 4 Conservation Areas are on the National Heritage Risk Register; and 56 properties are on the Leicester Heritage at Risk Register<sup>42</sup>.</p> <p>Leicester has a clearly defined historic core which is defined as the Archaeological Alert Area in the Core Strategy to indicate where development is most likely to have an impact upon archaeological remains.</p>	 <p>© Crown copyright and database rights 2019. Ordnance Survey 100019264.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation Areas</li> <li>Historic Parks and Gardens</li> <li>Scheduled Monuments</li> <li>Listed Buildings</li> <li>Locally Listed Buildings</li> <li>Leicester City boundary</li> <li>District Council boundaries</li> </ul> <p>Listed buildings (purple), scheduled monuments (red dots), conservation areas (blue)</p>

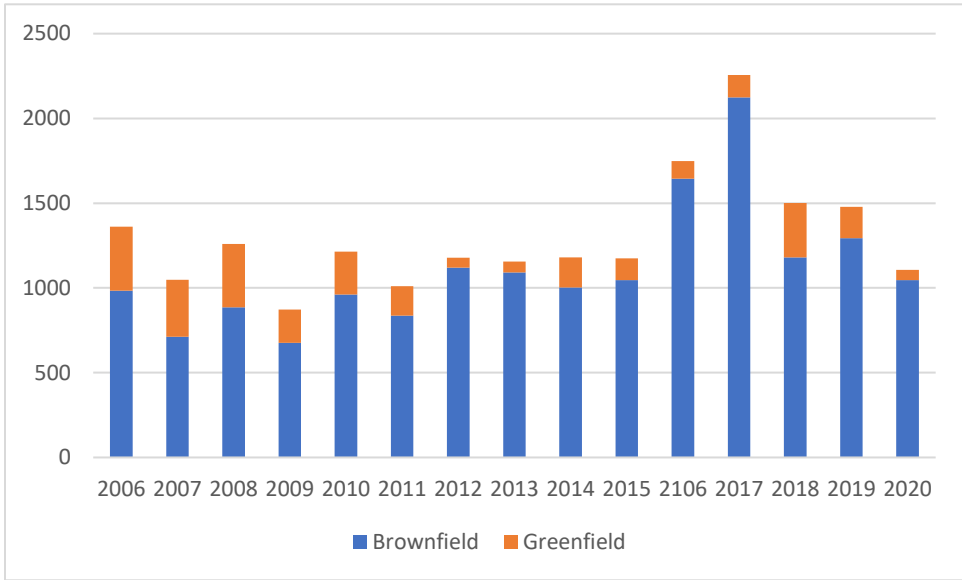
<sup>42</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/conservation/heritage-conservation/heritage-at-risk-register/>; Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021



**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	 <p>Historic road (red line), heritage assets (orange areas, red dots)</p>	
Recreational assets	<p>Leicester has many cultural and recreational assets including Curve, Phoenix Square, De Montfort Hall, museums, sports pitches and parks and gardens. It also has local libraries, sports centres and neighbourhood centres, and many other smaller facilities. A wide range of private leisure and recreational facilities offers professional sporting events, gyms, cinemas and other private sport facilities.</p>	<p>The use of recreational assets plummeted during the Covid pandemic, but is increasing again.</p>

**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan																																																																
<b>Soil</b>	<p>Almost all of the land within Leicester is urban, with only small amounts of grade 3 agricultural land on the outskirts of the city. In recent years the great majority of housing and employment land has been on previously developed ('brownfield') land: since 2011, on average 10% of new housing has been built on brownfield land:</p>  <table border="1" data-bbox="426 483 1381 1060"> <caption>Housing completions (no. dwellings) on brownfield v. greenfield land<sup>43</sup></caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Brownfield</th> <th>Greenfield</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2006</td><td>1000</td><td>350</td><td>1350</td></tr> <tr><td>2007</td><td>700</td><td>300</td><td>1000</td></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>900</td><td>350</td><td>1250</td></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>650</td><td>200</td><td>850</td></tr> <tr><td>2010</td><td>950</td><td>250</td><td>1200</td></tr> <tr><td>2011</td><td>850</td><td>150</td><td>1000</td></tr> <tr><td>2012</td><td>1100</td><td>50</td><td>1150</td></tr> <tr><td>2013</td><td>1100</td><td>50</td><td>1150</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>1000</td><td>150</td><td>1150</td></tr> <tr><td>2015</td><td>1050</td><td>100</td><td>1150</td></tr> <tr><td>2106</td><td>1650</td><td>100</td><td>1750</td></tr> <tr><td>2017</td><td>2100</td><td>100</td><td>2200</td></tr> <tr><td>2018</td><td>1150</td><td>300</td><td>1450</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>1300</td><td>150</td><td>1450</td></tr> <tr><td>2020</td><td>1050</td><td>50</td><td>1100</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Housing completions (no. dwellings) on brownfield v. greenfield land<sup>43</sup></p>	Year	Brownfield	Greenfield	Total	2006	1000	350	1350	2007	700	300	1000	2008	900	350	1250	2009	650	200	850	2010	950	250	1200	2011	850	150	1000	2012	1100	50	1150	2013	1100	50	1150	2014	1000	150	1150	2015	1050	100	1150	2106	1650	100	1750	2017	2100	100	2200	2018	1150	300	1450	2019	1300	150	1450	2020	1050	50	1100	<p>Given the scale of projected population growth in and around Leicester, undeveloped land in the city will be under increasing pressure.</p>
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2018	1150	300	1450																																																															
2019	1300	150	1450																																																															
2020	1050	50	1100																																																															

<sup>43</sup> Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
<b>Transport and accessibility</b>	<p>Accessibility is good in Leicester, with 96% of the population living within 400m of a bus stop<sup>44</sup>. In the 2011 census, Leicester ranked in the lowest 10% of districts and local authorities for car ownership. However, despite this, car use is still highly popular. Leicester is one of the worst cities in the UK in terms of congestion and traffic jams<sup>45</sup>. The great majority of traffic on Leicester’s major roads comprises cars and light good vehicles<sup>46</sup>. Traffic levels fell by about 15% in 2020 as a result of coronavirus, but have risen again sharply as restrictions have lifted.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual traffic in Leicester<sup>47</sup></p> <p>Cycling levels in Leicester more than doubled between 2014 and 2019, at least partly in response to recent significant spending on cycling infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Leicester Local Transport Plan 2011-2026<sup>48</sup> aims to reduce congestion, improve connectivity and access, improve safety, and reduce pollution. ‘Connecting Leicester Phase II’ started in 2015/16.</p> <p>Leicester’s Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 business case of November 2019 aims to deliver two rail and bus transport hubs and links; improvements to park and ride services; 8km of priority bus lanes; 26km of cycling and walking routes; and smart ticketing and real time information on target corridors<sup>49</sup>.</p> <p>Ongoing Connecting Leicester projects are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belgrave Gate improvements</li> <li>• Clock Tower and Church Gate street improvements</li> <li>• Granby Street regeneration</li> </ul>

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic\\_growth\\_plan\\_sustainability\\_appraisal\\_final\\_for\\_governance/Strategic%20Growth%20Plan%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20%28September%202018%29%20%28Final%20-%20for%20governance%29.pdf](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/strategic_growth_plan_sustainability_appraisal_final_for_governance/Strategic%20Growth%20Plan%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20%28September%202018%29%20%28Final%20-%20for%20governance%29.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.statista.com/chart/12828/the-uk-cities-with-the-biggest-traffic-jams/>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts/area/regions/East+Midlands/local-authorities/Leicester>

<sup>47</sup> <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/local-authorities/153>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/transport-and-streets/>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/xkhfuzsk/transforming-cities-fund-strategic-outline-business-case-2019.pdf>

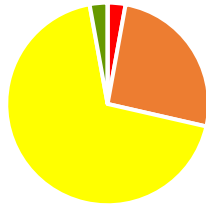


Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	<p>A major 'Connecting Leicester' programme has led to improvements at a range of locations around the city. Cycling levels increased by more than 50% between 2014 and 2018.</p> <p>Connecting Leicester projects 2019/20</p>	<p>gateway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horsefair Street and Pocklington's Walk improvements</li> <li>Market Place South / Dolphin Square improvements</li> <li>St. Margaret's Bus Station<sup>50</sup></li> </ul> <p>Midlands Connect's road investment strategy for 2020-25 includes a smart motorway between M1 Junctions 19 and 23a<sup>51</sup>.</p>
<b>Waste</b>	<p>The amount of waste generated in Leicester is increasing, with over 127,000 tonnes generated in 2019/20 and over 131,000 tonnes generated in 2020/21. Broadly 20% of Leicester's waste is recycled, 15-20% is composted or processed in an anaerobic digestion facility, 25% is sent for energy recovery, and 30-40% is disposed to landfill<sup>52</sup>.</p>	<p>The amount of waste generated in Leicester continues to increase, in part because of a growing population. The trends are for the proportion of waste that is composted to increase, and the proportion sent to landfill to decrease.</p>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/city-mayor-peter-soulsby/my-vision/connecting-leicester/ongoing-transport-projects/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/media/1563/ris-2-priorities-final-online-20032019.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> Authority Monitoring Report 2019-2021

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
<p><b>Water</b> Water quality</p>	<p>The water quality of the River Soar is generally moderate. The main reasons for the river not being of good status are pollution by the water industry (51 counts out of 126), agriculture and rural land management (42) and urban and transport (24)<sup>53</sup>.</p> <p>All of the area in and around Leicester is a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution.</p> <p>North-east of Leicester (Markfield/ Thurcaston) is a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, where action to address surface water contamination of the drinking water is required. However otherwise Leicester is free of other water quality related designations.</p>	<p>The Environment Agency aims to improve the water quality in much of the River Soar to 'good' by 2027. Climate change will make this harder to achieve.</p>
	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Ecological status of River Soar (water bodies), 2021<sup>54</sup></p> <p>■ bad ■ poor ■ moderate ■ good ■ high</p> </div>	
Water resources	<p>Leicester receives its water from Severn Trent: it is within the water company's 'strategic' zone. Prior to the drought of summer 2022, there were few water resource pressures on the River Soar, as a large proportion of the water resources for public water supply is imported from neighbouring catchments. However several public water supply reservoirs in the west of the catchment are designated as sites of special scientific interest, and so are sensitive to over-abstraction, and many water resources in wider Leicester have restricted or no water available for licensing<sup>55</sup>. Overall the Environment Agency has classed the Severn Trent Water area as being of 'moderate' water stress.</p>	<p>Seven Trent's Water Resource Management Plan of 2019 forecasts a significant deficit between supply (blue line below) and demand (green line) for water. The WRMP proposes to deal with this deficit through improved leakage reduction, influencing customers' water use, increased metering, and increasing its water supply, primarily through water transfer and treatment of wastewater. Significant wastewater</p>

<sup>53</sup> <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3407/print>

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> [https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf\\_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf](https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf)

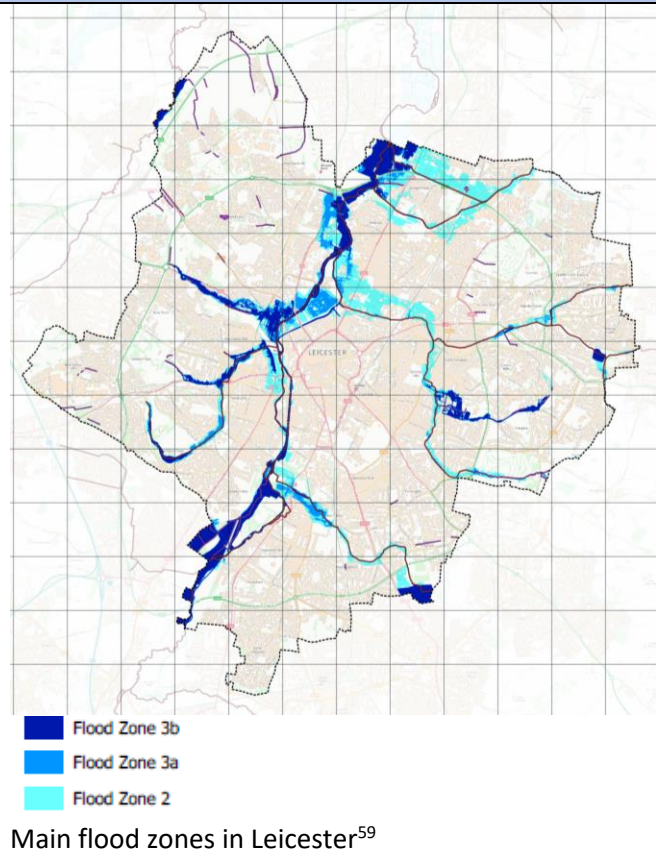
**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	<p>Baseline water supply-demand balance and components of demand<sup>56</sup></p>	<p>infrastructural upgrades are likely to be needed to cope with the significant levels of growth planned for the Leicester and Leicestershire region to 2050.<sup>57</sup></p>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.severntrent.com/about-us/our-plans/>

<sup>57</sup> [https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf\\_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf](https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/download/pdf_document/2017s5956-Leicester-City-and-Leicestershire-Water-Cycle-Study-Final-v5.0.pdf)

Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information		
Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
Flood risk	<p>Leicester is at significant risk of flooding from the River Soar. The city's 2012 surface water management plan found that almost 37,000 properties are at risk of surface water flooding, and this will have increased further since then<sup>58</sup>.</p>	<p>Increasing levels of precipitation, particularly if concentrated in intense rainfall events, may mean that Leicester's flood defence and water runoff systems will be operating outside their design criteria<sup>61</sup>. Reduced summer rainfall will lead to increased risk of summer drought and water shortages.</p> <p>The Environment Agency's 2017 Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Programme includes several proposed schemes in Leicester City, aimed at alleviating flooding from surface water sources at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leicester Northfields</li> <li>• Leicester Royal Infirmary</li> <li>• Egginton Street</li> <li>• Oakland Road</li> <li>• Redhill Way<sup>62</sup></li> </ul>



<sup>58</sup> <https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/the-plan/stage-two/developing-the-evidence-base/leicestershire-leicester-city-level-1-strategic-flood-risk-assessment/>. Additional properties may be susceptible to other types of flooding (e.g. fluvial). The Environment Agency is working on a Leicester Integrated Flood Risk Management Strategy which should identify properties at risk of flooding in more detail.

<sup>59</sup> Leicester City Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Levels 1 & 2, August 2022

<sup>61</sup> Leicester City Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Levels 1 & 2, August 2022

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/the-plan/stage-two/developing-the-evidence-base/leicestershire-leicester-city-level-1-strategic-flood-risk-assessment/>

**Table 4.2 Summary and update of scoping report information**

Topic	Current situation	Likely future without the plan
	<p data-bbox="835 878 1480 946">Sites identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy v. risk of flooding from surface water<sup>60</sup></p>	<p data-bbox="1535 313 1980 521">The August 2022 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment highlights the importance of blue-green infrastructure and sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) in helping to reduce flood risk.</p>

<sup>60</sup> Leicester City Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Levels 1 & 2, August 2022



### 4.3 Task A3: Existing problems

The SEA Regulations require a description of “any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to [Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation]”.

Based on the information from Task A2, Leicester faces the following existing problems:

- Air quality problems, although these are decreasing in the northern parts of the AQMA (Abbey Lane / Beaumont Lane, Melton Road / Loughborough Road)
- Large areas of deprivation, including low pay, poor health and low educational attainment
- Lower employment and higher unemployment than the regional and national average, although both are improving
- Greater expected population growth, and housing need, than can be accommodated within the city boundaries
- Lower housing completion than required to meet objectively assessed need
- High levels of car use despite good public transport and cycling infrastructure. Transport and highway pressures will continue to present ongoing congestion issues common to all large conurbations. That said, “Connecting Leicester” is working hard to ameliorate those issues
- ‘Moderate’ water quality in the River Soar and tributaries
- Leicester is in an area of ‘moderate’ water stress, with additional infrastructure likely to be needed for both water resources and wastewater management
- Significant potential for flooding, with 37,000+ properties potentially affected by surface water flooding.

Planning for growth of the city will require close working between the city council, neighbouring authorities, and infrastructure providers.

### 4.4 Task A4: SA/SEA Framework

An SA/SEA framework of SA objectives and appraisal criteria – Table 4.3 - has been developed to provide a structure for assessing the sustainability effects of the Local Plan (Stage B of the SA process). The **SA objectives** provide a method by which to test whether the Local Plan will yield the best possible outcomes in terms of sustainability. Essentially they are used to test the sustainability of the plan – its environmental, social and economic effects. The SA objectives therefore cover a full cross-section of sustainability issues. The **decision-making criteria** consist of a series of questions which help expand the focus of the SA objectives. The questions are used to ensure that all the issues are considered as part of the assessment process and to address any ambiguities that may arise. They are not a definitive list.

The following colour coding system was used to assess the impact of each of the strategies:

Very positive compared to the present situation	++	Negative compared to the present situation	-	No direct link, insignificant impact	0
Positive compared to the present situation	+	Very negative compared to the present situation	--	Depends on implementation	I
Unclear	?	Positive or negative depending on implementation			+/-

The original framework has been modified from that in the scoping report to take into account the statutory consultees’ comments on the scoping report, and to more clearly fulfil the requirements of the SEA Directive (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.3. Sustainability Appraisal Framework**

SA Objective	Criteria: Will it...
1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide new housing to meet Local Plan requirements?</li> <li>• provide for those in housing need?</li> <li>• help to improve the quality of the current and new housing stock by providing the appropriate type, mix and size of housing?</li> <li>• provide housing affordable to all sections of the community?</li> <li>• provide adequate, appropriate student accommodation?</li> <li>• help ensure new housing is built in the best locations with access to a range of services?</li> <li>• help contribute to the viability and sustainability of the City?</li> </ul>
2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to promote healthy lifestyles across different age ranges?</li> <li>• help to promote resilience to pandemics, climate change etc.?</li> <li>• improve the City's efforts to protect the public's health?</li> <li>• reduce health and welfare inequalities in the City?</li> <li>• improve access to health services?</li> </ul>
3. To provide better opportunities for people to participate in cultural and recreational activities; and to protect the city's landscape and townscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the development of a vibrant cultural economy?</li> <li>• increase the number of people in urban areas satisfied with open space?</li> <li>• improve the condition of public open spaces?</li> <li>• help improve access to a range of community and leisure facilities especially for the disabled?</li> <li>• help people to increase participation in sporting and cultural activities?</li> <li>• protect and enhance landscape and townscape quality and character?</li> <li>• protect designated landscapes?</li> </ul>
4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide safer communities?</li> <li>• help to create communities where people feel safe?</li> </ul>
5. To support diversity, tackle inequality, reduce deprivation, and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase community empowerment?</li> <li>• promote equality and diversity and cater for the needs of different disadvantaged groups?</li> <li>• maintain and enhance community facilities?</li> <li>• provide locations for community level activities and organisations?</li> <li>• tackle deprivation?</li> <li>• help to develop life-long skills and reduce long-term unemployment?</li> <li>• promote, celebrate and/or develop cultural distinctiveness and strengths?</li> <li>• bring about greater social cohesion?</li> </ul>
6. To increase biodiversity levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid significant impacts on the biodiversity of designated and non-designated sites?</li> <li>• enhance and provide opportunities to promote and better manage biodiversity?</li> <li>• maintain and improve ecosystem services?</li> <li>• increase available habitat to improve biodiversity levels within the city?</li> <li>• enhance and manage the City's environmental infrastructure, taking into account climate change?</li> </ul>
7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to maintain or enhance local distinctiveness and diversity within the built environment?</li> <li>• conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets, non-designated heritage assets and their settings?</li> <li>• help to protect from loss or damage other existing archaeological assets?</li> </ul>
8. To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce levels of pollution to air, water and soils in the City?</li> <li>• reduce the adverse environmental effects of resource use?</li> </ul>



SA Objective	Criteria: Will it...
9. To protect water quality and resources, and minimise flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage water efficiency?</li> <li>• protect water quality?</li> <li>• be within the capacity of available water resources, taking into account climate change?</li> <li>• ensure that flood risk is not increased by allowing only appropriate development in flood zones, taking a (flooding) sequential approach, and applying sustainable design, including sustainable drainage systems?</li> </ul>
10. To reduce the potential impact of climate change by minimising energy usage, and to develop renewable energy resources, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to minimise energy usage and encourage energy efficiency?</li> <li>• help to develop the City's renewable energy resource, reducing the dependency on non-renewable resources?</li> <li>• provide high standards of sustainable design and construction including renewable energy?</li> <li>• reduce the effects of natural hazards (e.g. flooding, subsidence), taking into account climate change?</li> </ul>
11. To encourage land use and development that optimises the use of previously developed land & buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help encourage brownfield regeneration?</li> <li>• ensure that greenfield sites with high environmental capital are protected?</li> <li>• maximise the efficient use of land?</li> </ul>
12. To make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure, help reduce the need to travel by car, improve accessibility to jobs and services for all, and to ensure that all journeys are undertaken by the most sustainable mode available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce road congestion and the need to travel by private car?</li> <li>• reduce air pollution?</li> <li>• help to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of service centres?</li> <li>• reduce the need to travel for those with the greatest barriers to travel?</li> <li>• help to reduce the distances people have to travel on a regular basis for education, employment and services?</li> <li>• reduce inequalities in access to education, employment and services?</li> <li>• promote safe walking and cycling?</li> <li>• promote safe, convenient, reliable and attractive public transport?</li> <li>• help develop a transport network that minimises the impact on the environment (including electric charging points)?</li> </ul>
13. To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recovery and recycling of waste materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the reduction, reuse, recovery and recycling of waste?</li> <li>• support a circular economy</li> <li>• ensure the safe disposal of waste?</li> <li>• ensure the efficient use of natural resources and support the use of sustainable products?</li> </ul>
14. To create high quality employment opportunities and develop a strong, diverse and stable local economy which attracts and retains investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide for the right amount and type of employment land available?</li> <li>• help to develop long-term skills and reduce long-term unemployment?</li> <li>• tackle deprivation?</li> <li>• ensure that the associated infrastructure (roads, public transport, broadband &amp; other services such as electricity &amp; gas), needed to support Leicester's economy is provided in the most sustainable way possible?</li> </ul>
15. To support the vitality and viability of the City Centre and other local centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that the city centre remains viable?</li> <li>• ensure that local centres remain viable?</li> <li>• reduce the use of the car by encouraging the use of sustainable transport?</li> <li>• Will the facilities on offer at these centres support the needs of local communities and the future economy?</li> </ul>
16. To raise the levels of educational achievement and develop a strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve equality of access to good quality learning and training opportunities for disadvantaged group?</li> <li>• improve the quality of learning and training opportunities?</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Criteria: Will it...
culture of enterprise and innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to improve people’s skills?</li> <li>• improve uptake of learning and training?</li> <li>• support links between business and academic sectors?</li> <li>• support more sustainable business practices, including the circular/ environmental economy?</li> </ul>

**Table 4.4. SEA Directive requirements v. SA objectives**

SEA Directive topic	SA objective
Biodiversity, flora, fauna	6. To increase biodiversity levels
Population, human health	1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets housing needs 2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities 4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime
Soil	11. To encourage land use and development that optimizes the use of previously developed land and buildings
Water	9. To protect water quality and resources, and minimise flood risk.
Air	8. To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality
Climatic factors	10. To reduce the potential impact of climate change by minimising energy usage, and to develop renewable energy resources, reducing dependency on non- renewable resources.
Material assets	8. To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality
Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage	7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings
Landscape	3. To provide better opportunities for people to participate in cultural and recreational activities; and to protect the city’s landscape and townscape

A different, more spatially specific, framework has been developed to assess and compare development sites. This is shown at Table 4.5, with colour coding shown at Table 4.6. Leicester City Council’s GIS system Aurora was used to measure distances. For the sites, the distances to GP, Green Wedge, allotments, train station and primary school all relate to accessibility to services, hence less distance is better. Distance to SSSI, Local Wildlife Site and water bodies relate to protection of sensitive features, hence greater distance is better.

One problem of using this approach is that Aurora, like most GIS systems, measures only straight lines between the site and various features. Straight line analysis doesn’t take into account barriers like canals or large roads, or that most journeys are not in a straight line. As such, the analysis is likely to over-state environmental impacts (for instance new residents are unlikely to travel to a nature conservation area in a straight line) and also over-state the sites’ accessibility to services (they are unlikely to be able to travel to their GP in a straight line). However, the site appraisal is only meant to provide an overall view of the impact of sites and help to identify measures to avoid or minimize these impacts, not be the only basis for choosing preferred sites.

**Table 4.5. Sustainability Appraisal Framework for Development Sites**

<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Site criteria</b>
1. To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs.	Site proposed for housing Loss of existing housing
2. To improve health and reduce health inequalities.	Distance to GP Infrastructure capacity (GP, schools)
3. To provide better opportunities for people to participate in cultural and recreational activities; and to protect the city's landscape and townscape	Distance from open space Loss of open space: quantity, quality Loss of Green Wedge Loss of playing pitches Loss of allotments
4. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.	Scoped out, as not site related
5. To support diversity, tackle inequality, reduce deprivation, and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities.	Scoped out, as not site related
6. To increase biodiversity levels.	Impact on SSSIs, Local Wildlife Site Presence of protected habitats and species Tree Protection Orders
7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings	In Conservation Area Impact on heritage assets and their settings
8. To manage prudently the natural resources, and protect and enhance air quality	In AQMA Pollution/contamination issues
9. To protect water quality and resources, and minimise flood risk.	Distance from water body % of site in flood zones 3a, 3b, 2
10. To reduce the potential impact of climate change by minimising energy usage, and to develop renewable energy resources, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources.	Scoped out. Covered under 12, and otherwise not site related
11. To encourage land use and development that optimises the use of previously developed land & buildings.	Previously developed land Agricultural land
12. To make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure, help reduce the need to travel by car, improve accessibility to jobs and services for all, and to ensure that all journeys are undertaken by the most sustainable mode available.	Access to bus Access to rail Impact on road network Access to town centre Access to school
13. To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recovery and recycling of waste materials.	Scoped out as not site related
14. To create high quality employment opportunities and develop a strong, diverse and stable local economy which attracts and retains investment.	Site proposed for employment Loss of existing employment Access to employment
15. To support the vitality and viability of the City Centre and other local centres	Covered by 'access to town centre' and 'access to local facilities' above
16. To raise the levels of educational achievement and develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation.	In regeneration area

**Table 4.6 Colour coding for development site appraisal**

Net new housing	50+	1-49				0
Distance to GP	<800m		800-1500m		>1500m	
Open space quality/ quantity	Provided by open space / sports officers					No comment
Sports provision comments						
Distance to Green Wedge	<800m		800-1500m	>1500m	Site is Green Wedge	
Distance to allotments	<800m		800-1500m	>1500m	Site is allotments	
Distance to SSSI	>800m		<800m		Site is SSSI	
Distance to Local Wildlife Site	>400m		<400m	Adjacent to Local Wildlife Site	Site is Local Wildlife Site	
Biodiversity comments	Provided by nature conservation officer					No comment
Archaeology comments	Provided by heritage officer					
Heritage comments						
Conservation area	Not in CA		Adjacent to CA	Partly in CA	In CA	
Air Quality Management Area	Not in or adjacent to AQMA		Adjacent to AQMA	Partly in AQMA	In AQMA	
Distance to nearest water body	>50m		<50m		Water body on site or adjacent	
Flood zone	Zone 1		Zone 2 (>5% of site)	Zone 3a (>5% of site)	Zone 3b (>5% of site)	
Previously developed land	Brownfield				Greenfield	
Distance to train station	<800m		800-1500m		>1500m	
Distance to primary school	<800m		800-1500m		>1500m	
Site proposed for employment	yes					no
Index of Multiple Deprivation	1 (most deprived)	2	3			3+ (less deprived)

## 4.5 Task A5: Consulting on the Scope of the SA/SEA

The SEA Regulations require statutory authorities – in England these are Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency – to “be consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report”.

Historic England, Natural England, the Environment Agency and other interested parties were consulted on the content of the Scoping Report. 27 responses were received. Table 4.5 summarises the main comments and the SA/SEA report response to these comments.

**Table 4.5 Consultee comments on the SA/SEA scoping report, and response to their comments**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Changes made to scoping report information</b>
<b>Environment Agency – statutory consultee</b>	
Distinguish between flood risk, water quality and water resources	Distinction made, further information provided at Table 4.2 of this report, revised in (new) objective 9.
Include reference to habitat creation and improvement of ecosystem services. Add in SA framework “To increase available habitat to improve biodiversity levels within the city”	Habitat creation and ecosystem services included as criteria for SA/SEA objective 6. Proposed wording included in criteria.
Provide more information on fluvial flood risk	Fluvial flood risk map included in Table 4.2
Include as an objective “To ensure that flood risk is not increased by development by taking a (flooding) sequential approach”	Included as a criterion for SA/SEA objective 8
Reword objective 8 to include ecosystem services	‘Protect and enhance ecosystem services’ has been added as a criterion for objective 6
Mention electric car charging points, cycling and trams at objective 11 on transport	Cycling and public transport (which already includes trams) are already mentioned. Electric car charging points have been added to the last criterion for objective 12.
Include as an objective “Flood risk will be minimized through allowing only appropriate development in flood zones and the application of sustainable design, including sustainable drainage systems. The effect of climate change will be considered at all levels of flood risk”.	Criterion for (new) objective 9 now reads “ensure that flood risk is not increased by allowing only appropriate development in flood zones, taking a (flooding) sequential approach, and applying sustainable design, including sustainable drainage systems?”
Include in Objective 8 “will it reduce flooding?”	
Add the criterion “will it create new habitat to improve biodiversity?”	This is already covered by the criterion previously added “increase available habitat to improve biodiversity levels within the city?”
<b>Natural England – statutory consultee</b>	
Pleased to see mention of Gipsy Lane Pit SSSI, and suggests generic additional information sources and mitigation measures	Further information provided in Table 4.2 on Gipsy Lane Pit SSSI
<b>Historic England – statutory consultee</b>	
Further baseline information is needed about heritage assets	Churchgate Conservation Area was appraised in 2017

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Changes made to scoping report information</b>
Landscape and cultural heritage are currently considered together. There should be a separate section on heritage assets.	Table 4.2 now distinguishes between landscape and heritage assets, and the SA objectives for landscape and heritage assets have been separated.
Reference should be made to buildings of local interest	Table 4.2 now refers to buildings of local interest.
Objective 7 should be rephrased as “conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings”	The criterion “help to protect or enhance existing features of the historic built environment?” has been rephrased as “conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings?”
Additional data needed on heritage assets, non-designated heritage assets and the settings of heritage assets. Detailed site assessment criteria needed.	Heritage assets and settings included in the site assessments
Reference to Heritage England should be revised to Historic England	Reference is now to Historic England throughout
<b>Other consultees’ main comments</b>	
Objective 2 should be more explicit on the health benefits of sport and active recreation	Objective 2 includes as a criterion healthy lifestyles across different age ranges
Emphasise air pollution more clearly	Air quality is now distinguished from other environmental dimensions; Table 4.2 gives information on Air Quality Management Areas
Focus more on locally grown and sourced food; mention Leicester’s Food Plan	The Leicester Food Plan is now out of date (it ran 2012-2015) but its ambitions are now listed at Sec. 4.1, and loss of allotments has been included in the site assessment framework
Include SA framework criteria on increasing biodiversity	The SA framework now includes criteria about increasing habitats and ecosystem services
Focus more on social infrastructure: community centres, libraries, community education services	SA objective 3 includes as a criterion “help improve access to a range of community and leisure facilities especially for the disabled”
Require housing to be very energy efficient	SA objective 10 includes as criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to minimise energy usage and encourage energy efficiency</li> <li>• provide high standards of sustainable design and construction including renewable energy</li> </ul>
Make more reference to Leicester’s Sustainability Action Plan	Now discussed further at Sec. 4.1
Include reference to student housing	Student numbers and housing discussed at Table 4.2, and SA objective 1 now includes as a criterion provision of adequate, appropriate student accommodation

## 5. Assessing the Local Plan objectives

### Task B1. Testing the Local Plan Objectives against the SA Objectives

The Local Plan objectives are shown at Chapter 2. They were assessed using the SA framework. Table 5.1 shows the assessment.

**Table 5.1 Appraisal of Local Plan objectives**

Local Plan objectives	SA objective															
	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/landscape	4. Crime/ safety	5. Diversity/deprivation	6. Biodiversity	7. Historic environment	8. Natural resources/air	9. Water/flooding	10. Climate change	11. Prev. developed land	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment/economy	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education/enterprise
1. Support the delivery of new homes balanced with economic growth to meet the needs of all people	✓	✓	?		✓	x	x	x	x	x	?	?	x	✓	✓	✓
2. Prepare for, limit and adapt to climate change	?	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?		
3. Support economic growth, maximise employment opportunities and support businesses to grow		✓	?		✓	x	x	x	x	x	?	?	x	✓	✓	✓
4. Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents		✓		✓	✓											
5. Ensure new development is of a high-quality design and layout which reflects local context & circumstances	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?						✓	
6. Enable the right infrastructure for the city to grow and thrive	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	?		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7. Conserve and enhance the identity, character and diversity of the city's built and heritage assets	?	✓	✓				✓			✓		✓	?	✓		
8. Protect and enhance the natural environment including green infrastructure and biodiversity	?	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		?			
9. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure by helping to reduce the need to travel by car & improve accessibility to jobs & services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
10. Enhance the vitality and viability of our city centre, town centres and district and local centres.	✓		✓	✓	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓	



ü	The plan objectives generally support the SA objective	x	The plan objectives potentially go against the SA objective		No significant link / neutral
?	The plan objectives could have a positive or negative effect on the SA objectives depending on how they are implemented				

The main conflict between the plan and SA objectives relates to the impact of proposed housing and employment sites on biodiversity, heritage assets, natural resources, water, climate change and waste. The significant housing and employment development supported by the Local Plan objectives will have negative impacts on environmental factors through the development of greenfield land, use of resources including water and construction materials, energy use, vehicle movements, and associated air and water pollution and greenhouse gas generation.

In turn, the plan policies dealing with climate change, heritage assets and nature conservation could negatively affect housing and employment land deliverability where they prevent development or would require significant protective or compensatory measures.

These conflicts are part and parcel of planning for future development, and cannot be easily solved.

# 6. Assessing the Local Plan alternatives

## Task B2. Developing the Local Plan alternatives

The SEA Regulations require that “the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan... and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan, are identified, described and evaluated”. It also requires “an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with”.

The alternatives (or options) stage of the SA aims to ensure that the choice of alternatives to consider, and the choice of the preferred alternatives, takes sustainability issues into account. The SA requirements are to

1. identify reasonable alternatives,
2. assess the alternatives’ effects using the SA framework from Table 4.3, and
3. explain why the preferred alternatives were chosen.

In the discussion below, SA objectives that are not relevant to a particular set of alternatives have been ‘scoped out’ and are not discussed. The full assessment tables are at **Appendix A**.

### 6.1 Scale of growth and broad spatial strategy

As was noted in Table 4.2, Leicester’s population is expected to grow by 21% between 2011 and 2036, with a 24% increase in households. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan suggests that, across Leicestershire, 96,580 homes will be needed 2011-2031, and an additional 90,516 homes will be needed 2031-50. Leicester will require 2,464 new dwellings per year (39,424 for 2020-2036) to fulfil the objectively assessed need for housing. Additionally, Leicester needs about 70ha of employment land. However the land within the city boundary is constrained, with much of the remaining area that is not built up being parks, green wedges and other publicly accessible open space.

Initially, four alternative **scales of growth** were considered:

- A. Housing need based on the government’s standard methodology – 2,464 dwellings per annum (dpa)
- B. Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment numbers of January 2017 – 1,668 dpa to 2036
- C. Current Leicester Core Strategy target – 1,280 dpa
- D. Current net housing completion rates – about 1,000 dpa

2. Housing need SA Objective	A. Standard methodology – 2,464 dpa	B. HEDNA – 1,668 dpa	C. Core Strategy - 1,280 dpa	D. Current delivery – ~1,000 dpa
1. Housing	++	+	--	--
2. Health	+	+	-	-
3. Recreation, landscape	-	-	0	0
5. Diversity, inequality	++	++	-	--
6. Biodiversity	--	-/--	-	-
7. Heritage	-			
8. Air, resources	-	-?	?	?

2. Housing need SA Objective	A. Standard methodology – 2,464 dpa	B. HEDNA – 1,668 dpa	C. Core Strategy - 1,280 dpa	D. Current delivery – ~1,000 dpa
9. Water	-	-?	?	?
10. Climate change	--?	-/--?	-?	-?
12. Transport	+	+	-	-
13. Waste	-			
14. Employment, economy	--	--	0	0
15. Vitality, viability	++/-	++/-	0	0

All of these alternatives have significant negative impacts. The two higher growth alternatives would negatively affect the townscape, biodiversity, climate change and other environmental aspects in Leicester, and would constrain options for employment development. The lower growth alternatives would lead to an increasing backlog of housing need, with associated impacts on health and deprivation.

A Statement of Common Ground between the Leicestershire authorities<sup>63</sup> explains that Leicester has a capacity to accommodate growth between 2020 and 2036 of 20,730 dwellings (1,296 dpa). This leaves 18,700 dwellings of 'unmet need' that neighbouring authorities will need to provide. This is the housing target.

As a starting point, two radical **spatial strategies** for accommodating Leicester's growth were considered:

- Develop all available sites at whatever density is necessary to try to accommodate all of the city's objectively assessed housing, employment and retail growth.
- Protect all existing greenfield land and only build on available brownfield sites, exporting however much of the city's objectively assessed housing, employment and retail growth that cannot be met on brownfield sites.

1. Spatial strategy SA Objective	A. Accommodate all of the city's objectively assessed housing, employment and retail growth within Leicester	B. Export the city's objectively assessed housing, employment and retail growth that cannot be met on brownfield sites.
1. Housing	++	--
2. Health	+	-
3. Recreation, landscape	--	0
5. Diversity, inequality	+	-
6. Biodiversity	--	0
7. Heritage	--	0
8. Air, resources	-?	0
11. Land use	++	++
12. Transport	+	-
13. Waste	-	0
14. Employment, economy	++	+
15. Vitality, viability	+	-
16. Education, enterprise	+	-

Accommodating all growth within Leicester would be very positive in terms of housing, employment

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.l1strategicgrowthplan.org.uk/latest-updates/publication-of-statement-of-common-ground-relating-to-housing-and-employment-land-needs/>

and efficient land use, but would have very significant impacts on the landscape, biodiversity and heritage. In contrast, protecting all greenfield land maintains the status quo for many SA objectives, but would not deal with housing need, would affect town centre vitality, and would increase commuting and other forms of travel. Neither approach is preferred, as both of these radical solutions have too many significant negative impacts. An approach between the two is preferred. In practice, as noted above, the City’s objectively assessed development needs cannot be met within the City boundaries, so the City Council has been working with neighbouring district councils to accommodate the City’s unmet needs within those neighbouring districts.

A parallel exercise for **employment development** considered where the employment development identified as being needed by Leicester should be provided:

- A. Only provide new employment land within the City’s boundary, ie consider some greenfield sites in the city for future employment needs. This option would involve using some land for employment instead of for future housing, open space, or other uses
- B. Work jointly with the surrounding districts to provide some employment land immediately outside of the city boundary, but where it is still accessible by city firms
- C. Work jointly with surrounding districts to provide all further employment land outside of the city’s boundary

3. Provision of new land for employment development SA Objective	A. Only provide new employment land within the City’s boundary	B. Provide some employment land immediately outside of the city boundary,	C. Provide all further employment land outside of the city’s boundary
1. Housing	--	+	++
2. Health	+		
3. Recreation, landscape	0		
4. Crime	+	0	0
5. Diversity, inequality	++	+	+
6. Biodiversity	-/--	0	0
7. Heritage	-	0	0
8. Air, resources	--	-	-
9. Water	?		
10. Climate change	+	-	-
11. Land use	+	+	+
12. Transport	+?	-	-/--
14. Employment, economy	++		
15. Vitality, viability	++	+	-
16. Education, enterprise	+		

The main problem with providing all of Leicester’s employment land within the city boundary is that it would compete for land needed to help Leicester meet its housing need. It would also negatively affect environmental conditions, including air quality, biodiversity and heritage. Providing all of the city’s employment land outside of the city boundaries would increase travel and affect the vitality and viability of Leicester’s centres. Alternative B is preferred, which would seek to optimize new employment land provision within the City boundary but accepting that some will need to be accommodated immediately outside of the City boundary. The Council is undertaking Asset Reviews and considering the impact of the flexibility of the E Use class order, to monitor and make provision for the outstanding land beyond the remaining 23ha, which will be provided within the adjacent Charnwood Borough Council.

### 6.2 Balance and trade-offs between types of land use

The next cluster of alternatives has to do with the balance and trade-offs between different types of land uses and development: protecting existing employment land v. providing more housing, and protecting open/green space v. making land available for development.

In terms of **employment v. housing land**, government already allows offices and agricultural buildings to be converted to residential uses under permitted development. Keeping this in mind, three alternatives were considered:

- A. Allow any employment land or building to be lost (i.e. reused or redeveloped) for any non-employment use
- B. Allow redevelopment of employment land or buildings for non-employment uses only on the poorest quality employment land which is no longer fit for purpose. This is the current policy.
- C. Retain all current stock of designated employment land and buildings, and do not allow any to be reused for non-employment uses (except for permitted development rights)

4. Protection of existing designated employment land and buildings SA Objective	A. Allow any employment land or building to be lost for any non-employment use	B. Allow redevelopment or reuse for non-employment uses on only the poorest quality employment land	C. Retain all current stock of designated employment land and buildings
1. Housing	++	0	-
2. Health	+/-	0	0
3. Recreation, landscape	?		
5. Diversity, inequality	-	+	+
6. Biodiversity	0		
7. Heritage	-	-	0/-
9. Water	+	?	0
10. Climate change	+	+	0
11. Land use	+		
12. Transport	?		
13. Waste	-	-	0
14. Employment, economy	-	+	0
15. Vitality, viability	-	?	0
16. Education, enterprise	-	0/-	0

Alternative B is the preferred alternative since it allows re-development or reuse for non-employment uses, only on the poorest land. It has fewer negative impacts than Alternative A, which has a negative effect on many important issues for the city, including employment, vitality and viability, and education. It is also slightly more positive than Alternative C, which mainly has a zero impact.

The levels of development mooted above are all likely to involve some loss of **open space, sports/recreation land and green wedges** (OSSRGW). Alternative approaches to OSSRGW are:

- A. given the urgent need for housing and employment development in Leicester, allow any publicly accessible OSSRGW land/buildings to be lost (i.e. reused or redeveloped) for non-OSSRGW use
- B. allow redevelopment or reuse of publicly accessible OSSRGW on only poor quality sites that are no longer fit for purpose
- C. retain all current stock of publicly accessible OSSRGW land

5. Protection of open space, sports, recreation and green wedges SA Objective	A. Allow any/all OSSRGW land/buildings to be lost to non-OSSRGW use.	B. Allow redevelopment or reuse of OSSRGW land on only poorest quality land	C. Retain all current stock of publicly accessible OSSRGW land
1. Housing	++	+	-
2. Health	--	-	0
3. Recreation, landscape	--	-	0
5. Diversity, inequality	-	-	0
6. Biodiversity	--	-	0
7. Heritage	--?	-?	0
8. Air, resources	-?	-?	0
9. Water	-?	-?	0
10. Climate change	-?	-?	0
11. Land use	--	-	++
14. Employment, economy	++	+	-

Retaining all the sites would help to protect the status quo environmentally, but the increased need for housing and employment land over time would not be fulfilled. Allowing all OSSRGW land to be developed would have very significant impacts on land use, biodiversity, heritage, and people's health and recreation. The city's high requirements for housing and employment land means that Alternative B, which takes into account also the scope of Green Wedge sites to accommodate development, the existing quantity of open space in an area (see below) and the availability of other open spaces serving an area, is the preferred option. Maximising the use of brownfield sites is important as a mitigation measure, but there are not enough brownfield sites in Leicester to accommodate all housing and employment. Improving the condition of existing/ retained OSSRGW would help to mitigate the impacts of the bespoke alternative, e.g. improving biodiversity, draining playing pitches that currently get flooded.

### 6.3 Other approaches for dealing with high expected growth in a constrained area

Three other approaches for dealing with development pressures were considered: increased development density, especially in the city centre and around transport hubs; reduced per-person provision of open space; and application (or not) of space standards for housing.

**Increased density in city centre sites and around transport hubs** can take several forms. High density without any conditions/constraints was not felt to be a reasonable alternative because of the significant harm this was likely to cause to landscape and heritage. Other alternatives were:

- A. High density, taking into account landscape, heritage etc. constraints. This would involve being flexible on design, densities and heights (e.g. in conservation areas)
- B. Medium density

6. City centre sites and sites around transport hubs SA Objective	A. High density, taking into account constraints	B. Medium density
1. Housing	++	+
3. Recreation, landscape	++	+
5. Diversity, inequality	+	+
7. Heritage	-?	-?
9. Water	?	?
10. Climate change	+	?
11. Land use	++	+

6. City centre sites and sites around transport hubs	A. High density, taking into account constraints	B. Medium density
<b>SA Objective</b>		
12. Transport	?	?
13. Waste	-?	-?
15. Vitality, viability	+?	+?

Alternative A is the preferred alternative, as it allows for more flexibility to accommodate the specific characteristics of various areas, and could provide for greater housing numbers overall. To give effect to Alternative A, densities specified in the plan have been expressed as minima.

Leicester has adopted an **open space** standard of 2.88ha of publicly accessible open space per 1000 population. At current levels of population, this would lead to a requirement of 948ha of open space. Leicester has 1102ha of open space, so 154ha (16%) more than required by the standard<sup>64</sup>. However the amount of open space varies across the city, with some areas having more open space than others. Leicester's population is also expected to increase, thus reducing this 'over'-provision. Two alternatives to open space provision were considered:

- A. Retain open space provision at current recommended levels and seek to even-out provision across the city: increase open space in areas of deficiency and reduce open space in areas of surplus.
- B. Reduce open space provision to a lower level and do not seek to improve any areas that are still deficient (even with this lower standard). This would allow sites to be released for housing or employment development.

7. Open space provision	A. Retain open space provision at current recommended levels and seek to even-out provision across the city	B. Reduce open space provision to a lower level
<b>SA Objective</b>		
1. Housing	-	+
2. Health	+-	--
3. Recreation, landscape	+-	--
5. Diversity, inequality	+-	--
6. Biodiversity	+-	--
7. Heritage	?	?
8. Air, resources	-	--
9. Water	0	0
11. Land use	-	--
14. Employment, economy	-	+

Alternative A is preferred because it has fewer significant negative impacts than B. Open space is a major determinant of good health, and contributes to the landscape and biodiversity. However in practice, to accommodate the housing needed, the plan has had to reduce open space provision.

**Space standards for dwellings** are important because they help to ensure that dwellings are of reasonable quality and protect people's health. Government has set 'nationally described space standards'<sup>65</sup>, but these can be applied only where there is a Local Plan policy based on evidenced

<sup>64</sup> Leicester City Council (2017) Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/183590/open-space-sport-and-recreation-study-report.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524531/160519\\_Nationally\\_Described\\_Space\\_Standard\\_Final\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf)



local need, and where they will not compromise the viability of development. Three alternatives related to space standards were considered reasonable:

- A. Wholesale application of the standards to all new dwellings including conversions and change of use
- B. Selective application of the standards, for instance to all new dwellings including conversions/change of use in a spatial area (e.g. inner wards) and/or development type (e.g. excluding build-to-rent developments or studios),
- C. No application of the standards

8. Space standards	A. Apply the space standards to all new dwellings	B. Selectively apply space standards	C. Do not apply space standards
<b>SA Objective</b>			
1. Housing	+/-	+/0	-
2. Health	+	+/0	-?
5. Diversity, inequality	+	+/0	0
8. Air, resources		0	0
10. Climate change		0	0
11. Land use	-	-/0	0
16. Education, enterprise		0	

None of the alternatives was found to have particularly significant sustainability impacts. No space standards (Alternative C) could lead to sub-standard housing with associated health effects. More widespread use of space standards (Alternatives A and B) could make slightly less efficient use of land as they would probably lead to fewer dwellings per hectare. There is probably not enough evidence for wholesale application of the standards (Alternative A), but Alternative B would allow for some improvements in housing quality and is more viable. As such, B is preferred alternative.

## 6.4 Other reasonable strategic alternatives

Other reasonable alternatives considered relate to affordable housing, city centre retail and leisure uses, shopping centres, and transport infrastructure.

In Leicester, as in many other English cities, provision of enough **affordable housing** is limited by (mostly) issues of viability, leading to insufficient affordable housing being provided. Reasonable alternatives were identified as being:

- A. The current approach: for sites  $\geq 15$  dwellings or 0.5ha, 15% in Strategic Regeneration Area, 30% in SE of city and Ashton Green, 20% elsewhere in the city
- B. Increasing the percentage of affordable homes expected from larger development sites, subject to viability
- C. Expecting smaller sites (e.g. > 5 dwellings or 0.25ha) to also provide affordable housing, subject to viability

(These alternatives are not mutually exclusive – it is possible to have more than one preferred alternative).

9. Affordable housing	A. Current approach to affordable housing	B. Increase % of affordable homes expected from larger development sites, subject to viability	C. Expect smaller sites to also provide affordable housing, subject to viability
<b>SA Objective</b>			
1. Housing	-?	+	+
2. Health		+	
5. Diversity, deprivation		+	

9. Affordable housing SA Objective	A. Current approach to affordable housing	B. Increase % of affordable homes expected from larger development sites, subject to viability	C. Expect smaller sites to also provide affordable housing, subject to viability
16. Education, enterprise	+		

The preferred alternative is a variant on these alternatives: 30% affordable housing is expected for larger sites (10+ homes) on greenfield sites, and on larger brownfield sites in Southeast and Ashton Green (see diagram in the Local Plan) 10% affordable housing would be expected.

Alternatives for the **location of future city centre retail uses**<sup>66</sup> are to

- A. Focus major retail development in the existing Central Shopping Core
- B. Allocate land for further expansion of retail development outside the Central Shopping Core but within the city centre
- C. Expand the boundary of the Central Shopping Core to accommodate more development

10. City centre retail uses SA Objective	A. Focus on the Central Shopping Core	B. Allow to expand outside the Central Shopping Core but within in the City Centre	C. Expand Central shopping core.
1. Housing	-	+	?
3. Recreation, landscape	+	+	+
5. Diversity, inequality	+	+	+
10. Climate change	-?	-?	-?
11. Land use	n/a	+?	?
12. Transport	++	+?	?
13. Waste	?	?	?
14. Employment, economy	++	++	++
15. Vitality, viability	++	+	+
16. Education, enterprise	++	++	++

Alternative B is the preferred alternative. It allows more potential for growth than Alternative A, with a range of opportunities for employment, encourages innovation, and allows people to enjoy the city centre. There is only a finite demand for retail floor space in the city centre, and continuous expansion (Alternative C) could potentially lead to fragmentation within the city centre areas, making the whole city centre 'package' less desirable.

Currently **major leisure uses** – for instance cinemas, bowling alleys and theatres - are located within the city centre, Freemans Park, and in some of the defined employment areas. Smaller scale leisure uses such as gyms and community facilities are found all over the city, and are expected to remain all over the city. Reasonable alternatives for future major city centre leisure uses are to

- A. Concentrate major leisure uses in the city centre
- B. Allow some major leisure uses outside the city centre

11. Major leisure uses SA Objective	A. Concentrate in the city centre	B. Allow outside of the city centre
1. Housing	-?	0

<sup>66</sup> Leicester City Council has a strategy of allowing some large footprint retail outside of the centre where it needs access by car (e.g. large white good retail/bulky goods at St. Georges Retail park and Abbey Retail park), and/or superstores that require specialist larger footprint uses. This set of alternatives relates to city centre retail, e.g. chain fashion and department stores.

11. Major leisure uses SA Objective	A. Concentrate in the city centre	B. Allow outside of the city centre
2. Health	+	++
3. Recreation, landscape	++	++
5. Diversity, inequality	+	++
8. Air, resources	-?	+?
9. Water	-?	+?
10. Climate change	+?	+?
12. Transport	+	-
13. Waste	0	0
14. Employment, economy	+	+
15. Vitality, viability	++	-?

Alternative B is the preferred alternative, continuing to allow some major leisure uses to be located outside the city centre. This provides a more equitable spread of leisure facilities, improving health and reducing deprivation. It is likely to lead to an increase in the need to travel for people wishing to access specialist leisure uses, and could affect the vitality and viability of the city centre. Where major leisure uses are outside of the city centre, they will be aimed towards the larger out-of-town retail centres and the lower grade employment areas. These areas can better assimilate the development than local centres or neighbourhood parades, which do not have the floor space, parking or public transport links to support these developments.

For the **location of shopping centres outside the city centre**, several reasonable alternatives exist:

- A. Strengthen just a few local shopping centres by focusing new development in them, and enhance the special character of centres such as Belgrave Road
- B. Support all local shopping centres
- C. Develop new centres for planned residential areas (only)

(These alternatives are not mutually exclusive – it is possible to have more than one preferred alternative)

12. Shopping centres: location SA Objective	A. Strengthen just a few local shopping centres	B. Support all local shopping centres	C. Develop new centres for planned residential areas (only)
1. Housing	0	0	?
2. Health	+	+	+
3. Recreation, landscape	+	+	0?
4. Crime	na	na	-?
5. Diversity, inequality	++	++	0?
7. Heritage	?	?	na
8. Air, resources	?	+	?
10. Climate change	?	+	?
11. Land use	0	0	--
12. Transport	+	++	?
13. Waste	na	na	-?
14. Employment, economy	++	++	?
15. Vitality, viability	++	++	-

The preferred alternative is to support all shopping centres. This will help to reduce the need to travel for shopping, with associated air quality and climate change benefits. New centres would still be developed for planned residential areas, but not at the expense of existing centres.

The current Leicester Core Strategy approach to the **uses allowed in shopping centres** is relatively constrained, with community and health facilities generally not permitted. However the nature of retailing is changing, with many larger retailers closing nationally, and there is a concern that local

shopping centres might become denuded under the current approach. The reasonable alternatives considered were:

- A. Allow a greater mix of uses in shopping centres e.g. community and health facilities that would support shopping provision
- B. Do not allow a greater mix of uses (current approach)

13. Shopping centres: mix of uses SA Objective	A. Allow a greater mix of uses in shopping centres	B. Do not allow a greater mix of uses
2. Health	+	0
3. Recreation, landscape	+	0
4. Crime	+	0
5. Diversity, deprivation	+	0
7. Heritage	+?	0
11. Land use	+	0
12. Transport	+	0
15. Vitality, viability	++	0
16. Education, enterprise	+?	0

Alternative A is the clear preferred option. It would increase access to a range of services by co-locating them with shopping services, thus reducing the need to travel. It would help to improve health, both by encouraging walking/cycling to the centres, and by providing health facilities in accessible locations. It would make good use of existing premises, and would support the vitality and viability of local centres. Hot food take-aways may need to be restricted because they are closed for most of the day (open only in the evening), which could affect the vitality of the area. There are also public health arguments against high densities of food take-aways. Betting shops may also need to be restricted on public health grounds.

In terms of **transport infrastructure**, the current focus of the Core Strategy, and of other Leicester policies and initiatives, is on the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling. The emerging Local Plan cannot focus on only highway improvements as this goes against national guidance and other Leicester policies and initiatives. However a reasonable alternative might be to promote a balance between walking/cycling/public transport infrastructure and highway infrastructure:

- A. Reuse and repurpose roads for sustainable public transport (buses, rapid mass transit & rail), increase the provision of walking & cycling lanes & facilities and encourage sustainable transport
- B. Balance opportunities for improvements to the highway network with opportunities to increase sustainable transport

14. Transport infrastructure SA Objective	A. Sustainable transport	B. Balance of highway network and sustainable transport
1. Housing	-	0
2. Health	+	0
7. Heritage	+	0/--
8. Air, resources	+	?
10. Climate change	+	-?
12. Transport	++	-?

Alternative A is clearly more beneficial from a sustainability perspective, and is the preferred option. However it may negatively affect the delivery of housing if the new housing requires new roads.

Leicester is unlikely to have large quantities of totally car-free residential development, but the Local Plan will support a policy of increasing public transport, walking and cycling.

## 6.5 Development sites

The choice of development sites was an iterative process, with information from the sustainability appraisal being taken into account at various stages.

### *Stage 1: Identification of available sites*

A snapshot of potential housing land supply in the City, as at 31 March 2017, is set out in Leicester's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). Sites with any of the following characteristics were precluded:

- 100% in flood zone 3B (or only access to/from the site in Flood zone3B)
- 100% of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- 100% of the site is a SSSI
- 100% of the site is a Major Hazardous Facility

During 2018/19 Council officers compiled an updated list of sites, using City's SHELAA as a starting point but removing those sites on which development had started or had been completed in the intervening period, and adding the following sites:

- (a) with full and outline planning permission<sup>67</sup> that haven't started or been completed;
- (b) where the Council has resolved to grant planning permission but permission has not formally been issued (usually because of outstanding work to prepare and complete a section 106 Planning obligation);
- (c) allocated for development by the saved provisions of the adopted Local Plan (2006), but where planning permission for development has not yet been sought or granted;
- (d) submitted to the Council as a result of 'Call for Sites' consultations or as a result of pre-application discussions;
- (e) previously published in the Council's 'Potential development sites' document that formed part of the 2017 emerging options Local Plan consultation and that remained available for development<sup>68</sup> – this included City Council owned parks, playing pitches, farmland/pastures and school playing fields; and
- (f) where there was an unimplemented and expired planning permission that, in the opinion of Council, could still come forward. For these sites the Council has carried out a focused consultation with site owners to gauge the continued availability of these sites for development.

From the updated list of sites, individual sites within the proposed Central Development Area (CDA) were not taken forward to Stage 2 for suitability assessment as the CDA was being planned as a whole. The process of choosing the remaining preferred sites involved the following stages:

### *Stage 2: Suitability assessment*

This stage considered the suitability of sites for proposed allocation in the Local Plan. The merits of each available site were assessed against criteria set out at Part 2 of the Methodology document. Part 2 of the Methodology document includes indicators for rating the performance of each site

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<sup>67</sup> For development of five or more dwellings and sites greater than 0.25ha.

<sup>68</sup> Since the 2017 consultation the City Council has given further consideration to its operational public open space requirements. As a result of this consideration, a number of the City's strategically important parks and all active allotment sites were withdrawn from the list of available sites. Cemetery sites were also withdrawn.

against each criterion as: Red (site cannot comply with indicator); Amber (site could potentially comply with indicator); and Green (site complies with indicator). The exercise revealed the relative suitability of the sites, but sites scoring 'Red' against one or more criteria were not automatically excluded from the appraisal process.

#### *Stage 3: Accordance with spatial, strategic and sustainability policies and objectives of the Local Plan*

The Stage 2 suitability assessment was used to help inform whether a site was selected for inclusion as a proposed allocation, but was not the sole determining factor. A sustainability appraisal of each available site has been carried out as part of this report. Table 6.1 summarises the appraisal findings for these sites using the SA framework of Tables 4.5 and 4.6. The full appraisals are at **Appendix B** (sites included in the submission Local Plan) and **Appendix C** (sites not included in the submission Local Plan).

#### *Stage 4: Viability/deliverability*

A Viability Assessment and an Infrastructure Assessment were prepared and form part of the evidence base underpinning the submission Local Plan. These are 'whole plan' assessments and do not set out viability or infrastructure requirements for individual sites.

For the strategic site allocations, the City Council worked with site owners/promoters to ensure the viability of the proposed development, and to establish mechanisms for securing the infrastructure needed to enable the development of these sites. Where the Viability Assessment identified potential viability issues in respect of the non-strategic site allocations, the City Council explored possible delivery vehicles with site owners/promoters and other agencies. The Local Plan sets out policies for these sites (SL02 – SL06) to ensure that the infrastructure made necessary by their development is secured.

#### *Stage 5: Proposed Allocations in the pre-submission Local Plan*

Council officers took into account the findings of their own site suitability assessments and of this Sustainability Appraisal, as well as matters raised in consultation meetings with ward Members, and public responses from the Regulation 18 consultations and previous consultations. The following principles were applied in the decision-making process:

- Previously developed land: Unless there were site specific issues related to suitability, availability and achievability, all previously developed sites were selected.
- Green Wedges: The starting assumption was that these should not be released. However where there is scope for sustainable urban expansion 'at scale', either by a single large site or a number of smaller sites jointly/comprehensively, then these were selected. Also some smaller non-strategic sites were selected from the Green Wedges in order to meet the identified need.
- Green/open spaces: In wards/areas with surplus open spaces, sites were selected but having regard to the availability to residents of alternative sites to meet local open space needs.
- Playing fields (including school playing fields): Where there may be scope for partial development on strips of land not directly affecting playing pitch provision then these were selected.

During 2019, the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust announced its intention to partially close and dispose of parts of the General Hospital. Several potential sites for new schools also came to light and were included in the updated list of sites for assessment.

**Table 6.1 Site appraisals**

Site no (see key at bot- tom of table)	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
15*																				
19*																				
149																				
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment	
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Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
1032	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1033	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1034*	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1035*	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1037*	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1038	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1039*	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1040*	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Grey	Green
1041*	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1042*	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1043	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1044	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
1045	Green	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Red	Green	Grey	
1046	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Green	Green	Light Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	Green
1047	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	Green
1048*	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Yellow	Brown	Brown	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green
1049	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	Green
1051*	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Grey	
1052	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green
1053	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green
1054	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Grey	
1055	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	
1056	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Brown	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Grey	
20258	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20259	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20260	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20264	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20265	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20266	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20267	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20268	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Green	Green	Blue	Red	Green	Grey		
20269	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey	
20271	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey		
20272	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Grey		
20273	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Grey		
20274	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Grey		
20275	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Red	Brown	Green	Red	Green	Grey	

\* allocated in the submission Local Plan

Key to first column:

Least sustainable site	Somewhat sustainable site	Most sustainable site	Not enough data to determine	* Included in the Local Plan
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*Stage 6: Changes between the pre-submission and submission Local Plan*

Some sites were removed between the Regulation 18 pre-submission Local Plan and the Regulation 19 submission Local Plan. Table 6.2 explains the reasoning behind the removal of most of these sites.

**Table 6.2. Reasons for removing sites between the pre-submission and submission Local Plan**

<b>Site no.</b>	<b>Reason for removal</b>
261, 262, 309, 464, 575, 579, 580, 673, 702, 718, 1054	Sites are in a Green Wedge, allotment and/or Local Wildlife Site, and have been assessed by the planning team and this SA as having, cumulatively, significant sustainability issues
463, 485, 546, 604	Small sites with limited residential capacity, situated on primary school grounds. Statutory consultee Sport England objected to the inclusion of the site at Reg. 18 stage due to insufficient justification for the loss of playing fields. Some of the sites also have biodiversity designations.
473, 474, 1055, 1056	Sites are not available or deliverable.
515	There are significant ecological constraints on the site including the presence of woodland and species-rich grassland. The site is well-connected to existing ecological networks and offers opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. There are also significant archaeological constraints on the site.
527	The site is part of the Aylestone Meadows Green Wedge. The area in which the site lies contributes towards preventing the merging of settlements and strongly guides development form as Gilmorton Avenue provides a boundary to the south and east. It is a strongly connected corridor of green infrastructure penetrating into the urban area of Leicester. In combination with neighbouring green wedge areas, it connects to green wedge in Blaby to the south. The site provides a recreational resource, including a play area and amenity space. There are also significant ecological constraints onsite. It is very well connected to existing ecological networks and is well placed as a Biodiversity Opportunity Site.
566, 665, 675, 1006, 1021	Small sites with limited residential capacity; development would involve the loss of open space in a ward with deficiency. Some have well-used children's play areas and/or achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain would not be possible.
605	This site is a well-used recreational/play space in an area of the city where there is an undersupply of children and young people's spaces. Alternative recreational provision within walking distance is limited. The site is also a Biodiversity Enhancement Site.
627	Statutory Consultee Sport England objected to the inclusion of the site at Reg. 18 stage due to lack of justification for the loss of open space under NPPF and Sport England policy. The site is a Biodiversity Enhancement Site containing established areas of scrub, tall herbs, and scattered trees. There are opportunities for this site to contribute to the Nature Recovery Network in Leicester.
653	The site is a Biodiversity Enhancement Site offering well-connected, undisturbed scrub and mature trees. It is unlikely that Biodiversity Net Gain can be achieved onsite. There is a remnant ridge and furrow onsite which would likely require mitigation.
663	This is a small site with limited residential capacity. There are areas of ecological value onsite, particularly along the Bushby Brook and its associated riparian woodland, which are UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and offer good connectivity to the wider ecological network for a number of protected species including otters.



Considering Table 6.1, some of the sites that the Local Plan does not allocate have few sustainability constraints. This is typically because one constraint is particularly strong, eliminating the site from further consideration. Examples are development of a school playing field where no other alternatives are available to provide access to sports for the children, and/or development of a sports pitch that offers speciality provision (e.g. cricket, premiership football club). Table 6.3 summarises reasons for not including the most obviously sustainable sites in the Local Plan.

**Table 6.3. Reasons for not including seemingly sustainable sites in the Local Plan**

Site no.	Reason for not including
448, 477, 507, 513, 639, 662, 709	School playing fields in active use, with no scope for partial release
149, 308	Leicester City Football Club use sites 149 & 308, and together these sites provide the best football pitches in the city. Highways access is limited and much of the site is contaminated.
498, 548, 558, 977, 983	Nearby sites are being proposed for development. If the site was also developed, local access to open space would be unacceptable.
502	There is a shortage of 9v9 pitches in the city, and site 502 provides one of these on its eastern side. Access to the northern part of the site is difficult, so it would be difficult to partly develop this site.
612	The site is in active use by the Ayleston Park Football Club
640	Nearby sites 557 and 464 are being proposed for development. If site 640 was also developed, the cumulative loss of access to open space would be unacceptable
678	There are several sports pitches on this site. The city has also recently invested in cricket pitches using S106 money (there is under-provision of cricket pitches in the city)
967, 984, 986, 988, 990, 991, 999, 1000, 1005, 1009, 1014, 1017, 1018, 1022, 1023, 1025, 1028, 1038	Site constraints don't make development possible (e.g. narrow road verge, directly adjacent existing buildings, very steep site, other site configuration constraints)
995	Development would result in loss of outdoor space to children's home
1003	Although the site is in a ward with sufficient open space, this is the only site in the immediate locality
1020	The alternative nearby open space provision is recommended for partial release, and this site does have some community sport value.
1043	No realistic means of vehicular access
1045	Site capacity is below the threshold (0.25ha / 5 dwellings) for consideration for site allocation.

In contrast, some of the sites proposed for development in the Local Plan have significant sustainability constraints. In some cases – notably the Central Development Area - the sheer size of the area means that it covers more sensitive areas and so has more constraints; but at the same time the site could provide many homes on brownfield land, with the benefits of development exceeding the environmental effects. In other cases only part of the site is proposed for development, avoiding the sensitive area, but the overall site boundary does not reflect this distinction. Some other sites are already brownfield and/or are part of the Central Development Area, where the benefits from comprehensive redevelopment of all the sites outweigh the individual constraints at each site. Table 6.4 summarises reasons for including in the Local Plan those sites that are seemingly unsustainable.

**Table 6.4. Reasons for including seemingly unsustainable sites in the Local Plan**

<b>Site no.</b>	<b>Reason for including</b>
190	Disused (declassified) former allotment site with significant potential for development. Development of the site could open up a walking route along the Melton Brook and Grand Union Canal.
715	Although a relatively modest site there is scope for development as a continuation of existing housing development fronting Gartree Road, but is subject to the protection of the local wildlife site.
960	Mixed use development is only proposed for a small proportion of this site on the northern end. This would avoid the area of flooding, and most of the length along the River Soar (Local Wildlife Site and sensitive to runoff etc.)
961	Housing is only proposed along the frontage of Welford Road. The aim is, through development, to secure community access to the eastern part of the site for use as community playing fields.

# 7. Assessing the Local Plan policies and sites

The SEA Regulations require information on “the likely significant effects [of the plan] on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

## 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this stage is to predict and evaluate the social, economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan, which comprises the plan policies and site allocations. This in turn has suggested measures for minimising negative impacts and enhancing positive impacts: these are discussed at Chapter 8.

## 7.2 Task B3: Predicting the effects of the Local Plan policies

The plan policies were appraised using the SA framework of Table 4.3. The appraisal was informed by the 2016 and 2019 appraisals of development plan policies, but some of the plan policies are new; some of the policies appraised previously were changed or the circumstances in which they were appraised had changed; the appraisal criteria have been fine-tuned since; and the policies were appraised asking how they would change things compared to the current situation. This accounts for differences between the past and the current appraisal findings.

Appendix D shows the policy appraisal in full. It is summarized at Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1 Policy appraisal**

	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/recreation	4. Safety	5. Diversity	6. Biodiversity	7. Heritage	8. Natural resources	9. Water	10. Climate change	11. Land use	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education
<b>3. Vision for Leicester</b>																
VL01	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0
<b>4. Strategy for Leicester</b>																
SL01	+-	+-	0	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	++
SL02	++	+-	-	0	0	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	-	0
SL03	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-?	-	-	-	-	-	0	+	-	+
SL04	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-?	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	0
SL05	++	+-	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	?
SL06	+	-	-	0	0	0?	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	+	0	0
<b>5. Housing</b>																
Ho01	++	+	0	0	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
Ho02	++	+	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	++	+	-	0	+	0
Ho03	++	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho04	-	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	+	0	+
Ho05	+-	+-	0	0	0	+	+-	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0
Ho06	+-	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
Ho07	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+-	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/recreation	4. Safety	5. Diversity	6. Biodiversity	7. Heritage	8. Natural resources	9. Water	10. Climate change	11. Land use	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education
Ho08	+	0	0	-	+	0	?	0	?	+	0	+	0	+	+	+
Ho09	+-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
Ho10	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho11	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ho12	+	0	0	0	+	?	?	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6. Climate change and flood risk</b>																
CCFR01	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	++	0	0	0	+	0	0
CCFR02	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	++	+	0	+	+-	0	0
CCFR03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
CCFR04	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	++	0	0	+	+	0	0
CCFR05	0	+	0	0	0	0	-?	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0
CCFR06	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>7. Health and wellbeing</b>																
HW01	0	++	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+-	+	0	+	+	0
HW02	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>8. Delivering quality places</b>																
DQP01	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
DQP02	+	0	0	+	0	0	-?	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	0
DQP03	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP04	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0
DQP05	+	0	0	+	+	-?	0	?	0?	+	+	+	0	0	+	0
DQP06	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DQP07	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0
DQP08	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
DQP10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DQP11	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
<b>9. Central Development Area</b>																
CDA01	++	+	++	+	+-	+-	+-	-	-	+	++	++	-	++	++	+
CDA02	+-	+	++	++	-	+-	+	0	-	-	++	+	0	+	++	0
CHA01-ORA05	++	0	++	0	+	-	+-	-	-	?	+	+	0	++	++	++
<b>10. Heritage</b>																
He01	+-	0	+	+-	0	0	++	0	0	+-	+	0	0	+	+	0
He02	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	+	0	0
<b>11. Culture and tourism</b>																
CT01	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	-	0	0	+	0	+	+-	0
CT02	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0
CT03	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
CT04	0	0	+-	0	0	-	++	0	0	+-	-	+-	0	+	0	0
CT05	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	?	+	0	0	?	0
<b>12. Employment</b>																
E01	0	-	-	0	0	--	-?	-	--	-	-	-	0	++	+-	0
E02	0	0	+	+	+	-?	-?	-	-	-	+	+	0	+	+-	+
E03	0	0	0	0	+	-	-?	-?	-	-?	+	-?	0	+	+	+
E04	-	+	0	0	0	+	0	-?	0	0	+	+	0	++	0	+
E05	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
E06	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+
E07	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	-	+	++	-?	+
E08	-?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
<b>13. Town centres and retail</b>																
TCR01	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	++	0
TCR02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	++	0
TCR03	?	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	++	++	+

	1. Housing	2. Health	3. Culture/recreation	4. Safety	5. Diversity	6. Biodiversity	7. Heritage	8. Natural resources	9. Water	10. Climate change	11. Land use	12. Transport	13. Waste	14. Employment	15. Vitality/viability	16. Education
TCR04	+?	+	++	+	+	0	?	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	++	0
TCR05	0	0	0	+	+	0	?	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	0
TCR06	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
TCR07	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
TCR08	0	0	0	0	+	0	-?	-	-?	?	?	+	0	0	-?	0
TCR09	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>14. Open space, sports and recreation</b>																
OSSR01	-	+?	+?	0	0	-?	0	-?	+?	+	0	0	+	0	0	0
OSSR02	+	0	0	0	0	-?	-?	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
OSSR03	+?	+	++	0	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	0	+?	0	0
OSSR04	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
OSSR05	-	++	++	0	+	0	0	0	?	0	0	+	0	0	0	+
OSSR06	0	++	++	0	+	-?	+	0	-?	-?	0	+	0	0	+	0
OSSR07	0	+	++	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	0	+	0	+?	+	0
<b>15. The natural environment</b>																
NE01	-	0	0	0	0	-?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
NE02	+?	+?	+?	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+?	0
NE03	+?	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+?	0
NE04	-	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>16. Transportation</b>																
T01	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	0	+	+	0
T02	0	+?	0	0	0	+	+	++	0	++	0	++	0	0	0	0
T03	0	+?	+	+	++	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	0	+	+	0
T04	0	+?	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	0	+	0	0
T05	+	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	0	+	0	++	0	0
T06	+?	0	0	+	0	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	0	+	+	0
T07	+?	+?	0	0	0	-	-	+	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	0
<b>17. Future minerals and waste needs</b>																
FMWN01	0	0	0	0	0	-?	0	-?	-?	+	?	-	++	+	0	0
FMWN02	0	0	0	0	0	-?	0	-?	-?	+	+	0	++	0	0	0
FMWN03	+?	0	0	0	0	-	-?	-	-	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
FMWN04	+?	0	0	0	0	-	-?	+	-?	+	+	-	++	+	0	0
<b>18. Development and infrastructure</b>																
DI01	+?	+?	+?	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	+
DI02	0	0?	+?	0	0	0	-?	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	0	+
<b>20. Planning enforcement</b>																
PE01	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

### 7.3 Task B3: Predicting the effects of the site allocations

Table 7.2 shows the appraisal results for those sites that are included in the submission Local Plan: those sites that are least sustainable are highlighted in red in the first column, and those that are not particularly sustainable (but not the least sustainable) are highlighted in amber. Most of the sites have relatively few sustainability constraints: many of the least sustainable sites have been removed since the Regulation 18 consultation draft plan.

**Table 7.2 Site appraisal**

Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
CDA 1048																				
<b>Strategic sites</b>																				
261																				
262																				
309																				
464																				
579																				
580																				
702																				
718																				
<b>Other sites</b>																				
15																				
19																				
190																				
219																				
222																				
240																				
297																				
307																				
335																				
449																				
481																				
488																				
501																				
505																				
525																				
529																				
546																				
549																				
557																				
559																				
569																				
577																				
589																				
620																				
626																				
629																				
631																				
646																				
647																				

Site no	Net new housing	Distance to GP	Open space	Sports provision	Green Wedge	Allotments	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Biodiversity comments	Archaeology comments	Heritage comments	In Conservation Area	In AQMA	Distance to water body	Flood zone	Previously developed land	Distance to train station	Distance to primary school	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Site proposed for employment
648																				
669																				
684																				
715																				
960																				
961																				
962																				
963																				
992																				
1001																				
1007																				
1030																				
1034																				
1035																				
1037																				
1039																				
1041																				
1042																				
1051																				

#### 7.4 Overall impacts of the Reg. 19 Local Plan

Table 7.3 summarises the overall impacts of the Local Plan. The Local Plan is broadly positive socially, in terms of housing, culture, recreation and diversity. It is broadly negative environmentally, as much of the new development will go on greenfield sites, including some areas of biodiversity importance, and will use natural resources. It is good economically, as it supports a varied and growing economy, a strong retail offer, and vital city and local centres.

**Table 7.3 Overall impacts of the Local Plan**

SA objective	Cumulative impacts of the Leicester Local Plan on the SA objective
1. Housing	The plan proposes 1,296 dwellings per year for 2020-2036 (total 20,730). Additionally, neighbouring authorities will be providing 18,700 dwellings to deal with the rest of Leicester’s housing need. This will support the provision of an adequate total number of homes, but not the quantity of affordable housing needed (1,117 affordable homes per year) <sup>69</sup> .
2. Health	The plan is broadly positive due to provision of new homes, requirements for green infrastructure, encouragement of walking and cycling, and management of traffic. The plan is not clear about what (if any) GP surgeries are required as part of strategic development sites (or elsewhere). Construction will have short-term

<sup>69</sup> Based on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>



	negative health impacts (e.g. noise, dust). The additional traffic caused by new development will also affect health through air pollution, accidents etc. Development of the allocated sites will affect 5 allotments.
3. Culture and recreation	The plan is positive for culture and recreation in terms of its support for redevelopment of the Central Development Area (CDA), provision of new open space/green infrastructure, redevelopment of the waterside, new railway museum etc. The development of 186ha of greenfield land, including 9 Green Wedges, will have a significant negative impact on the landscape. Redevelopment of disused or under-used brownfield sites will have a positive impact on the townscape.
4. Safety, crime	The plan policies are broadly neutral/positive on safety and crime. Redevelopment of run-down areas (e.g. CDA) is likely to improve safety, also requirements for natural surveillance in policy DQP01. However the planned increase in population in the city could lead to more crime. No significant impact.
5. Diversity	The plan is positive for diversity through policies on, and sites in, deprived areas; provision of places of worship; and provision of public space that encourages social interaction. It also strongly promotes accessibility to services for everyone, including people with limited mobility.
6. Biodiversity	The plan will lead to development on 7 Local Wildlife Sites (in addition to 4 that already have planning permission), and will turn many of the city's other open spaces into built-up areas. Policies NE02 on biodiversity gain, NE03 on green infrastructure and OSSR07 on waterways will help compensate for some of these impacts, but overall biodiversity is expected to reduce as a result of the plan.
7. Heritage	The heritage policies (He01, He02) aim to protect and, where possible enhance, the city's heritage assets. The CDA policies will help to regenerate a historic area, and encourage heritage-led regeneration (though they could be clearer about what that means for heritage).
8. Natural resources	The plan supports walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicles which will help to minimise air pollution. The construction of 20,730 homes and around 30ha of employment space will use natural resources, and will generate pollution during operation.
9. Water	The plan supports the redevelopment of the waterways and provision of sustainable drainage systems, which could help to improve water quality. Policy CCFR03 is for the management of flooding. However overall the plan is likely to increase the likelihood of flooding, by supporting 186ha of greenfield development; and the 20,730 new dwellings will use significantly more water.
10. Climate change	The plan supports walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicles. Policies CCFR02 and CCFR03 support renewable energy but could be stronger (e.g. require new developments to produce a certain proportion of their energy through renewable energy). The plan could also, for instance, identify specific locations for new renewable energy developments, including wind turbines. Without such stronger policies, the plan is likely, in practice, to lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.
11. Land use	The plan supports the redevelopment of brownfield land, particularly in the CDA; and backyard/infill development which will increase building densities. It helps to provide needed housing and employment within the Leicester City boundary, where it is more accessible to services than it would be further away. The plan will lead to 186 hectares of greenfield land being developed. The development of green infrastructure is a concern as it helps to reduce flood risk.
12. Transportation	The plan consistently supports walking, cycling and public transport. Policy DQP01 nicely does this by stating that, in new development, streets should allow

	“pedestrians and cyclists (to) come first rather than simply (acting) as routes for cars”. The transport policies support travel plans, park & ride facilities, the movement of freight by canal and rail where possible, and provision of additional parking spaces only under restricted conditions.
13. Waste	The 20,730 dwellings and 30ha of employment site promoted by the plan will generate more waste. Policy DQP01 supports good waste storage and management, and policies FMWN01 and 02 support waste management facilities in the city.
14. Employment	The plan does not have sufficient land to deliver all of the city’s employment needs within the city boundary. It aims to deliver about 30ha of employment land. The redevelopment of the CDA, development of Pioneer Park etc. will significantly improve employment in the city. Other policies (e.g. textile employment as well as high tech jobs) support a range of employment opportunities.
15. Vitality and viability	The plan is generally very positive for vitality and viability of centres, especially the focus on regenerating the CDA. The town centre and retail policies of Chapter 12 of the plan protect the vitality and viability of local centres. On the other hand, large-scale development on the edge of the city, some of which is likely to be car oriented, could draw people away from existing centres
16. Education	The plan is positive for education and innovation. The CDA and Pioneer Park will support the business clusters that encourage innovation. Policy Ho08 supports student accommodation.

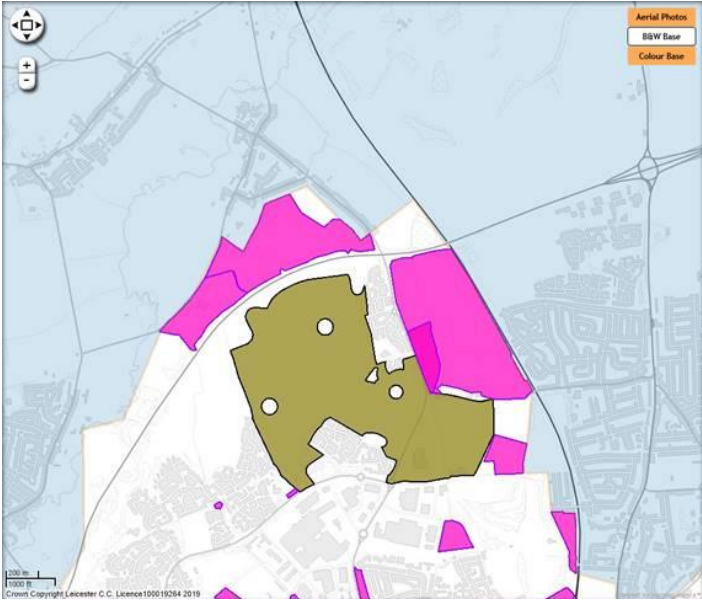
The main **secondary/indirect** impacts of the plan will be the expected economic boost from redeveloping the Central Development Area and other economic development sites (e.g. Pioneer Park). Other secondary benefits include health benefits from the provision of adequate housing; and social benefits of ensuring the vitality and viability of the city centre and more local centres. Negative indirect impacts include the impacts on biodiversity, water quality, and the landscape of significant amounts of development on greenfield land; and the climate change and air quality impacts of heating the new homes and traffic generated by the new homes.

The plan will have two key **cumulative impacts**, additional to those listed at 7.3. At *North-West Leicester*, the development of strategic site 2 (670 homes and 4.6ha of employment land to the east of Ashton Green), strategic site 3 (420 homes north of the A46 bypass), plus existing planning permissions for about 2,300 homes and employment land at Ashton Green will comprehensively change the area from greenfield and Green Wedge to a large new community – see Figure 7.1. It significantly affects the Green Wedges in the area. It will also generate significant quantities of additional jobs and traffic.

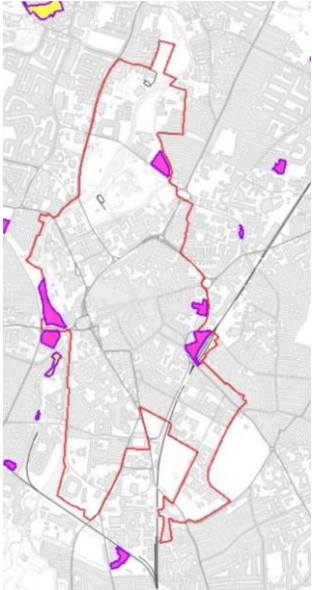
*Redevelopment of the Central Development Area* will involve redeveloping multiple smaller sites, involving many different owners and stakeholders. The Local Plan’s character area policies aim to ensure that development is not piecemeal, and to protect and enhance the coherence of the conservation areas, river and canal frontage, walking and cycling paths through the area, and other common benefits – see Figure 7.2.

The main **short term** impacts of the plan will be the impacts of constructing the 20,730 homes and 30ha of employment sites. Construction will require building materials and energy; generate additional transport movements (notably by HGV); and cause noise and dust. The strategic development sites are on greenfield land, which will reduce the impacts of the development on nearby residents, but most of the proposed new housing will be on smaller sites, in existing neighbourhoods and the Central Development Area.

**Figure 7.1 North West Leicester: Ashton Green (centre in brown), Strategic site 2 (east) and strategic site 3 (north)**



**Figure 7.2 Central Development Area**



The main positive **long term** impacts of the plan will include better health and social cohesiveness through the provision of housing, employment land and community facilities; and support for a more robust economy for the city. The main negative long term impacts include a change of 238 hectares (gross) of land from greenfield to developed land; reduction in biodiversity; changes in the landscape; and, in the North West Leicester area at least, increased traffic.

## 8. Mitigating the Local Plan's impacts

The SEA Regulations require information on “the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”.

### Task B4: Mitigating negative effects of the Local Plan

Throughout the SA process, the SA team made suggestions to the planning team about how the Local Plan could be made more sustainable and possibly easier to implement. The SA process particularly highlighted some general issues where the plan could be made more sustainable. These were discussed with the planning team in November 2019 and May 2022, and through extensive email correspondence.

**Climate emergency, renewable energy:** Leicester City declared a climate emergency in February 2019. It has an existing district heating system which supplies low-cost, low-carbon energy to major civic buildings and 3000 homes. However the draft Local Plan of 2019 said little about mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The Local Plan now has several policies on climate change, and makes reference to district heating in policy CCFR01 and CCFR04.

**Housing density:** Policy Ho05 of the draft Local Plan of 2019 supported densities of at least 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) in the Central Development Area, and at least 30+ dph in the rest of the city. These densities were comparatively low: for instance Birmingham and Oxford require 100 dph in the city centre, and other plans typically require 35-50+ dph for suburban areas. The Local Plan has increased these densities to 75+ dph in the Central Development Area and 35+ dph elsewhere.

**Biodiversity offsetting / net gain:** The draft Local Plan of 2019 said little about biodiversity net gain. Since then, the Environment Act 2021 has specified that new development must provide at least 10% biodiversity net gain. This has been included in Policy NE02 of the Local Plan. Further biodiversity enhancements could be delivered if the Local Plan aimed to implement Nature Recovery Networks as highlighted in the Leicester Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-31.

**Infrastructure needed for large development sites,** particularly in NW Leicester: New developments need infrastructure such as transport, water, wastewater and electricity; and services such as doctor's surgeries, schools, community centres and local shops. Not all new developments will need all of these: for instance new development can help to keep open existing under-subscribed schools or struggling shops. However in some cases new infrastructure and services will be needed to avoid placing unsustainable pressure on existing infrastructure and services. Policies SL02 – SL06 identify some but not all of the services and infrastructure that will be required to ensure that the large development sites proposed by the Local Plan are sustainable. The need for some infrastructure and services, and particularly transport infrastructure, is being identified in emerging studies, some of which will not be available until after the Regulation 18 consultation.

**Public transport for NW Leicester:** Generally the development sites in NW Leicester are distant from Leicester city centre and existing services. Strategic sites 1-4 are located near or adjacent to the M1 and A46 Leicester Western Bypass. Without very good public transport, these new sites are likely to be car dependent. Studies are still being carried out about public transport requirements for these sites, and how this can best be funded and delivered.

**Appendix E** lists additional SA suggestions that were made for individual plan policies, and resulting changes (or, if not changes were made, why not). Key changes resulting from the SA (or consistent with the SA suggestions) include:

- Wording on wheelchair accessible housing made more stringent/robust (Ho03)
- Clarification that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are expected to contribute towards the achievement of biodiversity net gain (CCFR06)
- Clarification about the conditions under which previously developed land in flood zone 3b can be redeveloped (CCFR06)
- Merging of policies on design and access, since they are interlinked (DQP01 and former DQP03)
- Support for 15 minute neighbourhoods in HW01 and T03
- Consideration of cumulative impacts on residential amenity (DQP06)
- Support for renewable energy at the Great Central Railway Museum (CT04) and in Green Wedges (OSSR01)
- At Pioneer Park, clarification that new development is expected to enhance the biodiversity and visual amenity of the canal and riverside, and improve connectivity along them (E04)
- In the Textile Area, support for conversion of existing buildings (E05)
- Encouragement of co-location of businesses where one business can use another business's waste as a resource (E07)
- Requirement for major new retail development to provide public toilets (TCR03)
- Stronger encouragement to enhance, not just protect, open spaces (OSSR02), and provide new walking and cycling routes through them (OSSR03)
- Support for enhancement as well as protection of sports facilities, and requirement for new built sports facilities to be easily accessible by non-car means (OSSR06)
- Encouragement of tree planting along waterways (OSSR07)
- Specification that avoidance of biodiversity impacts must be attempted prior to mitigation and biodiversity net gain (NE02)
- Expansion of Policy NE03 to include blue infrastructure (canals, rivers, pond etc.) as well as green infrastructure
- Expansion of NE04 to cover all irreplaceable habitats
- Policy T01 on sustainable transport networks prioritises walking, cycling bus and rail
- New criterion that new waste development should be on brownfield land where possible (FMWN01)
- Other changes to policy wording, and additions to the Local Plan glossary, to clarify the policy intent

## 9. Monitoring the Local Plan’s impacts

The SEA Regulations require information on “the measures envisaged concerning monitoring”.

The significant impacts of the plan will be monitored. These are likely to include development on greenfield land; housing delivery; number, size and location of Local Wildlife Sites and Green Wedges; number and location of conservation areas and other heritage/archaeological assets; number of vehicle movements; modal split (bus, car etc.); and provision of renewable energy. Details of what should be monitored will be included in the SA report for the final plan.

SA objective with significant impacts	Impact to be monitored	Target
1. Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. homes developed/year</li> <li>No. affordable homes delivered/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1296/year average</li> <li>Not available at this stage</li> </ul>
2. Health 12. Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ave. journeys/year/person</li> <li>Proportion of journeys made by walking, cycling, public transportation, car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease</li> <li>Increase for non-car, decrease for car</li> </ul>
5. Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranking in Index of Multiple Deprivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;32 out of 317</li> </ul>
6. Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area of Local Wildlife Sites</li> <li>Biodiversity net gain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No decrease</li> <li>Increase</li> </ul>
7. Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. listed buildings at risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;56</li> </ul>
8. Natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air quality in AQMA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in NOx and PM2.5</li> </ul>
9. Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flooding incidents</li> <li>Water quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> <li>River Soar quality good or high</li> </ul>
10. Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Per capita CO2 emissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;3.4t/year</li> </ul>
11. Land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area of greenfield developed</li> <li>Average densities in CDA</li> <li>Average densities outside CDA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 128.87Ha by 2036</li> <li>&gt;75dph</li> <li>&gt;35dph</li> </ul>
14. Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area new employment land</li> <li>% workforce in employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30ha total</li> <li>&gt;66%</li> </ul>

## 10. Next steps

Any comments should be sent to [planning.policy@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@leicester.gov.uk).