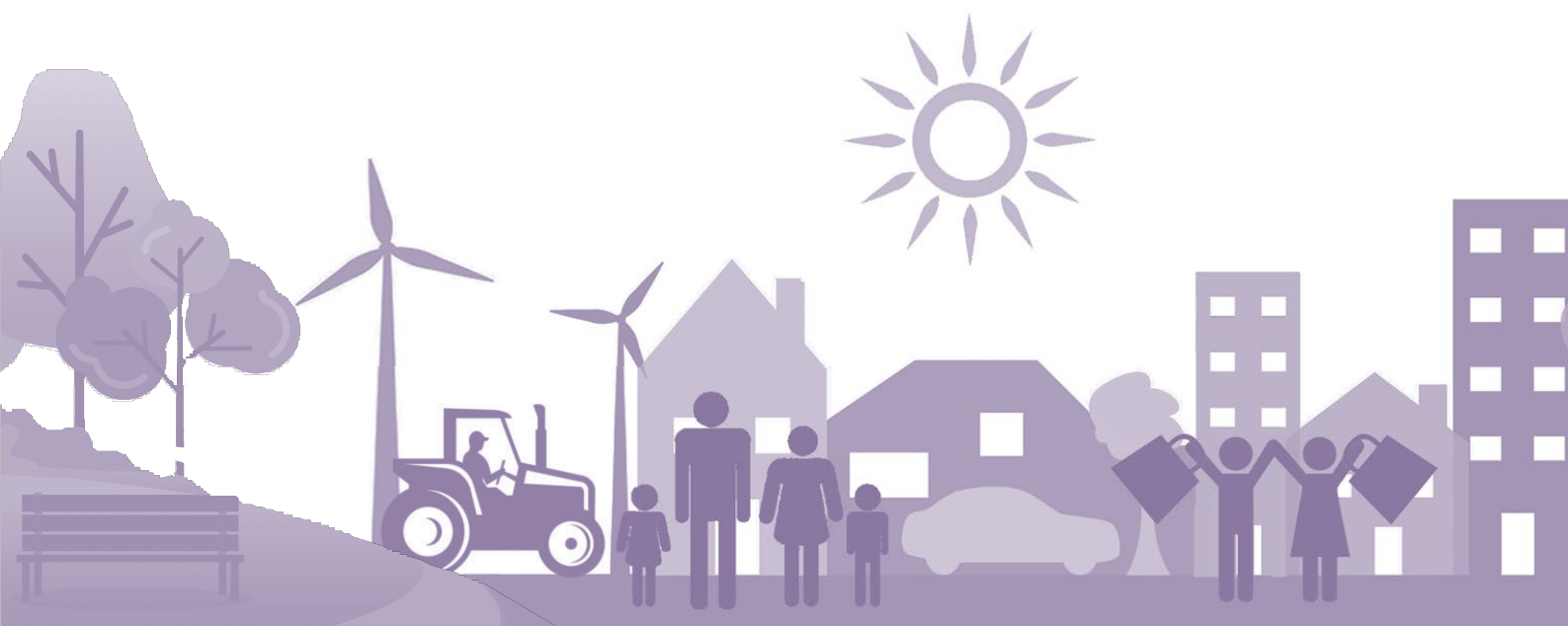


# Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2020 - 2041



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

Consultation Draft Plan  
Regulation 18  
July 2024

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## Consultation Overview

We are consulting on a further Regulation 18 draft of the new Local Plan. This latest consultation document builds upon previous consultations, incorporating views received and new evidence collected since those consultations. We have also published a Sustainability Appraisal of this version of the Local Plan. This is the first stage of the sustainability appraisal of our new plan and will be updated at each stage as the Local Plan progresses to ensure the potential social, environmental and economic effects of the plan are appropriately considered and inform the Local Plan. It is not a decision-making document. A further Regulation 18 consultation was considered necessary as emerging evidence was suggesting that the previous spatial strategy consulted on to date may not be deliverable. In addition, changes to national planning policy have taken place that needed to be taken into account and the discussions around Leicester City Council's un-met housing and employment need has been finalised.

The purpose of this consultation is to present the emerging position with the focus on strategic local planning issues. The draft plan contains proposed strategic level development sites (over 500 dwellings or one hectare of employment land), proposed major residential development sites (101 to 499 dwellings) and a suite of draft strategic policies to support them. We are seeking comments and responses to these strategic key aspects of the emerging Local Plan to continue to refine and shape the final strategy and policies in the Plan. The remaining non-strategic development allocations (residential sites below 100 dwellings and employment sites below one hectare) and non-strategic planning policies will follow in the Regulation 19 draft-submission version of the plan.

We are still finalising key pieces of evidence and/or new pieces that have been necessary following the recent changes to national planning policy such as highway modelling, infrastructure capacity, whole plan viability and habitat survey. Therefore, there is still some uncertainty about a number of issues which means that some of the proposed allocations and draft policies may be subject to change/modification in the Regulation 19 version of the plan. These uncertainties mean that we really want to hear the views of residents, community groups, stakeholders, businesses and other interested parties on these issues and of potential alternative approaches to meeting our identified needs as set out in the Plan.

This consultation accords with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 by notifying residents, community groups, businesses and other interested parties of the subject of the Local Plan and inviting comments on what the Local Plan ought to contain.

Following this consultation, the Plan will be revised and subject to further sustainability appraisal, and remaining elements of evidence finalised. A Regulation 19 submission draft Local Plan will be prepared for further consultation in Winter 2024/2025, prior to submission to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public (EiP) in 2025. Under changes to the national planning system, the Borough Council must submit a Plan prepared under the current plan making system by 30 June 2025.

### **How to comment on this consultation**

You are hereby invited to make comments on the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan and comments should be made during the consultation period of 31 July 2024 to Friday 27 September 2024. We encourage comment to be made through our online consultation portal. The portal and further details of the consultation can be found at [www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/localplanreview](http://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/localplanreview)

However, should you prefer to submit comments by email or by letter, please send these electronically to:

[PlanningPolicy@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningPolicy@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)

Or by post to:

FAO Planning Policy  
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council  
Hinckley Hub  
Rugby Road  
Hinckley  
Leicestershire  
LE10 0FR.

Please note that as required by legislation, consultation responses will be made public as part of the preparation of the Local Plan making process, and we will keep your details on our consultation database for future reference. Your contact details will be protected under

data protection legislation but your name and any comments you make will be publicly viewable.

Not only do we wish to receive comments on the current content on the plan, but we would also be interested to know if there is anything you think should be included in the Local Plan which is currently not covered, such as policies on particular issues.

Because this Regulation 18 consultation is focussed on mainly strategic matters, the proposed Local Plan policies all start with the prefix SP then the number and policy title. When making comments about policies, please include the policy number to aid understanding and clarity. Policy references and numbers may change once moving forward to Regulation 19 version of the plan.

## Layout of the plan

### Policy boxes

Policies are in colour bold italic, outlined in a solid colour line (corresponding with the relevant section); these policy boxes look like this:

***Policy Title: A B C***

***Policy Content: X Y Z***

### Information boxes

Boxes are also provided that state the relevant evidence bases that have informed the policy, the spatial objectives that policy is meeting, as well as the policies in the current Local Plan that are being replaced. These information boxes look like this:

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

A B C

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

X Y Z

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

1 2 3

# 1 What Is the Local Plan?

- 1.1 The Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (referred to as the 'Local Plan') sets out the 'vision and objectives for the future form, scale and quality of development in the borough up to 2041. The plan:
- Identifies land and areas for development for a broad range of uses;
  - Identifies areas that should be conserved or enhanced and where future development should be carefully managed.
  - Sets clear policies that guide decisions on planning applications; and
  - Indicates how the Plan will be delivered, including infrastructure, and how progress will be monitored.
- 1.2 The development plan is at the heart of the planning system with a requirement established in law that planning decisions must be taken in line with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Plan sets out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure. The development plan is also a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places. It is essential that plans are in place and kept up to date.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>1</sup> (NPPF 2023) is clear that the planning system should be plan-led. It states that plans should be up to date and succinct, providing a positive vision for the future of the area, and set out a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. In addition, plans should be a platform for allowing local people to shape their surroundings. Plans should be flexible to be able to respond to future changes such as changing economic, societal and environmental circumstances.
- 1.4 The Local Plan is a central and important strategy for the borough. The Plan plays a significant role in delivering sustainable development in the right locations, and helps to protect the countryside, important green spaces and the built & natural environment from inappropriate development.
- 1.5 The NPPF states that plans should be positively prepared and be aspirational; however, they must also be deliverable – in that the aims, objectives and policies set out in the Plan must have a realistic opportunity to be delivered. The Plan has been subject to a viability assessment to ensure the policies of the Plan can be implemented whilst delivering the required levels of development.
- 1.6 Local plans must set out strategic policies to address the development and use of land

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<sup>1</sup>[National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



in the area they cover. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development. In addition, the Plan includes several non-strategic policies, mainly to help guide decision making on planning applications. Appendix 4 sets out which policies of the Plan are considered strategic and which are considered non-strategic.

1.7 Finally, the NPPF expects plans to be underpinned by up-to-date relevant evidence. The evidence should be proportionate and should support and justify the policies set out in the Plan. The Plan has been informed and prepared by a comprehensive evidence base which can be viewed on the Local Plan website<sup>2</sup>. The evidence base is regularly reviewed to ensure it is up to date, robust and relevant.

1.8 The Local Plan will replace the following Development Plan Documents:

- Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy (December 2009);
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (July 2016);
- Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan (March 2011); and
- Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (September 2014).



1.9 To ensure the Plan remains up to date, the Plan will be reviewed within five years of adoption and be updated as necessary. Dependent on the scale of changes to national policy and guidance and/or locally specific issues, this may entail revisions to certain policies only or a full review of the Plan.

### How Has It Been Prepared?

1.10 The Local Plan has been prepared in the context of the following:

- The various planning acts and legislation;
- National planning policy and guidance<sup>3</sup>, set out in particular in the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance;
- Evidence studies prepared to inform the preparation of the Local Plan;
- The Council's Corporate Plan and other relevant strategies, such as the Corporate Plan;
- Made and emerging neighbourhood plans in the borough; and

<sup>2</sup> [View and download the documents | Evidence base and supporting studies | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> [Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

- Ongoing preparation of Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment

1.11 The Plan has also been developed through ongoing engagement with the public, landowners and other key stakeholders such as parish councils, infrastructure providers, interest groups and the development industry. As well as this draft plan, ongoing and proactive stakeholder engagement has included public consultation on the following documents:

- Scope, issues and Options Consultation 2018<sup>4</sup>;
- New Directions for Growth Consultation 2019<sup>5</sup>;
- Draft Local Plan Consultation 2021<sup>6</sup>; and
- Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation (2022)



## What has occurred since the Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation in 2022?

1.12 Following conclusion of the Regulation 19 consultation, a series of significant issues became apparent that would make submission of a sound plan in line with the published Local Development Scheme impossible at that time. These issues were as follows:

- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released a data update for 'Housing Affordability in England and Wales: 2021', referred to as the 'affordability ratios'. This meant that under the Standard Methodology calculation the Council's annual housing figure to be provided for in the Local Plan has risen from 444 dwellings per annum (dpa) to 472 dpa. This meant that the council needs to identify additional sites to meet an increase in its own local housing requirement.
- The quantum of unmet need from Leicester City has now been finalised. Although the matter was understood in principle at the Regulation 19 consultation stage, there had been no finalised distribution across the districts. This proposed distribution was based on the Leicestershire-wide Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) study which was jointly commissioned by all the

<sup>4</sup> [Scope, issues and options consultation | Local Plan review 2020 to 2039 | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200387/past_consultation_2020/1766/draft_local_plan_consultation)

<sup>5</sup> [New directions for growth consultation | Local Plan review 2020 to 2039 | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200387/past_consultation_2019/1766/new_directions_for_growth_consultation)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200387/past\\_consultation\\_2021/1766/draft\\_local\\_plan\\_consultation](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200387/past_consultation_2021/1766/draft_local_plan_consultation)

Leicestershire districts, Leicester City and Leicestershire County Council.

- In April 2022 the Borough Council became one of 42 councils advised by Natural England that it would be affected by nutrient neutrality requirements. This is where new development that may increase wastewater run off must achieve 'nutrient neutrality,' and this is achieved when the nutrient load created through additional wastewater (including surface water) is mitigated within the development. This new requirement will require relevant policies in the plan and the area subject to nutrient neutrality requirements illustrated on the Proposals map. Nutrient neutrality must also be factored into the preparation of the Local Plan through the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment.
- Changes to the housing need the Borough Council has to plan for has a consequential impact on the evidence which needs to be gathered and tested to ensure that sites are capable of delivering the future land requirements to meet the identified need. Officers have been working with County colleagues on a programme of work to deliver the necessary evidence and it is estimated that the transport modelling of potential sites will take around 12 to 15 months to complete. This timeframe will also include evidence around key infrastructure such as education requirements etc. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan and viability modelling work can only be prepared once the transport modelling is near completion (draft report stage).
- The passing of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 which has implications for local plan making.
- The introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. BNG is a way of creating and improving natural habitats and aims to make sure development has a measurably positive impact on biodiversity compared to what existed before. In England, BNG is mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).



## Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

1.13 This latest Local Plan consultation takes account of these issues.

### **What Area Does It Cover?**

1.14 The Local Plan relates to the whole of Hinckley and Bosworth borough. The characteristics of the borough are described in more detail in Section 2 of the Plan - The Spatial Portrait.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

1.15 The Local Plan is supplemented by more locally detailed policies and proposals set out

in neighbourhood development plans where these have been prepared for parts of the borough.

1.16 A neighbourhood plan is a planning document that sets out planning policies for a local area. It is written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, so this ensures that the community gets the right types of development in the right places. By producing a neighbourhood plan, communities can take a lead on developing planning policies and allocations for their areas, provided that they meet the prescribed 'basic conditions'<sup>7</sup>. Any plans and policies in the neighbourhood plan need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan. Once made, neighbourhood plans form part of the Local Authority's Statutory Development Plan, sitting alongside the Local Plan in decision making on planning applications.

1.17 Since the introduction of neighbourhood planning by the Government in the Localism Act 2011, there has been significant interest from communities in Hinckley & Bosworth in preparing neighbourhood plans. The Borough Council offers a range of support to neighbourhood planning groups, in particular providing advice and support at the statutory stages of neighbourhood plan development.



1.18 As of May 2024, twelve neighbourhood plan areas are designated in the borough and the various plans have reached different stages of preparation. The plans that have been 'made' up to 31 July 2024 are Market Bosworth, Sheepy, Burbage, Desford, Markfield, Stoke Golding and Barlestone neighbourhood plans.

1.19 The use of neighbourhood plans will predominantly inform:

- The determination of planning applications in the area that the plan applies;
- The requirement and scope of development contributions associated with a planning permission; and
- The assessment of schemes in the context of a need identified and well evidenced in the neighbourhood plan, for example the form of development or infrastructure requirements.

<sup>7</sup> PPG Neighbourhood Planning paragraph: 065 Reference ID: 41-065-20140306 - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

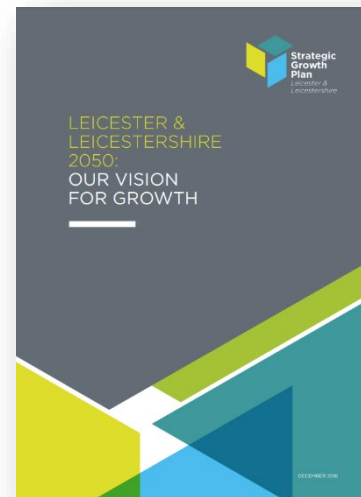
1.20 Overall, the Borough Council will champion neighbourhood planning, empower local communities to make decisions on sustainable and meaningful development within their area, and provide support to ensure neighbourhood plans are deliverable, achievable and sustainable. Further details on neighbourhood planning in the borough can be found on our website<sup>8</sup>.

## Strategic Growth Plan

1.21 The creation of sustainable and attractive places to live, work and relax is a shared endeavour by all partners in Leicester and Leicestershire. To achieve this key objective, the local authority partners have a history of working collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for communities in delivering development and infrastructure, whilst also maintaining the distinctive identity and character of individual places in the City and across the County.

1.22 The creation of sustainable and attractive places to live, work and relax is a shared endeavour by all partners in Leicester and Leicestershire. To achieve this key objective, the local authority partners have a history of working collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for communities in delivering development and infrastructure, whilst also maintaining the distinctive identity and character of individual places in the City and across the County.

1.23 The Strategic Growth Plan, approved in 2018, was prepared by the ten partner organisations – the City Council, the County Council, the seven boroughs and districts, and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership – to provide a plan which will shape the future of Leicester and Leicestershire in the period to 2050. It is a ‘non-statutory’ plan, but it provides an agreed framework to use when preparing individual Local Plans and other strategies. The Strategic Growth Plan can be viewed at [strategicgrowthplan.org.uk](http://strategicgrowthplan.org.uk)



1.24 Local Plans prepared by the city, district and borough councils are the statutory tool for delivering the Strategic Growth Plan’s overarching vision, as well as providing the local steer for the delivery of infrastructure and reflecting local distinctiveness and circumstances. Local Plans may include policy provision to enable later phases of the Strategic Growth Plan beyond the plan period. As the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan is updated and replaced, the relevant policies and proposals will reflect the Strategic Growth Plan together with the evidence base.

1.25 The authorities continue to take a collaborative approach to the delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan’s vision and objectives, incorporating cross-boundary growth and infrastructure matters, including through Statements of Common Ground and/or

<sup>8</sup> [Neighbourhood planning | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](http://Neighbourhood%20planning%20|%20Hinckley%20&%20Bosworth%20Borough%20Council%20(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk))

Memorandums of Understanding as appropriate.

- 1.26 The Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan enables the Strategic Growth Plan by/through taking account of it with regard to the Plan's spatial strategy. In particular, the Strategic Growth Plan designates the A5 as an Improvement Corridor and thus recognises improvement of the A5 corridor is essential to reducing congestion in the borough, to deliver already planned housing growth and to support delivery of major industrial sites which already have been allocated or have planning permission. Furthermore, Hinckley (alongside the towns of Coalville, Loughborough, Lutterworth and Market Harborough) is identified as an Area of Managed Growth where growth will be achieved through Local Plans.
- 1.27 Since adoption of the Strategic Growth Plan, all partners have continued working together in partnership to put together relevant evidence to support its implementation.

### **Duty to Co-operate and Statements of Common Ground**

- 1.28 The NPPF (paragraph 24) states that local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) are under a duty to co-operate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
- 1.29 This means that local planning authorities should jointly identify the strategic planning matters which should be addressed in their plans. They should also engage with other stakeholders where relevant. Co-operation should be effective and ongoing to help develop positive relationships and justify strategies to address these issues.
- 1.30 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council have been working continuously and effectively with its strategic partners including the other planning authorities in Leicestershire, and where appropriate Warwickshire, and other stakeholders on a range of cross boundary and strategic planning matters. This has led to the development of the Strategic Growth Plan, the joint preparation of evidence base documents, Memorandums of Understanding and collaborative work on a range of planning issues. This co-operation will continue to support preparation of local plans and other strategic planning documents where Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is a stakeholder.
- 1.31 To help ensure that the identified housing and employment need across Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) need is achieved up to 2036, a specific Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) was prepared jointly between each local planning authority (LPA) within the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA. This sets out how the HMA and FEMA need will be distributed across the LPAs including the un-met need arising from Leicester City. The proposed share of the unmet need apportioned to Hinckley and Bosworth was an additional 187 dpa to be added to the council's annual housing figure of 472 dpa equating to 659 dpa. Although the Council accepts that as a member of the Leicester and Leicestershire housing market area (HMA) it has a duty to help address any unmet need, the figure of 187 dpa is disputed due to the final manual adjustment that is made to the formula behind the distribution based on historic stock growth. Although

this objection is an '*area of disagreement*' detailed in the SoCG, the Borough Council resolved to become a signatory to the SoCG at Council on 30 January 2024.

- 1.32 To evidence and support this co-operation, Statements of Common Ground which document the cross-boundary matters being addressed and the progress in cooperating to address those matters are being prepared to support the submission of the Local Plan. A Duty to Cooperate Statement has also been published alongside the Plan.

## 2 Spatial Portrait

### Location

- 2.1 The borough of Hinckley and Bosworth (hereafter referred to as the borough) is located in the south-west of Leicestershire, within the East Midlands. The borough is at the centre of England between the cities of Leicester, Birmingham and Coventry. The A5, which runs along the western edge of the borough, acts as a physical border to Warwickshire and the West Midlands.
- 2.2 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is one of eight local planning authorities within Leicestershire. The borough covers approximately 29,734 hectares in total, which makes the borough the third largest by area in Leicestershire behind Harborough and Melton. In total, Leicestershire covers an approximate area of 215,711 hectares<sup>9</sup>.
- 2.3 The borough sits in a key position on the strategic road network in the East Midlands, close to the A5, M42/A42, M69 and the M1. There are direct rail links to Birmingham and Leicester and further afield to Cambridge and Stansted Airport. Two international airports, Birmingham and East Midlands, are also within a short distance of the borough.

### Population and Demographics

- 2.4 The borough's population continues to grow, reaching approximately 113,700 by 2021<sup>10</sup>, representing an approximate increase of just below 8% since 2011.
- 2.5 The borough of Hinckley and Bosworth has the third highest population Leicestershire, behind only Leicester City and the borough of Charnwood<sup>11</sup>. In total, Leicestershire and Leicester has a population of approximately 1,080,938<sup>12</sup>.
- 2.6 Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton, to the south of the borough, form the main urban area, in which approximately 62% of the population reside. The market town of Hinckley, the second-largest town in Leicestershire (following Loughborough), is the main urban centre. Hinckley is home to the key administrative services of the borough and provides the principal shopping, leisure and community facilities. Hinckley Town Centre has seen significant regeneration in recent years, with the Crescent and Hinckley Leisure Centre developments taking centre stage.
- 2.7 The remaining 38% of the borough's population reside in wards primarily rural in nature - particularly in the western and central area of the borough - across several key rural



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<sup>9</sup> ONS. 2023. Standard Area Measurements (Latest) for Administrative Areas in the United Kingdom.

<sup>10</sup> ONS. 2021. Total population in Hinckley and Bosworth (2021)

<sup>11</sup> Census. 2021. All usual residents in Leicestershire by local authority.

<sup>12</sup> Census. 2021. All usual residents in Leicestershire by local authority.



centres, villages and hamlets. The rural areas of the borough contribute to the overall beauty of the Leicestershire countryside, whilst most notable is the historic market town of Market Bosworth, with nearby Bosworth Battlefield being of significant international historical and cultural interest, and as a designated heritage asset of national importance.

### **Age Profile**

- 2.8 In 2021, approximately 60.3% of the borough's usual resident population are of working age between ages 16 to 64, whereas those aged 65 years and above make up 22.4% of the population. The borough's population aged 65 and over has increased from 18.1% in 2011 to approximately 22.4% by 2021<sup>13</sup>, which is higher than the averages in England (18.4%) and the East Midlands (19.5%)<sup>14</sup>.
- 2.9 While an aging population is experienced borough wide, the general spatial trend suggests the lowest per cent of this age bracket are mostly located in the north-east and southern urban parishes. In 2021, the parishes of Bagworth and Thornton (15.4%), Higham on the Hill (16.4%), Stanton-under-Bardon (19.1%) and Ratby (20.5%) had the lowest per cent of all usual residents aged 65 and over the highest per cent of usual residents aged 65 and over were more commonly located in more rural central parishes, with some anomalies in the north-east and south-west parishes. In 2021, the parishes of 'Osbaston (35.2%), Witherley (34.5%), Market Bosworth (24.2%) and Markfield (30.1%) had the highest proportion of 65 and over. An aging population can bring challenges of accessibility, rural isolation and inadequate provision of services.
- 2.10 In 2021, those aged 15 years and under represented 17.4% of the borough's population. The wards to the central and the north-east of the borough had the highest proportion of persons aged 15 and under, with the highest percentages found in the parishes of Bagworth and Thornton (23.7%), Stanton-under-Bardon (22%), Desford (19.6%), Cadeby (19.1%) and Ratby (18.5%)<sup>15</sup>.

### **Diversity**

- 2.11 Hinckley and Bosworth is not as ethnically diverse as most other boroughs and districts nationally. The proportions of the population who identify as each broad ethnic group within the borough are as follows<sup>16</sup>:
- 94.3% as White;
  - 2.8% as Asian or Asian British;
  - 0.6% as Black, African, Caribbean or Black British;
  - 1.8% as Mixed or multiple ethnic groups; and
  - 0.6% as other ethnic group.

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<sup>13</sup> Census. 2021. All usual residents in Hinckley and Bosworth by age.

<sup>14</sup> NOMIS. 2021. All usual residents in Hinckley and Bosworth, England and East Midlands by age in five-year bands.

<sup>15</sup> NOMIS. 2021. All usual residents in Hinckley and Bosworth parishes by age.

<sup>16</sup> NOMIS. 2024. All usual residents in Hinckley and Bosworth by ethnic group.

## **Main Language**

- 2.12 The main language spoken is English at 97.2%, followed by other European languages at 0.7% (mostly Polish and Romanian), South Asian at 0.5% (mostly Gujarati and Punjabi), East Asian at 0.2% (mostly Cantonese Chinese and other Chinese languages), and finally French, Portuguese and Turkish is spoken as a main language by 0.1% of all usual residents individually<sup>17</sup>. All other main languages present have numbers below 0.1% of all usual residents.

## **Economic and Labour Background**

- 2.13 The borough's history is inextricably linked to the industrial revolution with hosiery, mining and manufacturing being drivers for the borough's long term economic growth. The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2022 found that the 'Manufacturing' industry still accounts for the joint largest number of people in employment in Hinckley and Bosworth<sup>18</sup>, at an estimated 7,000 employee jobs (16.3% of total employee jobs). This is considerably above the percentage for the East Midlands (11.4%) and more than double the percentage for Great Britain (7.6%).
- 2.14 Hinckley and Bosworth is also very much at the forefront of future innovation, and home to many industry-leading companies, including Horiba MIRA, Caterpillar and Triumph. 'Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles' is the other joint highest industry by employee jobs, at 16.3%.
- 2.15 The borough is also a desirable location for "Transport & storage" which contributes 11.6% each to the borough's total employee jobs (approximately 5000 employee jobs). The Transport and Storage industry has seen significant growth in employee jobs, with increasing growth since 2015 (with 2018 being the only anomaly) starting at 5%. A key driver of the growth of this industry is the national transport links within the 'golden triangle' for logistics and distribution. The borough therefore attracts and has become home to several strategic distribution centres, including the high-tech state-of-the-art facility for DPD at Hinckley Park, which is strategically located adjacent to the M69 and A5, as well as being in close proximity to the M6 and M1.
- 2.16 Farm based agricultural is excluded from the data collected on employee jobs, however, the high farm land-use and rural nature of the borough continues to define a high proportion of positive identity, community spirit and historical background for the borough's residents.
- 2.17 Over the last decade, the borough's labour market has seen overall growth in the proportion of all people in employment. Recent statistics show a peak of 87.6% in December 2019, before a various peaks and troughs through the impacts and recovery of the COVID Pandemic, up until the latest figure of 82.3% in December 2023. East Midlands and Great Britain statistics show the same fall during the pandemic, although statistics on these wider scales did not increase to the same high levels or see the

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<sup>17</sup> NOMIS. 2024. All usual residents in Hinckley and Bosworth by main language.

<sup>18</sup> Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES 2021)

The term employment includes employees plus the number of working owners. BRES therefore includes self-employed workers as long as they are registered for VAT or Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) schemes. Self-employed people not registered for these, along with HM Forces and Government Supported trainees are excluded.

same extreme peaks experienced in Hinckley and Bosworth in 2021 and 2023.

### **Businesses**

- 2.18 As of 2023, there is a total of 4,490 enterprises and 5,020 local units based in the borough. The majority of enterprises are micro enterprises (0-9), at 90%. Only 0.4% of enterprises are large (250+), whereas small (10-49) and medium (50-249) enterprises represent 8.2% and 1.3% respectively. A similar trend is found with local units, with 85.9% of local units being defined as micro (0-9)<sup>19</sup>.

### **Economic Activity**

- 2.19 Hinckley and Bosworth's unemployment rate has consistently remained below Great Britain and East Midlands averages for over a decade, with the borough's figure dropping as low as 2.1% in December 2022. before rising slightly up to 3.4% in December 2023. In December 2023, the unemployment figure remains below Great Britain and East Midland averages of 3.7%.
- 2.20 In 2023, 15.1% of the borough's population were estimated to be economically inactive, as compared to 21.6% and 21.2% in the East Midlands and Great Britain, respectively<sup>20</sup>. People who are economically inactive include those who are retired, discouraged, long-term sick, temporary sick, looking after the family/home and students. Hinckley and Bosworth do not have a prominent student population by nature of the lack of universities located within or in close proximity to the borough, with the closest being De Montfort University in Leicester City or Loughborough University in the borough of Charnwood.

### **Earnings**

- 2.21 In 2023, the average gross weekly pay for full time workers by residence in the borough is £655.2, which surpasses the regional average of £640.2, although falling short of the Great Britain average of £682.6. However, there remains a high level of commuting out of the borough for employment, particularly into Leicester and Warwickshire, which continues to shape the nature and economy of many of our rural communities. Over the same time period, the average gross weekly pay for residents by place of work within the borough is £621.6, as compared to the East Midlands and Great Britain average of £623.6 and £682.6 respectively. These average earnings imply that workers commuting or working remotely for workplaces outside of the borough have a higher income on average.

### **Deprivation**

- 2.22 Overall, the borough has a relatively low deprivation ranking being placed at 228 out of 316 local authorities in the English Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>21</sup>, which indicates that deprivation is not as significant concern compared to other authorities. In Leicestershire, the borough ranks as 6th out of 8 in front of Leicester (22) and North-West Leicestershire (216) only. There are concentrations of relative deprivation in the

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<sup>19</sup> NOMIS. 2023. Labour Market Profile – Hinckley and Bosworth.

<sup>20</sup> NOMIS. 2023. Labour Market Profile – Hinckley and Bosworth.

<sup>21</sup> Indices of Deprivation, 2019 – where rank 1 is the most deprived and 317 the least deprived Local authority in England

borough, most notably in the urban areas such as Hinckley, but also in pockets of the rural area, especially with regard to barriers to housing and services. This indicates that housing affordability and access to services is an issue for rural areas in the borough.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- 2.23 The residents of Hinckley and Bosworth are considered to be in relatively good health, although it should be highlighted that health challenges do exist. In 2021, 6.5% of residents in the borough had day-to-day activities limited a lot by a long-term health problem or disability and 10.5% were limited a little<sup>22</sup>. The most recent data suggests that the life expectancy at birth for males is 80.5 years and for females is slightly higher at 83.3 years (2020-2022). These are slightly higher than England's averages of 78.9 years and 82.8 years respectively over the same time period<sup>23</sup>.
- 2.24 As reported by Active Together based on data from Sport England<sup>24</sup>, physical activity levels in May 2022–May 2023 have risen slightly above national averages, with 68.8% of the borough's adult population (16+) being active for at least 150 minutes per week on average, compared to 63.4% for England. Another consideration is the borough's 'inactivity' levels, with statistics showing 20% of the borough's population are being active for less than 30 minutes per week in May 2022-2023, which is lower than England's average of 25.7%. In comparing children and young people (aged 5-16) data from the academic year 2022-2023, 56.1% of the borough's young population complete an average of 60+ minutes of physical activity per day compared to 47% across England. These figures show a trend of the borough's population having a slightly more active and healthier lifestyle than the national average
- 2.25 According to annual wellbeing estimates from 2022-2023, Hinckley and Bosworth scored an average life satisfaction rating of 7.82 out of 10, compared to the Leicestershire average of 7.38 out of 10<sup>25</sup>.
- 2.26 There are no major hospitals or accident and emergency (A&E) facilities in the borough, although residents have access to community physical and mental health services, including 11 general practice branches and Hinckley and Bosworth Community Hospital. Larger hospitals with A&E facilities are available which are located nearby in Nuneaton, Leicester and Coventry.

### **Service Provision**

- 2.27 Public services are provided for our residents at borough and county levels, alongside our 24 Parish and Town Councils. The Borough Council have a continued relationship with partners, service providers, stakeholders and organisations (local and national) to bring forward services for our residents. Fostering these close partnerships is essential to the effective provision of services, including Integrated care boards (ICB), the Police and the Education Authority. As a Borough Council, we work closely with the residents

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<sup>22</sup> Census. 2021.

<sup>23</sup> ONS. 2022. Life Expectancy at Birth and AT Age 65 Years by local Areas, UK

<sup>24</sup> Active Together Summary for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland: Sport England Active Live Data 2023

<sup>25</sup> ONS. 2021. Annual Personal Well-being Estimates (Local Authority Update Edition).

of the borough, in particular the voluntary sector, which is becoming increasingly necessary on a national scale.

### **The Built and Natural Environment**

2.28 Hinckley and Bosworth has many distinctive and valuable assets which makes it unique to our residents and visitors. The historic, cultural and environmental significance of the borough is celebrated through visitor attractions, namely through day visits, such as:

- Mallory Park;
- Tropical Birdland;
- The Battlefield Line Railway;
- Twycross Zoo;
- Bosworth Battlefield; and
- Burbage Common and Woods.



2.29 Other built and natural assets in the borough include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), such as the Ashby Canal, which traverses north via Hinckley through multiple rural villages in the borough, including into the Market Bosworth Marina. The borough is also home to two nationally important forests, the National Forest in the north of the borough and Charnwood Forest in the north-east, which provide natural and semi-natural open spaces, green infrastructure and tourism opportunities to many.

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## 3 Vision and Objectives

- 3.1 The vision and objectives are at the core of the Local Plan and build on the uniqueness of the borough set out in the Spatial Portrait. The vision and objectives are also shaped by the wider corporate priorities and strategies of the borough and have been developed through the previous consultations undertaken in the preparation of the Plan.
- 3.2 The Hinckley & Bosworth Corporate Plan 2024-2028 sets out the overarching vision for the Borough Council, reflecting national and local priorities and provides the focus for the Council's service delivery. The Corporate Plan sets out a range of actions and priorities focused on three key themes.
- **People** - Helping people to stay healthy, active and in employment
  - **Places** - Creating clean, sustainable and attractive places to live, visit and work in; and
  - **Prosperity** - Encouraging sustainable commercial economic and housing growth, as well as attracting businesses, improving skills and supporting regeneration.
- 3.3 These three themes broadly correlate to the three overarching objectives of sustainable development set out in the NPPF – social, environmental and economic sustainability. The spatial objectives have been developed with regard to the themes of the Corporate Plan.
- 3.4 The Rural Strategy for Hinckley & Bosworth 2024-2028<sup>26</sup> sets out the high-level priorities for the rural areas of the borough. The Strategy sets out eight priority themes, the majority of which can be influenced by planning. The themes of the Rural Strategy have helped shape the vision and objectives of the Local Plan.

### The Plan Vision

- 3.5 The Local Plan Vision describes how the borough will change and develop over the plan period to 2041. It sets out how the Local Plan will shape the borough and it is a collective positive vision for the future of the area.

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<sup>26</sup> Rural Strategy 2024–2028 [Search results | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](#)

## Our Place - Vision

By 2041, Hinckley & Bosworth borough will be a flourishing, healthy and vibrant community where people want to live, work and enjoy. As a place of opportunity, it will be a thriving place supporting continual sustainable economic and housing growth. The borough will encourage inward investment and green growth to provide new jobs as well as more places to live and work and maximise our residents' potential through employment and skills support.

Development will be focused in the urban areas where it will be closest to key services, opportunities, key transport links and facilities together with development of a new settlement, providing its own services, opportunities and sense of place. Hinckley town centre will be a welcoming and successful destination for retail, business, commercial services and leisure, with Burbage, Earl Shilton, Barwell and a new settlement providing services to meet the needs of their population.

Sustainable development will be supported in rural communities with our key rural centres and villages shaped by the Local Plan and neighbourhood plans influenced by our communities. Growth will respect the borough's important townscapes and natural landscapes, and the borough is a place where our historic and cultural assets will be respected for their intrinsic significance and for the positivity benefits they can bring. The borough will have a cleaner and greener environment and we will promote sustainable development and initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of the borough.



### The Spatial Objectives - People, Places, Prosperity

- 3.6 To ensure this vision is achieved, the following Spatial Objectives, reflecting the themes of the Borough Council's Corporate Plan, and representing the social, environmental and economic issues of the borough have been identified. These objectives will frame the specific policies in the Local Plan and the objectives relevant to each policy are listed alongside each particular policy. The objectives will also set

the monitoring framework to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, policies and objectives of the Plan.

- 3.7 To achieve sustainable development the policies of the Plan have been prepared to meet our social, environmental and economic objectives. These objectives are interdependent, and the Local Plan should be read as a whole and in this context.

## People - Social Objectives

### 1. **Healthy Communities and Places**

To support and create strong, healthy and self-reliant urban and rural communities where the identities of existing settlements are respected. Communities have access to the social, recreational, sports and cultural facilities and services they need in their places, which in turn help them to thrive, grow sustainably and improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all. To ensure housing development is of an appropriate quality to support the health and wellbeing of residents.



### 2. **Safe and Inclusive Communities**

To develop strong and safe communities by designing out crime, creating safe spaces and encouraging community involvement and positive interaction. To improve life chances by providing fair access to resources. To support development that meets the varied housing needs of the borough including affordable and other specialist types of housing.

### 3. **Infrastructure**

To ensure that the future infrastructure needs of the borough's new and existing communities are properly assessed, planned for and delivered at the right time in the development process.

### 4. **Tourism**

To support sustainable tourism and leisure developments within the borough, which respect the landscape and the local surroundings, support local communities and their economies.

### 5. **Transport**

To promote a sustainable transport system which enables reliable access to homes, jobs services and facilities by a choice of sustainable transport modes, including active travel, and mitigates the impacts of new development on the highway network.

## Places - Environmental Objectives



**6. Natural Environment**

To conserve and enhance the natural environment, protect biodiversity and deliver a network of green infrastructure that connect and contribute to the Nature Recovery Network.

**7. Climate Change**

To mitigate climate change and reduce the effects of new development on air quality and carbon emissions by promoting a sustainable pattern of development, the use of sustainable materials, nature-based solutions, low carbon technologies, sustainable transport options, renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.

**8. Achieving Good Design**

To ensure that new development is designed to a good standard. Good design will help meet the borough's current and future needs and make a positive contribution to maintaining and enhancing local character, distinctiveness and an attractive environment. Innovative design and construction methods will be supported.

**9. Built Environment and Townscape**

To conserve and enhance the borough's archaeological and historical significance and the unique townscape character of the borough's towns and villages.



**Prosperity - Economic Objectives**

**10. Positive Planning**

To take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals which accord with the policies of the Development Plan.

**11. Land for Development**

To plan for suitable, sustainable, available, deliverable and well-located land to meet all identified development needs and maintain a balance between housing and employment.



**12. Economic Growth and Resilience**

To ensure that suitable buildings, sites and quality infrastructure are provided, in accordance with sustainability considerations, to support strong economic growth, tourism, agriculture and a varied local economy. These should provide flexibility and be able to adapt to changing economic needs.

**13. Town and Village Centres**

To plan for the continued regeneration and the identification of opportunity sites in Hinckley Town Centre to accommodate a range of uses to support and expand its role as the borough's main retail, leisure and cultural centre. To support and develop the vitality and viability of all other identified retail centres within the borough.

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## 4 Spatial Strategy



- 4.1 This part of the Plan sets out the spatial strategy for the future growth of the borough, establishing the scale and type of growth planned and the main policies and the framework for where, how and when growth and development will occur in Hinckley & Bosworth up to 2041.
- 4.2 The spatial development strategy sets out how much growth is required to support a growing population and economy, and where that growth should take place. The strategy sets out the broad principles for the distribution and location of new development and the policies that will seek to deliver that spatial strategy. The spatial strategy follows the context of the vision and objectives of the Plan, focused on people, places and prosperity. The strategy seeks to meet the development needs of the borough and its community, strengthen economic prosperity, improve quality of life and opportunity, and conserve and enhance the environment by directing growth to the most sustainable locations.
- 4.3 This is within the context that the borough is under significant pressure for growth. The population of the borough is increasing because people are living longer, birth rates are exceeding death rates, and more people are moving into the borough from elsewhere than are leaving. The Government has set minimum housing targets which the borough must accommodate unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise. The borough must also consider growth that cannot be accommodated elsewhere and build in flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. There is also continued pressure for economic growth, particularly for large scale strategic distribution as a result of the borough's geography, being broadly central in the country and the strategic road network, within an area known as the 'golden triangle'.
- 4.4 Because of this we must plan for the homes, job opportunities, services and facilities to support our growing communities. The aim of the strategy is to accommodate this growth sustainably, in line with government policy and what our evidence tells us and with consideration to the aspirations of local people.

- 4.5 The strategy for the borough was developed from the options put forward for consideration in the Scope, Issues and Options Consultation 2018, New Directions for Growth Consultation 2019 and Regulation 18 Consultation June 2021. Five distinct potential spatial strategies were presented, and these included focusing growth in rural settlements, within new settlements, neighbourhood plan led growth and development focused on key transport corridors. In the context of the scale of development required in the borough, the evidence base developed to support the Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and comments received during the consultations it was considered that a hybrid approach, taking elements from all the spatial options is most appropriate for the borough. This resulted in a spatial strategy that looked to locate development needs split between 70% urban locations and 30% rural locations. This was the strategy that was used within the Regulation 19 submission draft. However, since this consultation concluded, emerging evidence is suggesting that this spatial strategy option may not be achievable, hence the need for a further Regulation 18 consultation to look at an alternative approach.
- 4.6 It is current thinking that a hybrid approach may still be the mechanism for achieving sustainable patterns of growth in the borough. To review the spatial strategy options, it was decided to split the borough into four sub-areas as a starting point, these being:
- Urban South
  - Central
  - West; and
  - North East and Leicester Suburbs
- 4.7 The following sections set out the scale of growth required in the borough and the strategy for how that growth will be most sustainably accommodated.

### **Housing Growth**

- 4.8 Housing need is established through the standard method for assessing local housing need as set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance. The method uses a calculation based on government data on projected household growth and local housing affordability. The standard method currently (April 2024) gives an annual local housing need figure for Hinckley & Bosworth of 433 dwellings per year (or 9093 dwellings over the period 2020-2041).
- 4.9 Government guidance sets out that the standard method should be considered as the starting point for establishing a housing requirement for the Local Plan. We have considered whether there are any other circumstances which mean the borough should be planning for a number of houses above that



established through the standard method. We do not anticipate that there are specific economic circumstances present in the borough that would require increasing the supply of new homes at this stage.

- 4.10 We have also considered whether the local housing need figure should be revised to take account of the need for affordable housing. Providing new affordable housing is important in the borough. However, our updated Housing Needs Assessment indicates there is no specific need to consider a housing requirement greater than the local housing need figure in order to enable the delivery of more affordable housing. This is because affordable housing need is already accounted for in local housing need. Local housing need measures the total number of new households that will form, including those in need of affordable housing. There is therefore no additional affordable housing need above and beyond the already identified local housing need. In addition, many households with a need for affordable housing will already be living in housing; therefore, providing an affordable housing option will release another home, meaning there is no overall net increase in need.
- 4.11 Hinckley & Bosworth is however part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA). The City of Leicester has declared an unmet housing and employment need which has been quantified in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, (HENA June 2022). The Borough Council has actively engaged with partners in the Housing Market Area and a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared between the relevant partners which sets out the process by which unmet need will be distributed across the HMA to 2036. Hinckley & Bosworth signed the SoCG on the 30 January 2024. The SoCG sets out options for the apportionment of further housing growth to HBBC, over and above the standard method (see paragraphs accompanying Policy SP02).
- 4.12 The HENA only apportions housing need within the HMA to 2036. The Local Plan however sets out a plan period to 2041. For the avoidance of doubt, the housing figure in the plan, based on the outcome of the SoCG (Policy SP02), has been rolled forward to reflect the plan period. This is in line with the approach taken by a number of other authorities in the HMA that have a similar plan base date.

### **Employment Growth**

- 4.13 Evidence from the previous Employment Land and Premises Studies indicated that the borough had a sufficient supply of employment land to meet its needs up to 2036. The majority of future supply was aimed at strategic scale distribution and warehousing employment land, with a more limited supply of smaller scale local needs employment land. It was also noted there is a limited need for additional office space compared to general industrial and manufacturing and small local need warehousing.
- 4.14 These studies recommended that the Local Plan should consider allocating land to meet purely local employment needs, and that the urban area should be the priority focus for new local needs employment followed by the area to the north east of the borough around Groby, Ratby and Markfield.

4.15 Further work is underway to review these studies and also strategic distribution needs. We will consider the latest evidence on employment land needs in the next iteration of the draft Local Plan.

### **Locational Strategy for Development**

4.16 The strategy is to direct development to where it is most sustainable and where it will help support our growing communities. The form and pattern of development will help deliver houses to meet needs, support our economy by providing new job opportunities, help support the vitality and viability of our services and facilities, strengthen communities and help preserve the valued natural and built environment.

4.17 The strategy for growth is influenced by the hierarchy of settlements in the borough, the sites submitted as part of Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and other key pieces of evidence. The hierarchy groups settlements in the borough reflecting the availability of amenities, facilities and services within those settlements, and therefore the role and function of those settlements in the borough. This allows us to understand the overall sustainability of those settlements to sustain and accommodate future growth. Table 2 and the locational strategy for development under Policy SP02 sets out further information in relation to the settlement hierarchy.

#### **SP01 Sustainable Development**

*Development that accords with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans or other development plan documents) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*

*Where there are no policies relevant to the proposed development or the relevant policies are determined to be out-of-date, the development will normally be supported, unless material considerations indicate otherwise and/or either of the following apply:*

*Any adverse impacts arising from the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework; or*

*Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

4.18 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and at the heart of national planning policy is the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.19 There are three overarching objectives to sustainable development - economic, social and environmental, and all three are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

4.20 When considering development proposals, the Borough Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It will always work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the borough.

4.21 Where no local planning policies are directly related to the proposed development, the Borough Council will assess the proposal based on its impacts on the local environment and whether it accords with national planning policies.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

The Policy seeks to achieve sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF. Sustainable development is central to the purpose of planning.

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

The Policy has links to all the strategic objectives of the Local Plan.

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP01 replaces Policy DM1 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

**SP02 Development Strategy**

*Development in the borough will be in accordance with the spatial strategy set out below:*

1. *New housing development will be directed to the most sustainable locations based on the Settlement Hierarchy as set out in Table 2. The majority of new homes will be located in the Urban Areas of the Borough, followed by the identified Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages to maintain the vitality and viability of those centres settlements and the role they play in the rural area of the borough. New housing growth will be limited in other locations.*
2. *Provision will be made for 13,862 dwellings during the period 2020-2041 including:*
  - a) *4072 dwellings that are already completed or committed including allocations in made neighbourhood plans, planning permissions or resolutions to grant permission (as of 30 September 2023);*
  - b) *Strategic site allocations (sites of 500 homes or more) in the Urban Area comprising:*
    - i. *1581 homes (1581 to be delivered in the plan period) at the mixed-use Earl Shilton SUE (Policy SP03);*

- ii. *2,500 homes (1420 to be delivered in the plan period) at the mixed-use Barwell SUE (Policy SP04);*
  - iii. *2000 homes (900 to be delivered in the plan period) on land south of the A47 at Earl Shilton*
  - iv. *A minimum of 1200 homes on land north of Normandy Way, Hinckley*
  - v. *530 homes on land west of Hinckley West*
  - vi. *A minimum of 3,000 homes (1000 to be delivered in the plan period) on the mixed-use new settlement site at Lindley Meadows*
- c) *Non – strategic major development sites (of between 101 – 499 homes) in the Urban Area, Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages comprising:*
- i. *195 homes on land at Brick Kiln Street (the former Cadent site), Hinckley;*
  - ii. *450 homes on land south of Markfield Road, Ratby;*
  - iii. *180 homes on land south of Station Road (phase 2), Market Bosworth;*
  - iv. *130 homes on land east of Ratby Lane and south of Jacqueline Road, Markfield;*
  - v. *170 homes on land south of London Road Markfield;*
  - vi. *128 homes on land north of Barton Road, Barlestone*
- d) *Further smaller, non – strategic developments (between 11 and 100 homes) and minor development (sites of up to 10 homes) in the Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages to be identified in the Regulation 19 plan where necessary;*
- e) *1392 homes on small windfall sites, and*
- f) *Provision for Gypsy and Travellers as set out in Policy SP13*
3. *The plan makes provision for 194.68ha of employment land during the period 2020 – 2041, comprising:*
- a) *19.43ha of employment land completions in the period 2020 – 2023;*
  - b) *66ha of remaining supply on land with planning permission or land that's available for development throughout the borough, including:*
    - i. *24.53ha of employment land remaining at MIRA;*
    - ii. *28.37ha of land permitted for strategic B8 purposes; and*
    - iii. *13.08ha of land for general employment purposes.*



- c) *Between 33 and 55ha of general employment land allocations at the following sites:*
  - i. *28.3ha on land at Cliffe Hall Farm, (Junction 22 M1) Markfield\**
  - ii. *47.51ha of land at Wapping and Harrow Farm, Watling Street, Hinckley\*;*
  - iii. *11ha on land at Wiggs Farm, Wood Lane/Station Road, Bagworth;*
  - iv. *10.64ha on land adjoining Hinckley WWTW Brookfield Road, Burbage;*
  - v. *up to 5.3 ha at the Earl Shilton SUE (Policy SS03)*
  - vi. *6.5ha at the Barwell SUE (Policy SS04)*
- d) *Safeguarding the borough's existing employment areas from non-employment uses.*

**4. Development in the countryside and on designated open space within settlements will be restricted**

- 4.22 This part of the Plan sets out the spatial strategy for the future growth of the borough, establishing the scale and type of growth planned and the main policies and the framework for where, how and when growth and development will occur in Hinckley & Bosworth up to 2041. This Regulation 18 plan sets out the proposed strategic housing and employment sites only, further, non-strategic site allocations will be set out in the Regulation 19 plan in due course.
- 4.23 The spatial development strategy sets out how much growth is required to support a growing population and economy, and where that growth should take place. The strategy sets out the broad principles for the distribution and location of new development and the policies that will seek to deliver that spatial strategy. The spatial strategy follows the context of the vision and objectives of the Plan, focused on people, places and prosperity. The strategy seeks to meet the development needs of the borough and its communities, strengthen economic prosperity, improve quality of life and opportunity, adapt to climate change and conserve and enhance the environment by directing growth to the most sustainable locations.
- 4.24 The spatial strategy has been developed within the context that the borough is under significant pressure for growth, in particular from Leicester City. The population of the borough is also increasing because people are living longer, birth rates are exceeding death rates, and more people are moving into the borough from elsewhere than are leaving. The Government has set minimum housing targets which the borough must accommodate unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise. The borough must also consider growth that cannot be accommodated elsewhere and build in flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. There is also continued pressure for economic growth, particularly for large scale strategic distribution as a result of the borough's

geography, being broadly central in the country and the strategic road network, within an area known as the 'golden triangle'.

- 4.25 The following sections set out the scale of growth required in the borough and the strategy for how that growth will be most sustainably accommodated.

### **Housing Growth**

- 4.26 Housing need is established through the standard method for assessing local housing need as set out in National Planning Practice Guidance. The method uses a calculation based on government data for projected household growth and a local housing affordability ratio. The standard method currently (2024) gives an annual local housing need figure for Hinckley & Bosworth of 433 dwellings per annum (dpa) (or 9093 dwellings over the period 2020-2041).
- 4.27 Government guidance sets out that the standard method should be considered as the starting point for establishing a housing requirement for the Local Plan. We have considered whether there are any other circumstances which mean the borough should be planning for a number of houses above that established through the standard method. We do not anticipate that there are specific economic circumstances present in the borough that would require increasing the supply of new homes at this stage. We have also considered whether the local housing need figure should be revised to take account of the need for affordable housing. Providing new affordable housing is important in the borough however our evidence indicates there is no specific need to consider a housing requirement greater than the local housing need figure in order to enable the delivery of more affordable housing. This is because affordable housing need is already accounted for in local housing need. Local housing need measures the total number of new households that will form, including those in need of affordable housing. There is therefore no additional affordable need above and beyond the already identified local housing need. In addition, many households with a need for affordable housing will already be living in housing and so providing an affordable housing option will release another home, meaning there is no overall net increase in need.
- 4.28 Hinckley & Bosworth is however part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA). The City of Leicester has declared an unmet housing and employment need which has been quantified in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA June 2022). The Borough Council has actively engaged with partners in the Housing Market Area to accommodate this need in the most sustainable way. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared between the relevant partners which sets out the process by which unmet need will be distributed across the HMA to 2036.
- 4.29 Hinckley & Bosworth signed the SoCG on the 30 January 2024. The SoCG sets out the proposed distribution of an additional 102 dpa beyond the standard method. This part of the HENA distribution is not disputed in the SoCG, however the final step in the

distribution is disputed. This final step would seek to apportion a further 85 dpa to the housing need for the borough.

- 4.30 Using the most up to date standard method calculation (based on the 2023 affordability ratio), the annual housing requirement is 433 dpa (or 9093 dwellings over the plan period) compared to the standard method figure set out in the HENA of 472 dpa (or 9912 dwellings over the plan period). This is slightly less than the standard method identified in the HENA, however, uses the most up to date information as required by planning practice guidance. The Borough Council has accepted in the SoCG the apportionment of 102 dpa from Leicester City’s unmet need, based on the standard method in the HENA, this would result in a housing requirement of 574 dpa (or 12,054 dwellings over the plan period). Should the Borough Council be required to accept the final step in the apportionment as set out in the SoCG, the housing requirement for the borough would result in 659 dpa (or 13,839 over the plan period). Despite the 433 dpa being the most up to date housing figure for the borough, there is little justification from the evidence to be providing a lower housing figure as set out in the most recent standard method. For this reason, the Borough Council has decided to adopt the housing figures contained in the agreed SoCG as a basis for the housing requirement in the Local Plan. Provision is made in Policy SP02 for 13,862 dwellings over the plan period (660 dpa).
- 4.31 Some of this provision will require allocations to be set out in the Local Plan (this Regulation 18 document sets out the proposed strategic sites of 500 homes or more, along with smaller, non-strategic major sites of between 101–499 homes). Further, smaller non-strategic sites of 11–100 homes, and minor developments of 1–10 homes may also be required, these will be detailed further in the Regulation 19 Plan in due course if necessary.
- 4.32 The Council is also working closely with a number of neighbourhood planning groups to bring forward allocations as part of Neighbourhood Plans. As the plan progresses, it is likely that further allocations may be identified in Neighbourhood Plans which could also meet the identified housing need, these will be identified in the Regulation 19 plan in due course. Furthermore, a number of sites have also come forward on appeal since the previous residential land availability monitoring period on which the figures in Table 1 are based (2022/2023). These will form part of the land supply once the next monitoring report has been completed and will be included in the Regulation 19 plan.

**Table 1: Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan Housing Provision (2020–2041)**

<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Local Plan Housing Requirement and Supply (2020–2041)</b>		
A	Housing requirement per annum	660
B	Plan period requirement (21 years)	13,862
C	Numbers already committed (completed sites, small and large sites with planning permission as of 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023, sites allocated in made neighbourhood plans and small sites windfall allowance	5464
D	Required allocations	8398
E	Strategic mixed-use sites (500 homes or more) (Policy SP02)	10,811 (6631 to be delivered in the plan period)

<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Local Plan Housing Requirement and Supply (2020–2041)</b>		
F	Non-strategic major housing sites (between 101 – 499 homes) (Policy SP02)	1253
G	Shortfall to be identified on sites of 11 – 100 homes in regulation 19 plan	514

- 4.33 Table 1 shows the existing committed housing supply in the borough includes completed sites to date, small and large sites with planning permission as of 30 September 2023, sites allocated in made neighbourhood plans and a small sites windfall allowance of 87dpa. This amounts to 5464 dwellings that are already committed and count towards meeting the overall housing requirement for the plan period.
- 4.34 Our own evidence shows that small sites make an important contribution to housing supply in the borough. This may include small scale conversions of existing buildings not currently in residential use such as agricultural buildings or former factory buildings, infill development and other development which makes sustainable use of vacant or underused land and buildings in the borough. Approximately 87 dwellings per year are supplied on such small sites in the borough. As the Regulation 18 Plan does not look to allocate new housing on small sites it is right to include an allowance for this based on our robust and strong evidence on the supply of small sites<sup>27</sup>. The Regulation 19 Plan, will in due course, seek to identify 10% of all allocations on sites no larger than one ha as required under paragraph 70 a) of the NPPF (2023).
- 4.35 In addition to the committed sites, two Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) are currently planned in the borough at Barwell and Earl Shilton. The SUEs are strategic mixed-use developments that will deliver significant housing and employment growth in Hinckley & Bosworth alongside other benefits such as schools, parks and road improvements. Over the lifetime of the development of the SUEs, it is anticipated that the Barwell SUE will deliver 2,500 new homes and the Earl Shilton SUE 1,600 new homes. However, in the period up to 2041 the two SUEs are expected to deliver close to 2,000 new homes between them. Further strategic allocations are also proposed at Hinckley North (a minimum of 1200 homes, this is a cluster of sites which cumulatively are strategic in nature), Hinckley West (a large strategic site of 530 homes), 2000 homes (900 of which are to be delivered in the plan period) on land south of the A47 at Earl Shilton and a mixed use new settlement site at Lindley Meadows which is anticipated to deliver around 3000 new homes, 1000 of which are likely to be delivered in the plan period. The new settlement proposal at Lindley Meadows lies adjacent to the established MIRA enterprise zone and proposes to deliver a minimum of 3000 new homes over the lifetime of the development. Education provision, a district centre, leisure, and sports facilities are also proposed with 1000 homes expected to be delivered during this plan period. The Regulation 19 Plan, will, in due course, set out more detailed polices for each one of these strategic sites and also allocate any further smaller sites between 11–100 homes, and minor sites of up to 10 dwellings.
- 4.36 1253 new homes are allocated on sites of between 101–499 in the Urban Area, Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages. Whilst these sites are not comparable in scale to the

<sup>27</sup> Windfall Study – 1 April 2021 - [https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/7460/windfall\\_study\\_april\\_2021](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/7460/windfall_study_april_2021)

strategic allocations, they are, nonetheless major developments in their own right which will, cumulatively, deliver a significant number of new homes to help meet the identified requirement over the plan period.

### **Gypsy & Traveller Provision**

4.37 At the time of producing this Regulation 18 plan, the evidence base for the provision of pitches to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers in HBBC is still emerging (see Appendix 5 for a list of the evidence base in support of the plan). Within the context of delivering a sufficient supply of homes, as set out in Chapter 5 of the NPPF (2023), Paragraph 63 states that in establishing housing need, 'the size, type and tenure of housing need for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing- with -care and care homes) students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'. Annex 1 of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (updated 19 December 2023) sets out that for the purpose of planning policy, gypsies and travellers means:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*

4.38 There is an existing community of gypsies and travellers within the borough which may result in the need for the plan to make additional provision for pitches to accommodate their needs over the plan period. There are already a number of existing sites within the Borough with established pitches to serve the community's needs. Any further pitch requirements will be detailed in the forthcoming Regulation 19 plan, once the evidence base in this regard has been completed. There is one site for travelling showpeople in the borough and plot requirements for future housing need for this community will be considered alongside the need for gypsy and traveller pitches.

### **Employment Growth**

4.39 Evidence from the Employment Land and Premises Study 2024 indicates that the borough has a sufficient supply of employment land to meet needs up to 2041. Whilst there is adequate supply overall for the plan period, forecasting indicates that for some sectors, there is likely to be an additional requirement for general employment land in the region.

4.40 Policy SP02 makes proposed allocations totalling 109.25ha, over and above the evidenced general employment requirements.

4.41 Strategic B8 requirements for Leicester and Leicestershire are still emerging and are dependent on the outcome of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI)

which is being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. Strategic B8 will therefore be determined in the Regulation 19 plan in due course.

- 4.42 More information on employment growth can be found in Section 8 Economic Prosperity.

### **Locational Strategy for Development**

- 4.43 The strategy is to direct development to where it is most sustainable and where it will help support our growing communities. The form and pattern of development will help deliver houses to meet needs, support our economy by providing new job opportunities, help support the vitality and viability of our services and facilities in the urban and rural areas of the borough, strengthen communities and help preserve the valued natural and built environment.
- 4.44 Development will be focused within the Urban Areas of the borough through the delivery of mixed-use strategic sites, along with proportionate growth in the Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages. This distribution of development reflects the Urban Area as the most sustainable, main centre for the borough whilst maintaining sustainable managed growth within the Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages.
- 4.45 Strategic employment growth will also be primarily focused in the urban area and areas with good transport links on key transport corridors to minimise the impact on the local road network. This approach accords with the recommendations of the Employment Land and Premises Study.
- 4.46 The Local Plan also recognises the important role neighbourhood plans play in determining local planning priorities with a number of made neighbourhood plans having already made decisions on housing allocations and development within their areas and this is reflected in the Local Plan. The council continues to work closely with a number of Neighbourhood Planning groups to bring forward further suitable sites for development and monitors, via the annual housing land availability assessment, any new permissions granted since the base date of the last published monitoring period to ensure that the figures in the plan remain as up to date as possible. The strategy for growth is influenced by the hierarchy of settlements in the borough. The hierarchy groups settlements reflecting the availability of amenities, facilities and services within each settlement, with those in the Urban Area being more sustainable than those in the Key Rural Centres, and those in the Key Rural Centres more sustainable than the Rural Villages. This approach allows us to understand the overall sustainability of each settlement, which along with an assessment of other sources of evidence, indicates which settlements could sustain and accommodate future growth over the plan period.
- 4.47 The hierarchy establishes the Urban Area (of Hinckley, Burbage, Earl Shilton and Barwell) at the top of the settlement hierarchy. The Urban Area is the focus for key facilities and services in the borough providing the widest retail offer, job and educational opportunities, leisure and health care, and key transport links whilst reducing reliance on private motor vehicles. The Urban Area is the most sustainable

part of the borough and is the key focus for new housing and employment growth over the plan period.

- 4.48 Below the Urban Area in the hierarchy are the eight Key Rural Centres. These are the main settlements within the rural area of the borough and provide a range of services and facilities serving the residents of those settlements as well as the needs of surrounding rural communities. The Key Rural Centres offer opportunities for new growth in the rural area, with growth to support communities and to help maintain services and facilities. Any sites to be allocated in the Key Rural Centres will be non-strategic in nature and will be identified in a future Regulation 19 plan.
- 4.49 The next tier on the hierarchy is the eight Rural Villages. The Rural Villages, whilst providing a more limited range of services and facilities compared to the Key Rural Centres, still play an important role in meeting local needs and requirements. Development in Rural Villages will tend to meet more local needs and to help maintain key services and facilities. Any sites to be allocated in the Key Rural Centres will be non-strategic in nature and will be identified in a future Regulation 19 plan.
- 4.50 Rural Hamlets form the lowest tier in the hierarchy Hamlets have very limited or no services and are the least sustainable settlements in the borough. Residents of Rural Hamlets normally rely on other larger, more sustainable settlements to provide services and facilities to meet their needs. Growth will be more limited within Rural Hamlets. Table 2 below sets out the Settlement Hierarchy for Hinckley & Bosworth.

**Table 2: Hinckley & Bosworth Settlement Hierarchy**

Hierarchy Classification	Characteristics	Settlements
Urban Area	The focus of key transport, retail, employment and leisure facilities in the borough. Provides the services to meet the day to day needs of residents and is generally accessible to the surrounding area by public transport	Hinckley Burbage Barwell Earl Shilton
Key Rural Centres	Provide a range of services to meet most of the day to day needs of residents and act as a focal point to help meet the needs of the surrounding rural communities	Barlestone Desford Groby Market Bosworth Newbold Verdon Markfield Ratby Stoke Golding
Rural Villages	More limited than Key Rural Centres but may provide some of the services to meet day to day needs of residents such as a school, regular public transport, village pub and community hall/centre	Bagworth Congerstone Higham-on-the-Hill Sheepy Magna Stanton under Bardon Thornton Twycross Witherley

Hierarchy Classification	Characteristics	Settlements
Rural Hamlets	Small rural settlements with limited to no services. Reliant on surrounding larger settlements to meet the day-to-day needs of residents	Atterton Barton in the Beans Bilstone Botcheston Bradgate Hill Brascote Cadeby Carlton Copt Oak Dadlington Far Coton Fenny Drayton Kirkby Mallory Little Orton Nailstone Norton-Juxta-Twycross Odstone Orton-on the-Hill Osbaston Peckleton Pinwall Ratcliffe Culey Shackerstone Sheepy Parva Shenton Sibson Stapleton Sutton Cheney Upton Wellsborough

**Earl Shilton and Barwell**

4.51 The Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted in 2014 and sets out the development framework for Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) for both settlements. Due to the current stage of both SUEs the adopted AAP is critical in bringing these schemes forward and therefore will be saved as part of this Local Plan.

***SP03: Strategic Site: Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE)***

*Development at the mixed-use Earl Shilton SUE will be in accordance with a site-specific design code. Land at the Earl Shilton SUE is proposed to be allocated for:*

*a) A minimum of 1581 homes, 1581 of which will be delivered within the plan period*



- b) A minimum of 20% affordable housing to be provided on site.*
- c) Up to 5.3ha of employment land, predominantly for industrial and warehousing use within classes B2 and B8 (of which at least 0.5ha would be use class E(g)(i)) and primarily to support local employment opportunities, including starter and grow-on units.*
- d) A neighbourhood centre, including:
  - i. A new primary school;*
  - ii. Local convenience retail provision that is complementary to, but does not detract from, Earl Shilton District Centre;*
  - iii. Community and Recreational facilities (if appropriate and/or equivalent developer contributions towards improving the quality of or increasing capacity at existing facilities); and*
  - iv. A public house or equivalent; and/or nursery provision or other identified community need.**
- e) Local and strategic highway improvements in line with Policy 10 of the AAP.*
- f) Improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and other modes of sustainable travel in line with Policy 11 of the AAP.*
- g) Public realm improvements to Earl Shilton District Centre in line with Policy 19 of the AAP.*
- h) Outdoor Sports provision.*

4.52 Earl Shilton is located close to the A47 and supports Hinckley as a sub-regional centre. A mixed use sustainable urban extension for 1,600 new homes, 4.5 hectares of employment land, a primary school, retail and community facilities is allocated within the Council's current local plan and has brought with it a focus for regeneration within the district centre of Earl Shilton.

4.53 Although the AAP is outdated it does contain useful design guidance and the policy context remains sound. A design code will be created to guide development of this site. In recognition of the dated nature of some elements of the AAP, the Council appointed consultants in 2023 to update the infrastructure requirements set out in the AAP for both SUE's. This Site-Specific Infrastructure Study (SSIS) provides an up-to-date assessment, on a strategic level, of the infrastructure required to deliver the site, an overview of the anticipated delivery mechanisms and the likely cost apportionment associated with delivery. The purpose of the SSIS was to both update the existing evidence base for this site and to assist in the determination of a number of pending planning applications. Stakeholder consultation as part of the SSIS has demonstrated

that overall, the site remains deliverable but due to the long lead in times for such large sites, a pragmatic approach to delivery has been taken. It is anticipated therefore that 1581 dwellings will be delivered from this site over the plan period, with the remaining rolling forward into the next plan period.

- 4.54 The wider Earl Shilton SUE has been granted permission subject to conditions and completion of a S106 agreement. Planning applications 21/01511/OUT and 23/00330/OUT will provide for up to 1500 dwellings across the site and have received a resolution to grant in June 2024. The delivery of these two planning applications will come forward in future reserved matters planning applications in a phased approach.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (2014)

Earl Shilton and Barwell Strategic Urban Extensions Infrastructure Study (August 2023)

Whole Plan Viability Study (2024)

**Which spatial objectives will the policy help deliver?**

The Policy has links to all the strategic objectives of the Local Plan.

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP03 replaces Policy CS Policy 2 in the Local Plan 2003-2026

**SP04: Strategic Site: Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE)**

*Development at the mixed use Barwell SUE will be in accordance with a site-specific design code. Land at the Barwell SUE is proposed to be allocated for:*

- a) *A minimum of 2,500 homes (1420 of which will be delivered within the plan period)*
- b) *A minimum of 20% affordable housing to be provided on site.*
- c) *A minimum of 6.2ha of land for industrial and warehousing use within B2 and B8 use classes, and Class E, to primarily support local employment opportunities, including starter and grow-on units.*
- d) *A neighbourhood centre, including:*
  - i. *New primary school;*
  - ii. *Local convenience retail provision that is complementary to, but does not detract from, Barwell District Centre;*
  - iii. *Community and Recreational facilities (if appropriate and /or equivalent developer contributions towards improving the quality of or increasing capacity at existing facilities);*
  - iv. *Health facilities (if a location in or close to Barwell cannot be secured or additional facilities suitably expanded); and*
  - v. *A public house or equivalent; and/or nursery provision or other identified community need.*
- e) *Local and strategic highway improvements in accordance with Policy 16 of the AAP.*
- f) *Improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in accordance with Policy 17 of the AAP.*
- g) *Public realm improvements to Barwell District Centre in accordance with Policy 19 of the AAP.*
- h) *Outdoor Sports Provision.*

4.55 Barwell is located close to the A47 and supports Hinckley as a sub-regional centre. A mixed use sustainable urban extension (SUE) on the western edge of Barwell comprising 2,500 new homes, 6.2 hectares of employment land, a primary school, health centre, retail and community facilities is allocated within the Council's current Local Plan and has brought with it a focus for regeneration in the district centre of Barwell. This development has outline planning permission (12/00295/OUT) subject to the signing of a Section 106 agreement.



4.56 Some of the figures contained within the AAP are outdated but it does contain useful design guidance, and the policy context remains sound. A design code will be created to guide development of this site. In recognition of the dated nature of some elements of the AAP, the Council appointed consultants in 2023 to update the infrastructure requirements set out in the AAP for both SUE's. This Site-Specific Infrastructure Study (SSIS) provides an up-to-date assessment, on a strategic level, of the infrastructure required to deliver the site, an overview of the anticipated delivery mechanisms and the likely cost apportionment associated with delivery. The purpose of the SSIS was to both update the existing evidence base for this site and to assist in the determination of a number of pending planning applications. Stakeholder consultation as part of the SSIS has demonstrated that overall, the site remains deliverable but due to the long lead in times for such large sites, a pragmatic approach to delivery has been taken. It is anticipated therefore that 1000 dwellings will be delivered from this site over the plan period, with the remaining rolling forward into the next plan period.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (2014)

Earl Shilton and Barwell Strategic Urban Extensions Infrastructure Study (August 2023)

Whole Plan Viability Study (2024)

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

The Policy has links to all the strategic objectives of the Local Plan.

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP04 replaces Policy 3 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

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## 5 Climate Change

- 5.1 Mitigating and adapting to climate change is a key challenge for society and is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council recognises that there is a climate change emergency and is acting to ensure that work takes place to reverse current trends. The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024-28) sets out the actions that the Borough Council will undertake to address the climate change emergency which it declared in July 2019. These include actions the Council can take itself, and how the council can lead others to take steps towards addressing the climate crisis through both influencing behaviours and by creating the policy and regulatory framework to ensure others take appropriate steps. The vision of the Strategy is 'to work towards making HBBC carbon neutral by 2030 (direct council emissions) and ensure the borough is net zero by 2050, considering both production and consumption costs, minimising the environmental impacts of our activities and through our leadership role influence and empower others to take similar actions. To ensure all the Council decisions consider the carbon usage and the resulting impact. We recognise the importance of a healthy and biodiverse environment that ensures our borough's future prosperity and assists the wellbeing of all who live and work in the borough'. The Local Plan is one of the key documents which can aid the accomplishment of this vision and actions contained in the Strategy.
- 5.2 The two main policy responses to climate change are adaptation and mitigation. Adaptation seeks to reduce the risks resulting from climatic changes, for example, considering the future climate risk when allocating development sites and promoting nature-based design responses including green roofs and walls, wetlands forming part of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) to reduce flood risk and the planting of more street trees. Mitigation seeks to reduce the causes of climate change, such as reducing the need to travel, promoting low carbon design approaches or providing opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy technologies. Climate change cannot be considered in isolation and so the Local Plan has weaved adaptation and mitigation measures into policies throughout this Local Plan to ensure that the natural environment is conserved and enhanced, and this is an approach supported by national planning policy.

## **SP05 Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

**Proposals will be supported where they support Hinckley & Bosworth becoming carbon neutral by 2050; through where relevant:**

**Minimising carbon emissions, including by:**

- a. Being located so as to minimise the need to travel and maximise the ability to make trips by sustainable modes of transport;**
- b. Ensuring the most efficient use of land through good design principles; Supporting active design, active travel and sustainable public transport modes to reduce demand for car use;**
- c. Incorporating electric vehicle charging points;**
- d. Ensuring circular economy principles have informed the design and implementation of energy (including heating and cooling), water and waste design in major developments;**
- e. Supporting sustainable construction and design;**
- f. Integrating renewable and low carbon energy generation wherever possible; and**
- g. In the case of existing buildings which are designated and non-designated heritage assets, retrofitting them with measures to reduce energy consumption, in a manner consistent with their heritage interest.**

**Maximising carbon capture and storage and , including by:**

- h. Increasing tree canopy cover across the borough;**
- i. Incorporating green infrastructure, such as trees and woodland, that helps to sequester carbon from the atmosphere; and**
- j. Minimising degradation and erosion of soil.**

**Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, including by:**

- k. Use layout, building orientation, design, and materials to ensure properties are not susceptible to overheating and include open space and vegetation for shading and cooling, and to detain surface water run-off;**
- l. Managing flood risk associated with higher peak river flows and more extreme weather events, and relocating vulnerable uses where appropriate;**
- m. Ensuring high levels of energy and water efficiency in accordance with SP32.**
- n. Creating a better linked habitat network by conserving, creating or enlarging existing habitats and delivering a biodiversity net gain;**
- o. Demonstrate that flood risk from all sources has been mitigated, including use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) following the Drainage Hierarchy and nature-based solutions where appropriate;**
- p. Incorporating recycling and waste reduction both during construction and occupation; and**

**q. Inclusion of high-speed broadband to facilitate home working.**

**Applicants must submit a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate how these principles have been addressed within the development proposal. The level of information provided in the Sustainability Statement should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development.**

- 5.3 Local planning authorities have a binding legal duty to mitigate climate change, established in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Climate Change Act lays down not only the net zero carbon budget by 2050 but also interim 5 yearly carbon budgets which are periodically signed into law. To meet these carbon budgets, changes need to be made not only in the building sector but also through transport, land use and industry. Policy SP05 is the overarching strategic policy for climate change which includes measures to reduce carbon emissions, maximise carbon storage and sequestration and mitigation and adaptation measures which combined will build a climate resilient borough. However, this is not the only policy within the Local Plan which seeks to address climate change; adaptation and mitigation measures have been woven into the Plan to ensure a whole plan approach is taken.
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- 5.4 Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) is a spatial approach to decarbonising an area's energy system that provides decision makers with detailed information needed to support informed policy decisions. A LAEP is in the early stages of development for the County, the Borough Council will seek to use the findings of the Plan to contribute towards delivering net zero.
- 5.5 The Policy requires applicants to submit a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate how the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation have been embedded within the development proposal. A Sustainability Statement will be required for all developments within the borough and should provide details of sustainable design, construction measures and be carbon costed to demonstrate that it will contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions. It is recommended that the BREEAM Communities assessment is undertaken as part of demonstrating how sustainable design has been integrated into the proposal
- 5.6 Further guidance on what should be included in a Sustainability Statement will be provided in the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Validation Requirements for Planning Applications.

### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

This Policy reflects the Council's strategy towards tackling the Climate Change Emergency. The PPG advocates that mitigation and adaptation are the key ways in which climate change can be tackled through the planning process and this should be done by integrating measures throughout the Local Plan.

The NPPF and the PPG

Hinckley & Bosworth Renewable Energy Capacity Study (2014)

Hinckley & Bosworth Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024-28)

Hinckley & Bosworth Climate Change Implications for Local Plan (2021)

UK Government Transport Decarbonisation Plan

TCPA and RTPI: The Climate Crisis – A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change (2021).

### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
3. Infrastructure
5. Transport
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
9. Built Environment and Townscape
10. Positive Planning
11. Land for Development

### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP05 replaces Policies DM 1, 2, 7 and 10 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.



## **SP06 Flood Risk**

***Planning applications for development proposals that require a Flood Risk Assessment will be required to address the actual and residual risk from all forms of flooding and the impact of climate change. The Flood Risk Assessment should be prepared in accordance with national guidance and having regard to local guidance, including the recommendations set out in the Borough Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.***

***Development in areas at risk of flooding will only be supported where it is satisfactorily demonstrated that:***

- a) The Sequential Test has been passed;***
- b) Where required, the Exception Test has been passed;***
- c) The proposed development will not increase the risk of flooding on site or elsewhere, and appropriate floodplain compensation is provided where necessary; and***
- d) The proposed development, including the access and egress, will be safe and resilient to flooding for its lifetime, taking into account the relevant climate change allowances.***

***Where development is permitted within flood risk areas, it must demonstrate that, where required, it will reduce fluvial and surface water flood risk and manage residual risks, address the impacts of climate change through appropriate flood mitigation and adaptation measures, including enhancements to existing defences or provision of new defences.***

**All development proposals should, wherever possible, include measures to reduce and manage surface water in accordance with the principles laid out within the drainage hierarchy through appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and avoiding where possible discharge to the public sewerage system so as to minimise and manage flood risk and improve water quality in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies on climate change and pollution control.**

5.7 The Borough Council are in the process of updating the current Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the findings of this Review will be used to update Policy SP06 Flood Risk. The Borough Council's current Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2020)<sup>28</sup> has not identified high levels of flood risk in Hinckley & Bosworth compared to other parts of the country, and the higher risks relate primarily to surface water and culverted watercourses. The main rivers associated with fluvial flooding in or close to the borough are the River Anker and River Sence, which pose a flood risk to settlements including Sheepy Magna, Shackerstone, Witherley and the outskirts of

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<sup>28</sup> [Overview | Strategic flood risk assessment \(SFRA\) 2020 | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckleybosworth.gov.uk\)](#)

Atherstone. Additionally, there is fluvial flood risk posed to the borough by several smaller watercourses. Within Hinckley and Burbage, the Battle Brook, Harrow Brook and Sketchley Brook pose a fluvial flooding risk. In the east of the borough, the Rothley Brook poses a risk to the urban areas of Groby and Ratby. Groundwater flooding and flooding from reservoirs were identified, but at a lower risk level.

- 5.8 National policy seeks to ensure that flood risk from all sources and flood risk management should be taken into account in preparing local plans and development proposals, including the potential impact from climate change. Climate change can contribute to increases in local flood risk in a number of ways, including rising river levels and surface water run-off, with additional risk of sewer overflow and potential for damage to property and risk to people. Climate change is likely to alter the flood risk profile for the borough, with peak river flow and peak rainfall intensity expected to increase. In addition to national guidance, the Borough Council's SFRA includes local guidance on the impact of climate change on flooding in the borough, including the borough's climate change allowances. Developers should apply the latest Environment Agency climate change guidance and the guidance contained in the SFRA and ensure the development has taken into account climate change adaptation measures. The Borough Council will also use its influence in drawing up flood related public initiatives and interventions, including those of a regional or sub-regional scale, to press for upstream planting and other measures to slow rainwater run-off from hills and fields into rivers that pose a downstream flood risk in Hinckley & Bosworth.

### **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)**

- 5.9 Site-specific FRAs are required in the following circumstances:

- Proposals of one hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1;
- Proposals for new development (including minor development such as non-residential extensions, alterations which do not increase the size of the building or householder developments and change of use) in Flood Zones 2 and 3;
- Proposals for new development (including minor development and change of use) in an area within Flood Zone 1 which has critical drainage problems (as notified to the LPA by the Environment Agency); or
- Where proposed development or a change of use to a more vulnerable class may be subject to other sources of flooding.

An FRA may also be required for some specific situations:

- If the site may be at risk from the breach of a local defence (even if the site is actually in Flood Zone 1);
- Where evidence of historical or recent flood events have been passed to the LPA; or
- In an area of significant surface water flood risk.

- 5.10 FRAs will need to consider the actual and residual flood risk to take account of existing flood and drainage assets, within the site or in proximity of the site that the

development may impact on and benefit from. Actual flood risk is the risk to the site considering existing and any planned flood mitigation measures, either prior to or as a result of new development. Residual risk is the risk that remains after the effects of flood risk infrastructure have been taken into account. It is important that these risks are understood to confirm that the consequences can be safely managed. Further guidance on how actual and residual risk should be considered in FRAs and information regarding existing flood defences and possible issues are provided in the Borough Council's SFRA.

## **Sequential Test**

- 5.11 National policy states that a sequential approach is designed to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding from any source are developed in preference to areas at higher risk. This means avoiding, so far as possible, development in current and future medium and high flood risk areas considering all sources of flooding including areas at risk of surface water flooding.
- 5.12 Developers are required to apply the Sequential Test to all development sites, unless not required through National Planning Practice Guidance and the site is:
- A strategic allocation and the test have already been carried out by the LPA;
  - A change of use (except to a more vulnerable use);
  - A minor development (householder development, small non-residential extensions with a footprint of less than 250m<sup>2</sup>); or
  - A development in flood zone 1 unless there are other flooding issues in the area of the development (e.g. surface water, ground water, sewer flooding).
- 5.13 The Borough Council's SFRA contains information on all sources of flooding and takes into account the impact of climate change. This should be considered when a developer undertakes the Sequential Test, including the consideration of reasonably available sites at lower flood risk.
- 5.14 Policy SP06 requires applicants of non-allocated sites to undertake a sequential test for the settlement and demonstrate this has been passed. If the Exception Test is required, evidence must also be provided that all parts of the test can be met for all developments, through the submission of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). Developers should also apply the sequential approach to locating development within the site. When applying the Sequential Test, applicants should consider whether risk can be avoided through substituting less vulnerable uses or by amending the site layout; demonstrate that less vulnerable uses for the site have been considered and reasonably discounted; and can the layout be varied to reduce the number of people or flood risk vulnerability or building units located in higher risk parts of the site.

## **Exception Test**

5.15 Following the application of the Sequential Test, if it is not possible for the development to be located in areas of lower probability of flooding, the Exception Test must be applied. The Exception Test will be required in the following instances, as defined in the National Planning Practice Guidance:

- The development is classed as more vulnerable development in Flood Zone 3a;
- Essential infrastructure in Flood Zone 3a or 3b; or
- Highly vulnerable development in Flood Zone 2.

5.16 The applicant will need to demonstrate how they have passed both parts of the exception test and the following guidance:

**Demonstrating that the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk** – applicants should have regard to wider sustainability objectives in the Local Plan, including opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, green infrastructure provision - such as riparian woodland planting - climate change adaptation, and social and economic benefits. Applicants should detail the suitability issues the development will address and how undertaking this will outweigh the flood risk concerns for the site.

**Demonstrating that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall** – the site-specific Flood Risk Assessment should demonstrate that the site will be safe, and the people will not be exposed to hazardous flooding from any source. The FRA should consider actual and residual risk and how this will be managed over the lifetime of the development, including the criteria set out in national guidance.

5.17 Consideration should first be given to minimising risk by planning sequentially across a site. Once risk has been minimised as far as possible, only then should mitigation measures be considered. Development proposals will be required to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the site in accordance with relevant climate change policy. These should be considered at an early stage in the design process and be reflected in the site layout. Further flood mitigation measures may be needed for any developments in an area protected by flood defences, where the condition of those defences is 'fair' or 'poor', and where the standard of protection is not of the required standard.

5.18 Management of surface water is an important feature of new development as the increased coverage of impermeable area on a site can increase the rainwater flowing off the site. The introduction of these flows to the public sewerage system can increase the risk of flooding for existing residents. Surface water flows need to be managed sustainably, avoiding connections into the foul or combined sewerage system and where possible directed back into the natural water systems. This follows the Drainage Hierarchy set out in National Planning Practice Guidance to discharge surface water run off as high up the following hierarchy of drainage options as possible:

- into the ground (infiltration);
- to a surface water body;
- to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
- to a combined sewer

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019)

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Leicestershire (LCC 2024)

Leicester City and Leicestershire Strategic Water Cycle Study (JBA 2017)

Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, and Oadby and Wigston Joint Water Cycle Study (progressing 2017)

Hinckley & Bosworth Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Review 2024 (Ongoing)

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

6. Natural Environment

7. Climate Change

10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP06 replaces Policy DM7 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

**SP07 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy**

*The Borough Council is committed to reducing environmental impacts by encouraging and facilitating carbon reduction measures and supporting appropriately designed and sited renewable energy and low carbon developments.*

*Planning applications for the development of renewable energy and low carbon development installations at the domestic, community and commercial scales will be supported where:*

- a) *All reasonable steps have been taken to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts including, but not limited to, landscape, noise, visual and cumulative impacts; and,*
- b) *The proposed development accords with other policies of this Plan*

*The impact of ancillary structures included as part of the proposed scheme will also be assessed.*

- 5.19 The Climate Change Act 2008 adopted a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. National planning policy requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
- 5.20 Statistics published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero show that, within the borough in 2022 renewable energy generation was sourced from photovoltaics and onshore wind producing 53,694 Megawatts per hour (MWh). In 2014 the equivalent data reported that the borough was generating 14,130 MWh from renewable energy sources; showing a 230% increase in renewable energy generation between 2014 and 2022. The borough has therefore significantly increased its renewable energy generation in recent years. However, the delivery of renewable energy developments to provide a meaningful contribution to the UK's renewable energy target remains an ongoing commitment within the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy (2024-2028).
- 5.21 Planning applications for the development of wind energy will be considered in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.
- 5.22 In all other cases, the Renewable Energy Opportunity Area Maps within the Renewable Energy Capacity Study (2014) identify areas that have the greatest potential for energy delivery, based on resource availability with the fewest constraints. These areas should form the primary focus for the location of renewable energy generation technologies, but each site will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, judged on the merit of the proposal, and in line with other policies of the Plan.
- 5.23 The landscape sensitivity of the area to which the proposal relates and the cumulative impacts of the proposed and existing schemes on this sensitivity will be given particular regard. With reference to the Council's latest landscape sensitivity assessment, applicants should demonstrate the area's level of sensitivity and the anticipated impacts of the proposal thereon by preparing a suitable Visual Impact Assessment.
- 5.24 Where development proposals come forward outside of the identified opportunity areas, applicants must demonstrate the suitability of the proposal site in relation to the criteria used in determining the opportunity areas. These criteria are identified in Chapter 3 of the Renewable Energy Capacity Study.
- 5.25 National policy emphasises particular support for community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy development. It is also recognised that such developments can contribute to meeting the renewable energy target, whilst ensuring community support through the delivery of direct benefits to the host community. Such community-led initiatives will be supported even where they fall outside opportunity areas.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

The Policy seeks to achieve renewable and low carbon energy development in accordance with the NPPF and PPG.

Hinckley & Bosworth Renewable Energy Capacity Study 2014

Written Ministerial Statement: Planning - Local Energy Efficiency Standards Update  
Statement made on 13 December 2023

Written Ministerial Statement: Policy Statement on onshore wind made on 8 July 2024

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero Renewable Electricity Generation: (MWh) at  
:Local Authority Level 2022

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP07 replaces Policy DM2 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

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## 6 Place Making and Design

6.1 High quality design extends beyond an area or space being visually appealing, and the implications can be widespread and significant. Poor design continues to be well documented across the country, for example low quality housing, derelict or run-down industrial estates, failing town centres, poor connectivity, loss of or lack of green space,



limited resilience to climate change and the fear of crime or antisocial behaviour. The consequences of poor design are detrimental to the daily quality of life and long-term prospects of the people and communities that live, work and play in those spaces.

- 6.2 Conversely high-quality design can fundamentally enhance social, economic and environmental sustainability. Creating a balanced well-designed development can have significant positive impacts on both the lives of the individuals and the wider community.
- 6.3 It is particularly important that local people are at the start of the process, and at the heart of decision making. The Borough Council will strive for effective engagement between the Local Planning Authority, communities, developers, landowners, applicants and other interested parties throughout the process.
- 6.4 The National Model Design Code, introduced in 2021 following the Building Better, Building Beautiful commission, expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects government's priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design. Together with the Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Guide SPD 2020<sup>29</sup> they will provide a framework for creating first-class places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design, to inform development proposals.

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<sup>29</sup> [The Good Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2020 | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)



### **SP08 High Quality Design**

***The Borough Council will require a high-quality standard of design, architecture, inclusivity and place-making.***

***Development will be supported where it positively takes into consideration Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Guide (Design Code Supplementary Plan), the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, any Design Guide contained in a made neighbourhood plan, and any other relevant national design guidance.***

***Development will be supported where the following requirements are met:***

- a) The development is supported by a Design and Access Statement having regard to the site survey, respecting existing site constraints and design assessment in the Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Guide SPD, which demonstrates the understanding and implementation of local context, distinctiveness and character, including the local pattern of development, building form and landscape character, style details and materials, and the archaeology, history and culture of the local area;***
- b) The amenity and privacy of nearby residents are not materially adversely affected, including by matters of lighting, air quality, odour, noise, vibration and visual intrusion***
- c) The amenity of the proposed users of the development would not be materially adversely affected by activities in the near vicinity of the site, including by matters of lighting, air quality, odour, noise, vibration and visual intrusion***
- d) The development complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regards to scale, layout, density, massing, design, high quality materials and architectural features;***
- e) All elements of the development are designed with climate change in mind, maximising opportunities for active travel and sustainable transport methods to help reduce car dependency, renewable and low/net-zero carbon energy technologies, including electric vehicle charging points, use of sustainable and low-carbon materials where feasible, building in flexibility to respond to change, and mechanisms for reducing energy consumption within buildings;***
- f) Appropriate sustainable drainage solutions have been implemented within the design, including but not limited to wildlife areas, ponds, green roofs, swales, permeable surface materials, rain water harvesting, and tree planting and landscaping;***
- g) Development encourages ease of movement for all users, including people with disabilities, by providing legible, accessible, efficient and safe connections and green infrastructure linkages within the development but also to surrounding streets, communities and neighbouring development;***

- h) The development encourages active design for healthy communities, including both physical health and the well-being of residents, in line with Policy SP09;***
- i) It is designed with logical, legible and inclusive layouts which support active street frontages where appropriate, improves the public realm for all, and provides distinction between public and private space;***
- j) Provides an appropriate level of well-designed and well-located high-quality landscaping, including all new streets to be tree-lined where appropriate, and the implementation of green and/or blue infrastructure in line with, in particular, Policies SP20 and SP28;***
- k) Creates safe, secure and manageable environments which help to reduce opportunities for crime and minimise the fear of crime by providing natural surveillance and functional accesses;***
- l) Ensures a sufficient level of vehicle parking, recycling and waste management that is well- integrated and not the main visual element and***
- m) Residential development shall be provided with an appropriate level of private amenity space having regard to the Good Design Guide SPD or its equivalent replacement.***

- 6.5 Section 12 of the NPPF sets an expectation for all planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide (2021) and the National Model Design Code (2021) (paragraph 133) The NPPF advises that design guides and codes “can be prepared at an area-wide, neighbourhood or site specific scale and to carry weight in decision-making should be produced either as part of a plan or as supplementary planning documents” (paragraph 134). Hinckley & Bosworth has prepared Good Design Guide SPD 2020 which gives further guidance and requirements for developments. This has been reviewed by Design Midlands to evaluate how it reflects Design Code guidance and they have provided recommendations to enable the Borough Council to update this piece of work and potentially adopt it as a whole borough Design Code Supplementary Plan if and when appropriate.
- 6.6 A design guide differs from a design code in being less precise and specific in its content: a code gives clear, unambiguous rules about what is permitted, whereas a guide is more open to interpretation. A design code is a set of clear, specific and unambiguous design requirements. The NPPF makes clear that the geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place and should allow a suitable degree of variety. For example, for a specific site with a masterplan the code should be detailed and specific, whereas a county-wide code may be high level. They can also give developers greater certainty about what may be acceptable when seeking planning permission and can help lead to faster decisions based on whether a proposal complies with a code.
- 6.7 The Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Guide SPD 2020 states that when approaching any form of design, the starting point should always be the people who

will use or be impacted upon by the development, followed by acknowledging the power of the public realm, connectivity and social spaces. Final considerations should then be how the buildings are used to define that place, and how they interact with the space around them and the people who use them. The Hinckley & Bosworth Good Design Guide SPD 2020 will be central to delivering high design quality across the borough. The design guide covers existing residential developments, new residential developments, converting agricultural buildings, commercial/mixed use development and shopfronts. The Design Guide also sets out design objectives that provides the structuring principles that characterise good design. The second half of the document comprises a summary of the design attributes and characteristics that make each of our settlements special, of which we want applicants to acknowledge and enhance through any new development and a basis for policy, we can set out the Local Plan’s vision and expectations for high quality design across the borough for 2020-2041 and beyond. If the Good Design Guide SPD is updated or replaced with an equivalent document, the replacement document will take precedence.

6.8 Proposals for new development will be required through this Policy to show how they will make a positive contribution to high quality design and place making, including arrangements for future maintenance of design features in the public realm. To achieve this, applicants will need to show how they have responded to the design objectives in the Good Design Guide 2020, summarised below in Table 3, in turn demonstrating that their proposal is a suitable response to the site and its setting.

**Table 3: Design Objectives for Hinckley and Bosworth**

Design Objective	
Be FUNCTIONAL – A building or place should:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be fit for purpose and deliver the intended function;</li> <li>▪ Achieve long-term value for money;</li> <li>▪ Be intuitive, comfortable, safe and easy for all to use; and</li> <li>▪ Relate well to its environment.</li> </ul>
Support mixed uses and tenures ensuring a place can be ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY SUCCESSFUL. The community should also have good access to local facilities, encouraging a healthier environment. This should:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce the need for travel;</li> <li>▪ Help social integration between communities; and</li> <li>▪ Allows places and communities respond to change.</li> </ul>

Design Objective	
<p>PUBLIC SPACES such as streets, squares and parks should be AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE to see, use and enjoy. They should be functional, attractive, have both hard and soft landscaping, and have efficient and legible connections. This will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bring neighbourhoods together providing space for social interaction;</li> <li>▪ Provide good accessibility to light, air, and the public realm/setting of the surrounding buildings; and</li> <li>▪ Make a space interesting and exciting; public art, seating, play equipment can play an important role in this.</li> </ul>
<p>Be ADAPTABLE and RESILIENT to changing circumstances and demands, to ensure efficient use of resources and stability of an area. Changing conditions can include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working and shopping practices;</li> <li>▪ Demographic and household changes;</li> <li>▪ Climate change;</li> <li>▪ Change of building use;</li> <li>▪ Construction methods; and</li> <li>▪ Safety and maintenance.</li> </ul>
<p>Have DISTINCTIVE character which makes a space SPECIAL and VALUED, linked into the way an area works, its history, culture and need for change. Physical attributes on a site that can contribute to this include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local pattern of development;</li> <li>▪ Building forms, details and materials;</li> <li>▪ Style and vernacular;</li> <li>▪ Landform, gardens, parks, trees and plants; and</li> <li>▪ Wildlife habitats and micro-climates.</li> </ul>
<p>Be ATTRACTIVE and BEAUTIFUL using all of the senses. Streetscapes, landscapes, buildings and elements within them all have an influence on the beauty of a place. Other more momentary or emotional elements can make a significant impact overall, such as:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Light and shadow;</li> <li>▪ Cleanliness; Colour;</li> <li>▪ Texture; and</li> <li>▪ Shapes and patterns.</li> </ul>
<p>Encourage EASE OF MOVEMENT. The success of a place can be greatly attributed to the ability to move freely, safely and efficiently. Routes through and out of a development must:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be legible and easy;</li> <li>▪ Closely fit with preferred lines of travel; and</li> <li>▪ Connect with each other and the wider community.</li> </ul>

6.9 The Good Design Guide SPD sets out in more detail what is required in the various criteria of Policy SP08. In particular, more detail behind criteria m relating to private amenity space can be found in the Good Design Guide SPD. New residential development should also be designed with sufficient private external space to promote health and wellbeing. Private amenity space can include elements such as separation distances like back-to-back and back-to-side distances, garden proportions, and other

ways of incorporating private amenity space into a design such as balconies, terraces, courtyards etc.

- 6.10 Criteria j regarding tree lined streets is in response to the Government's Building Better Building Beautiful agenda, and the amendments made to the NPPF following the publication of the National Model Design Code. NPPF paragraph 136 now states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, with further clarification stating this would apply unless in specific cases where there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons as to why this would be inappropriate.
- 6.11 In addition to our local Good Design Guide SPD, made neighbourhood plans may also include more locally specific design characteristics, design policy, and/or design guide. These should be taken into account where applicable.
- 6.12 Overall, Hinckley & Bosworth is aiming to deliver sustainable developments that are beautiful, efficient and fit-for-purpose, designed in a way that delivers the intended function, whilst being intuitive and flexible enough to respond to economic, social, environmental and technological change.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

The Good Design Guide 2020 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)  
The emerging National Model Design Code and relevant changes to the NPPF.

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
5. Transport
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP08 replaces Policy DM10 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP10 Preventing Pollution**

**Adverse impacts from pollution will be prevented by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate that:**

- a. It will not adversely impact on the water quality of waterbodies, groundwater and surface water, and will not prevent waterbodies and groundwater from achieving a good status in the future and contribute positively to the environment and ecology. Where development has the potential to directly or indirectly pollute groundwater, a groundwater risk assessment will be needed to support a planning application;**
- b. If located within the hydrological catchment of the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, development proposals will be required to demonstrate nutrient neutrality;**
- c. Appropriate containment solutions for oils, fuels and chemicals are provided;**
- d. All reasonable steps are taken through design, siting and technological solutions to ensure the abatement of obtrusive light to avoid sky glow, glare and light spillage and intrusion. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be required for proposed developments that fall in to the E1 (Natural) area, as set out in the latest Environmental Zones Map;**
- e. It would not cause noise or vibrations of a level which would disturb areas that are valued for their tranquillity in terms of recreation or amenity. Development proposals that generate significant levels of noise must be accompanied by a scheme to mitigate such effects, having regard to the nature of surrounding uses;**
- f. Appropriate remediation of contaminated land in line with minimum national standards is undertaken;**
- g. It will not adversely and significantly impact air quality in terms of additional fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), nitrogen oxides and ammonia levels which can be damaging to the natural environment;**
- h. It will not result in land instability or further intensify existing unstable land; and**
- i. The development does not create or exacerbate flooding by being located away from areas of flood risk unless adequately mitigated against in line with National Policy and Policy SP06.**

6.13 The control of pollution is fundamental to ensure development does not result in adverse impacts upon people's quality of life or quality of the environment as it can cause poor health and environmental degradation. Whilst pollution control is administered by a number of regulatory bodies and organisations such as the Environment Agency, the planning system has an equally important role to play in complementing the statutory responsibilities of these bodies and to seek improvements through development proposals such as the remediation of contaminated and unstable land.

- 6.14 The effects of development that might cause the release of pollutants to water, land or air, or from noise, dust, vibration, light, odour or heat, are material considerations when deciding whether or not to grant planning permission. The planning system has an important role to play in preventing new and existing development from contributing to or being put at an unacceptable risk from various sources of pollution or where proposals result in land instability, including the consideration of cumulative effects. Development can however offer opportunities to remediate and mitigate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land and result in improved environments.
- 6.15 The Borough Council will apply relevant legislation and guidance and liaise with pollution control authorities including the Coal Authority in considering proposals for development which have the potential to pollute or result in land instability.

### **Nutrient Neutrality**

- 6.16 The north western tip of the borough, north of Twycross, stands within the catchment area of the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In 2022, alongside other local planning authorities in Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Warwickshire, advice was received from Natural England in relation to nutrient neutrality for developments in the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment.
- 6.17 For development which may affect the integrity of the River Mease SAC, Natural England has advised that certain types of new development should only be approved if it can be demonstrated that they are nutrient neutral. The Policy therefore makes clear that relevant proposals within the hydrological catchment of the River Mease SAC must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. This catchment will be identified as a Nutrient Neutrality Zone on the future proposals map.
- 6.18 Relevant proposals are those which would:
- result in a net increase in population served by a waste water system; or
  - have the potential to release additional nitrogen or phosphorus into the surface or ground water system.

### **Noise Pollution**

- 6.19 National policy<sup>30</sup> seeks to avoid, mitigate and minimise the adverse impacts on health and quality of life arising from noise from new development and, where possible, encourages schemes which can contribute to improvements to amenity by using development to mitigate against existing impacts.
- 6.20 National guidance states<sup>31</sup> that consideration should be given to whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and whether or not a good standard of amenity

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<sup>30</sup> NPPF (2023) and Noise Policy Statement for England (2010)

<sup>31</sup> Noise Policy Statement for England (DEFRA, 2010)

can be achieved. The noise exposure hierarchy can be used as guidance to determine whether noise is likely to be a concern<sup>32</sup>.

- 6.21 Rural and tranquil areas are more sensitive to disturbance from noise where the ambient noise levels are lower compared to urban areas. National policy specifies that planning policies should identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are valued for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.
- 6.22 The Borough Council considers natural and semi-natural open spaces, the Ashby Canal and Bosworth Battlefield to be areas of tranquillity as they are identified for their recreational, biodiversity and heritage conservation value. The Canal in particular is characterised by slow moving narrow boats, walking and cycling. Cemeteries and churchyards provide a place for quiet contemplation, relaxation and a haven for wildlife and these spaces are also considered areas of tranquillity.

## Light Pollution

- 6.23 Light pollution (also known as obtrusive light) is caused by excessive artificial light being directed into the night sky. Outdoor lighting can cause intrusive and unnecessary light pollution in urban, suburban and rural areas, although it is in the open countryside that light pollution is most noticeable. Excessive artificial light at night is visually intrusive impacting on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, nature conservation and can cause physiological problems, in addition to it being a significant waste of energy. It is therefore vital to ensure appropriate controls on external lighting to avoid or mitigate against these adverse effects.
- 6.24 The guidance notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light 2021<sup>33</sup> identifies forms of obtrusive light which may cause nuisance to others, or adversely affect fauna and flora as well as waste money and energy. These are defined as:
- Sky Glow, which is the brightening of the night sky;
  - Glare, the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a darker background; and
  - Light spill, the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the area being lit, inclusive of light intrusion where this causes a nuisance to others.
- 6.25 The guidance identifies environmental zones and corresponding lighting environments and recommends that these zones are specified in development plans. The Borough Council will publish an updated Light Zone map prior to adopting the Plan to reflect the differing levels of light as defined in the guidance. The recommended light levels identified for each zone within the guidance both pre curfew (before 23:00 Hrs) and post curfew (07:00 Hrs) should be followed and applied as part of this Policy.
- 6.26 The reduction of light pollution should not compromise crime prevention and public safety and alternative technological solutions should be explored to ensure these elements are not compromised whilst also mitigating against obtrusive light.

## Air Pollution

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<sup>32</sup> Planning Policy Guidance paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 30-005-20190722 – Noise Exposure Hierarchy Table

<sup>33</sup> Institute of Lighting Professional – Guidance Note 01/20 – Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (2021)



6.27 Air pollution is the release of greenhouse gas and other emissions, dust, fumes, odours and particulates being released into the atmosphere resulting in adverse impacts on health, amenity and the natural environment. The DEFRA Air Quality Strategy (2023)<sup>34</sup> highlights that air pollutants of particular concern include fine particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and ammonia and most action should be directed towards these three pollutants.



6.28 Particulate matter is everything in the air that is not a gas. The size of airborne particles governs their behaviour. The Environment Act 2021 established the requirement for long term targets to be set for fine particulate matter and these have been set through the Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023. The legislation encompasses both PM<sub>10</sub> (particles under 10 micrometres comprising both fine and coarse particulate matter) and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, (particles under 2.5 micrometres or fine particulate matter). This Policy focuses on PM<sub>2.5</sub> in consistency with the Regulations and the Air Quality Strategy recognising the widespread impact this pollutant has.

6.29 Nitrogen oxides are gases which are generally emitted from high-temperature combustion processes. The main sources of Nitrogen Oxides are from transport and can impact human health (respiratory diseases) as well as damaging biodiversity.

6.30 Ammonia is a reactive gas which impacts biodiversity. It also reacts with other chemicals in the air to form particulate matter. The borough is rural in nature and the main source of this pollutant in the UK is agriculture.

6.31 Impacts can arise from construction, demolition and site works, related transport movements, industrial processes and agriculture, particularly livestock farming. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that new development should not result in adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts upon air quality. Appropriate construction design and mitigation measures, appropriate distances and screening between developments and sensitive uses will protect the amenity of residents and workers and the environment.

## **Contamination of water and land**

6.32 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) demands that headline water issues such as the availability of water supplies, maintaining the quality of water in rivers and managing flood risk are considered as a whole rather than addressed in isolation. The planning system can contribute to meeting these demands by providing the policy framework and permitting appropriate schemes which conform but also seek to contribute to the objectives of the WFD.

6.33 The key concepts underpinning the WFD are integrated river basin planning and management. All parts of the water cycle are connected, and actions in one part of a river basin can impact in other parts. Integrated River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) aim to avoid the difficulties that can result from a piecemeal approach to water management. Hinckley & Bosworth lies within the Humber River Basin District. The

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<sup>34</sup> DEFRA Air Quality Strategy (2023)

respective River Basin Management Plan<sup>35</sup> includes a number of environmental objectives including the prevention of the deterioration of the status of surface and ground water; good status for all water bodies; reversing any significant and sustained upward trends in groundwater pollutant concentrations; cessation of discharges; emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances into surface waters; and reducing the pollution of groundwater or limiting the entry of pollutants. The core environmental aims of the WFD and RBMP applicable to the borough are to prevent the deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and protect, enhance and restore polluted waters and groundwater.

- 6.34 Contamination of land or groundwater can result from land formerly used for development or inappropriate uses and/or water management techniques. Land formerly used for industrial or waste management purposes could contain contaminants which can escape from the site and result in water pollution or pollution of nearby land. National policy reaffirms that where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner, through appropriate remediation. Groundwater Source Protection Zones (GSPZs) protect areas of groundwater used for drinking water. The majority of the borough is outside of a source protection zone. There is a small area of rural land to the north-west of the borough which is within Zone 3 (total catchment). Depending on the type and location of development in proximity of the SPZs only certain types of SuDS may be appropriate and will need to be agreed with the Environment Agency.
- 6.35 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies several recommendations regarding the provision of SuDS for multiple benefits, including the benefit of improving water quality. The use of SuDS is explored further as part of relevant climate change policy.
- 6.36 The use or storage of substances such as oils, fuels and chemicals pose a risk to watercourses and groundwater resources through surface water run-off, from leakage and inadequate storage measures. Where a development proposal poses a risk of contamination, remedial action will be necessary. To this end, appropriate conditions may be imposed requiring certain remedial measures prior to construction or appropriate design and wastewater management schemes. As a minimum, development proposals should ensure that in the future land will not be designated as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Where development proposals pose a risk to the deterioration in water quality, the Borough Council will seek the appropriate measures to ensure development does not compromise the objectives of the RBMP and where possible, contributes to improvements to water quality status.
- 6.37 The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies a number of strategic solutions, primarily concerned with managing flood risk in the borough but also identifies measures addressing potential adverse impacts on water quality and/or supply. The vision for flood risk and drainage in the borough seeks to manage flood risk with wider environmental and water quality enhancements. Strategic solutions that may be appropriate include integrated major infrastructure/flood risk management schemes and watercourse improvements as part of regeneration and enhancing green infrastructure with opportunities for natural flood management and retrofitting SuDS.

## **Land Instability**

- 6.38 The borough has existing deep coal resources and a history of coal mining around the north-east of the borough, although there are currently no active coal mines in the

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<sup>35</sup> Humber River Basin District River Basin Management Plan (2022)

area. Whilst most past mining land is generally benign in nature, potential public safety and stability problems can be triggered and uncovered by development activities.

- 6.39 Within the Borough Council area there are approximately 13 recorded mine entries and around seven high risk areas for development identified on the Coal Authority's Interactive Map Service. The mining industry legacy is concentrated in the north of the plan area around Merry Lees, Bagworth and Wiggs Farm.
- 6.40 It is noted that ground instability can and does arise from a wide range of natural and man-made features and not solely from coal mining.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Institute of Lighting Professional – Guidance Note 01/20 – Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (2021)

Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (2019)

Noise Policy Statement for England (DEFRA, 2010)

Air Quality Strategy for England DEFRA 2023

Environment Act 2021

Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023

Relevant policy within NPPF and PPG

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
10. Positive Planning

#### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP10 replaces Policy DM7 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP11 Health and Well-being**

***Development proposals will promote, support and enhance positive mental and physical health and wellbeing and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. Where any potential adverse impacts are identified, they will need to be addressed and mitigated in an appropriate manner.***

***Proposals for major development, or other development likely to have a potentially significant health impact in relation to either its use and/or location, will be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) having regard to the most up to date guidance from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) , and/or locally adopted standard procedures. The level of information required should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. Development proposals should demonstrate how the conclusions of the HIA have been taken into account in the design of the scheme.***

***Development that would have an unacceptable impact on the health or wellbeing of existing or new communities will not be permitted.***

6.41 Good health is not just the absence of illness it also relates to a person's level of physical and mental health, and the extent to which individuals in a society are enabled to live healthy and flourishing lives. One of the Borough Council's priorities in the Corporate Plan (2024 – 2028) under the theme 'People' is to 'help people to stay healthy, happy and active and continue to provide initiatives that support children and young people, older people and our vulnerable residents'. In order to do this, we have stated that we will do the following which have links to the Local Plan:

- Improve the quality existing homes and increase the availability of affordable housing,
- Work to prevent all forms of homelessness, support workplace health initiatives,
- Promote and deliver a wide range of health preventative health interventions,
- Maximise opportunities to participate in physical activity working with sports and health partners,
- Deliver housing related health projects; and
- Be proactive in tackling emerging community safety threats, work with partners to prevent and reduce incidence of violence, including domestic violence.

6.42 Over the last two decades, government policies have aimed to tackle the clear and growing evidence of a rising tide of avoidable ill-health and the continued health gap between those most and least deprived. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) is the government's overarching planning framework which brings together health and planning. This gives emphasis to health and sets out the government's requirements for the planning system as far as it is relevant,

proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF identifies in Chapter 8 a requirement for planning policies and decisions to “enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs”.

- 6.43 A healthy place is one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments whilst reducing health inequalities for people of all ages. Healthy places should also provide communities with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, support community engagement and wellbeing in inclusive ways, whilst promoting social interaction. The NPPG suggests the use of Health Impact Assessment (HIA) can be useful tool where there are expected to be significant impacts.
- 6.44 Tackling health and well-being is a multi-agency approach. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022 – 2032) was prepared by the Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Board, and is made up of local councillors, GPs, health and social care officials and representatives of patients and the public. This Strategy outlines the Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Board’s approach to reducing health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Leicestershire. One of the commitments in the strategy is to *‘collaborate with the Leicestershire planning system and developers to explore a new approach the design of our residential, employment and town centre environments to increase active travel, green infrastructure and reduction in motorised transport’*. The strategy also seeks to embed a health and equality in all policies approach by partners and across a range of wider determinants of health. This approach is sits hand in hand with the production and preparation of the Local Plan, along with providing justification and evidence for the policy approach around HIA.
- 6.45 The Local Plan has a crucial role to play in ensuring that opportunities exist for people to be able to make healthier lifestyle choices and address health inequalities. Research has shown that socio-economic and physical environments can determine up to two thirds of health outcomes in our populations. Focusing on these ‘wider determinants of health’ such as our homes and the wider built environment is essential for improving population health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities.
- 6.46 A HIA gives the opportunity to ensure the creation of sustainable developments for the community by:
- Demonstrating that health impacts have been properly considered when preparing, evaluating and determining development proposals;
  - Ensuring developments contribute to the creation of a strong, healthy and just society;
  - Helping applicants to demonstrate that they have worked closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community;
  - Identifying and highlighting any beneficial impacts on health and wellbeing of a development scheme; and

- Identifying and acting to minimise any negative impacts on health and wellbeing of a development scheme.

6.47 A HIA is required for all major development, or other development likely to have a potentially significant health impact in relation to either its use and/or location. Leicestershire County Council are working to establish a standard HIA procedure for Leicestershire around health considerations in planning and have been working closely with HBBC to prepare a supporting paper for the Local Plan setting out the approach to HIA as part of the statutory plan making process and in developing more detailed HIA policy. This work will continue throughout the Local Plan process and the collaboration around HIA matters is set out further in the Duty to Cooperate.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Corporate Plan 2024-2028

Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2023

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JNSA, 2022-2025)

The Hinckley and Bosworth Community Health and Wellbeing Plan (2023-2036)

Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning: a guide for local authority public health and planning teams (October 2020)

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
3. Infrastructure
8. Achieving Good Design
10. Positive Planning

#### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for the Local Plan.

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## 7 Housing to Meet Different Needs

### SP13 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Proposals for new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches, plots or sites will be supported where:

They are located within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell, Earl Shilton, a Key Rural Centre or Rural Village, or are extensions to existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites and

- a. Provide a safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to the site and sufficient space for parking and vehicle manoeuvring and storage.
- b. Provide for convenient access to schools, shops, healthcare and other local facilities, preferably by walking, cycling or by public transport.
- c. Provide appropriate landscaping to maintain visual amenity and provide privacy for occupiers.
- d. Provide a safe and healthy environment for residents.
- e. Include an appropriate level of essential services including access to drinking water, electricity, refuse storage and collection and sewage disposal.
- f. Are sympathetic to its surroundings and do not have an unacceptably adverse effect on the character or appearance of the locality.
- g. Plots for Travelling Showpeople are of sufficient size to enable the storage, repair and maintenance of equipment.

- 7.1 The council will prepare a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and is working with partners to identify and allocate suitable sites to meet the identified needs as contained in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2024.
- 7.2 It is important to ensure that provision is made for the housing needs of a range of specific groups including Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 7.3 The Government's Planning Policy for Gypsy and Traveller Sites (PPTS 2015) sets out that in preparing their Local Plan, local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers, and plot targets for travelling show people, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area.
- 7.4 Local Planning authorities should:
  - Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets.

- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and where possible for years 11-15.
- Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density.
- Protect local amenity and environment.

7.5 A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is currently being prepared to update previous evidence. This will give the council a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs in the Hinckley and Bosworth Area. The assessment report is due later this year and its findings will be set out in the Regulation 19 submission version of the Local Plan. There is a pipeline of current pitches which will meet the requirement for pitches for the period 2024 – 29. Future need over the plan period will be met through windfall pitch developments which come forward and a call for sites will be carried out as part of the monitoring of the land supply if required.

7.6 The criteria will be applied to all applications for new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches plots and sites. This includes applications for temporary stopping places and transit sites, which will still be required to meet all of the criteria, although the level of facilities provided on site should be appropriate to the type of site proposed.

7.7 It is important that accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople provides a suitable living environment with access to important services and facilities. Sites should be designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the local area whilst ensuring sufficient provision is made for the storage of vehicles and equipment with particular regard to the needs of Travelling Showpeople.



## 8 Economic Prosperity

- 8.0 Evidence from the Employment Land and Premises Study 2024 indicates the borough has a sufficient supply of employment land to meet needs up to 2041. Employment land monitoring reports for the period 2020-2023 indicate that 19.43ha have been completed to date. There is 66ha available based on sites with planning permission and land that's available for development throughout the borough on existing employment sites. 24.53ha is available at MIRA for specialist automotive uses related to the site's enterprise zone status, 28.37ha for strategic B8 use and 13.08ha remaining for general employment purposes.
- 8.1 Whilst there is adequate supply overall (66ha) for the plan period, econometric forecasting indicates that for some sectors, there is likely to be an additional requirement for general employment land in the region of between 33ha to 55ha. The proposed allocations identified in Policy SP02 total 109.25ha, 43.25ha more than is required for the purposes of evidenced general employment requirements. The sites at Cliffe Hill Farm (M1J22), Wiggs Farm and Wapping and Harrow Farm have the potential to contribute to strategic B8 requirements, however at the time of writing this Policy it remains unclear what the strategic B8 requirements for HBBC may be.
- 8.2 Strategic B8 requirements for Leicester and Leicestershire are still emerging and are dependent on the outcome of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) which is still being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. The strategic B8 requirement will therefore be identified in the Regulation 19 plan in due course. Table 4 below sets out the elements that make up the employment land provision in Policy SP02.
- 8.3 Up to 5.3ha and 6.5ha of employment land are allocated as part of the mixed-use Earl Shilton and Barwell SUEs respectively for B2/B8 purposes.

**Table 4: Hinckley & Bosworth Employment Land Provision (2020–2041)**

A	Employment land completions 2020–2023	19.43ha
B	Remaining employment land supply	66ha
C	Evidenced general employment land need	33–55ha
D	Land allocated for general employment use in Policy SP02	109.25ha
E	Strategic B8 employment allocation (unknown at this time, to be included in the Regulation 19)	0ha
F	Total employment land provision (2020–2041) (A+B+D+E)	194.68ha

- 8.4 There are a number of existing employment areas in the borough which already meet the needs for a range of employment opportunities. These sites need to be protected for such purposes going forward and further detail will be set out in due course in the Regulation 19 plan.

8.5 Due to the outstanding evidence for Strategic B8 employment, and the outcome of the HNRFI, the Policy for Scale and Distribution for Employment Sites will be determined in the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

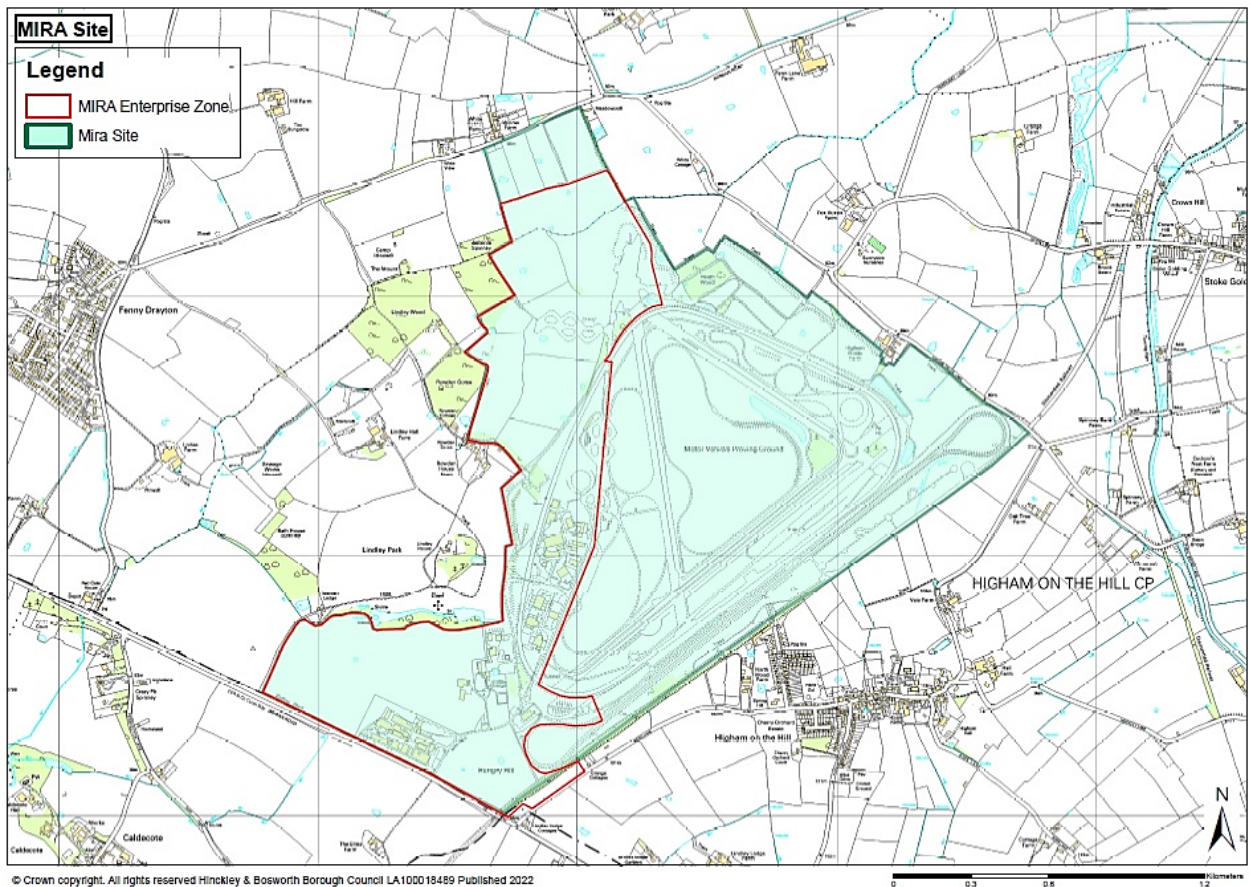
**SP16 Strategic Site: MIRA Enterprise Zone**

***Within the MIRA site in Figure 1, the Borough Council will continue to support high quality employment (in line with the overall strategy of the Enterprise Zone), as follows:***

- a) The Borough Council will support proposals on site for employment development related to the business sectors associated with the Enterprise Zone including automotive research, development and innovation.***
- b) Other uses may be supported on site where:***
  - i. These support the preferred business sectors;***
  - ii. Do not undermine the functionality of the wider MIRA site;***
  - iii. The traffic generated does not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety or the operation of the highway network; and***
  - iv. The scale and appearance of the development is compatible with the character of its surroundings.***
- c) Non-employment uses will not be supported unless they meet the criteria in Policy SP17(b), and there is a clear and evidenced need for their location within the site.***

***The council also identifies a minimum of 24ha of available developable land within MIRA Enterprise Zone, as detailed in the most up to date Employment Land and Premises Study. Proposals for the development of employment uses on this available land within MIRA Enterprise Zone will be supported where they accord with other policies of the Local Plan.***

**Figure 1: MIRA Site Boundary**



- 8.1 Situated in the geographic centre of the UK, MIRA site extends over 345 hectares and has over 40 major companies on site. It is a unique world-renowned facility and incorporates the largest technology park in Europe. It enables a collaborative environment where businesses engaged in research and development within the transport sector can establish a technical presence in the UK.
- 8.2 The site comprises of a proving ground test track, Connected and Autonomous Vehicle testing facilities and associated services, major laboratory facilities, serviced office suites, workshops, bespoke stand-alone research & developments facilities and a Technology Institute and is continually expanding to suit all requirements.
- 8.3 MIRA was awarded Enterprise Zone status in August 2011 by the UK government and is the only transport sector focused Enterprise Zone in the UK. The Government introduced Enterprise Zones with many benefits, including removing barriers for growth, alongside business rates discounts, unrivalled locality, simplified planning and access to a large skilled workforce.
- 8.4 The Council is proud to host MIRA Technology Park in the borough, in particular because it offers a range of skilled jobs for the local workforce, and globally recognised research and development. The Midlands is strong in advanced manufacturing and engineering so the 19 Universities that work with the technology park and the MIRA

Technology Institute (opened in 2018) ensure future talent availability in this sector, whilst encouraging young people to consider skilled career choices when moving through education on to their future careers.

8.5 The Borough Council will work closely with MIRA to determine the boundary of the special policy area and to confirm their aspirations for growth and development, therefore the boundary is subject to change. The borough will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that we are delivering a strategy that works for everyone. We will co-



operate closely with other local authorities, such as Nuneaton & Bedworth and North Warwickshire where our administrative boundary immediately abuts the southern extent of the A5 Watling Street, which is the main access for MIRA's facilities.

8.6 It is important to note the proximity of the MIRA site to nationally important and internationally significant registered Bosworth Battlefield. Whilst the Enterprise Zone may not encroach upon the battlefield, the significance of the battlefield may be detrimentally affected by ill-considered development within its setting, therefore the Borough Council will work with MIRA on any proposed development to ensure there are no significant detrimental impacts on Bosworth Battlefield.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Employment Land and Premises Study (2024)

Hinckley & Bosworth Economic Regeneration Strategy (2021-2025)

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

10. Positive Planning

11. Land for Development

12. Economic Growth and Resilience

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for the Local Plan.

**Strategic Rail Freight Interchange**

8.7 A proposal for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange close to Hinckley is at the pre-

application stage of the Development Consent Order process, which is with the Government as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. This means a decision on whether or not to grant permission for the proposal will be made by the Government rather than the relevant local authorities. The site is to the south and east of Hinckley & Bosworth borough and, although it is known as the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI), the majority of the site falls within the administrative area of Blaby District Council. The proposals for the HNRFI include industrial and storage/distribution units, a rail port and lorry park, dedicated road access directly from Junction 2 of the M69 and associated highway works, and landscaping including footpath and cycle links.

- 8.8 A proposal for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange close to Hinckley has been submitted through the Development Consent Order process, which is with the Government as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). A public Examination into the application was opened in September 2023 and concluded in March 2024. Through the Examination, the Borough Council in partnership with Blaby District Council and Leicestershire County Council (as Highways authority) gave evidence and expressed concerns over the proposals, their suitability for the location and impacts on the strategic road network and Burbage Common which lies adjacent to the site. No initial decision has been made at this time.

## 9 Town, District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres

- 9.0 The Council is proud of its achievements over the years in our town, district, local and neighbourhood centres. As such, one of the Council's main ambitions is to continue support the development of our centres to ensure their continued vitality and viability, but also ensure the delivery of several key sites within Hinckley's Town Centre.
- 9.1 These aims are reflected in national and local policy. To achieve these aims, a hierarchy of town, district, local and neighbourhood centres has been defined to allow them to grow and diversify in ways that are appropriate for the scale and range of uses offered and the settlements for which they serve. The settlement centre hierarchy<sup>36</sup> is currently defined in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Centre Hierarchy Definition as per the District Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review**

Centre Hierarchy Centre Definition	
Town Centre	Area including the primary shopping area and area predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area
District Centres	Comprise of a group of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore and a range of non-retail services such as banks, building societies and restaurants, community facilities such as libraries and other retail uses that all contribute to meeting the day-to-day needs of the community that would be served by the centre
Local Centres	Include a range of small shops generally serving urban communities and larger rural villages or similar. Typically, local centres might include a convenience store, newsagent and post office, amongst other more essential retail and non-retail uses
Neighbourhood Centres	A small parade or group of small shops of purely neighbourhood significance which are not regarded as centres within the NPPF. They are considered to be important to the local community to meet their day-to-day needs. Neighbourhood centres are particularly important in Rural Villages which often rely on the small number of retail uses and services

- 9.2 In the settlement centre hierarchy, Hinckley is classed as a Town Centre and recognised as 'the heart' of the borough. The borough has three District Centres, Earl Shilton, Barwell and Market Bosworth with Earl Shilton District Centre forming the

<sup>36</sup> As listed in the District Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review (2015)

largest of the three. There are 9 Local Centres and 14 Neighbourhood Centres in the borough. The breakdown of these centres can be seen in the Table 6 below.

**Table 6: Current Classification of Town/District/Local/Neighbourhood Centres<sup>37</sup>**

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Centres</b>
<b>Town Centres</b>	<i>Hinckley</i>
<b>District Centres</b>	<i>Barwell Earl Shilton Market Bosworth</i>
<b>Local Centres</b>	<i>Barlestone Village Centre, Burbage Boyslade Road, Burbage Windsor Street. Groby Village Centre, Hinckley Clifton Way, Hinckley Rugby Road, Markfield Main Street, Newbold Verdon Village Centre, Ratby Village Centre.</i>
<b>Neighbourhood Centres</b>	<i>Burbage Atkins Way, Burbage Brookside, Burbage Church Street, Burbage Rainbow Way Desford High Street, Desford St Martins Drive Earl Shilton Belle Vue Road Groby Laundon Way, Groby Lawnwood Road,</i>

<sup>37</sup> To be reviewed in the updated District Local and Neighbourhood Centres Review.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Centres</b>
	<p><i>Hinckley Coventry Road and Northfield Road,</i></p> <p><i>Hinckley Trent Road,</i></p> <p><i>Hinckley Tudor Road,</i></p> <p><i>Markfield Chitterman Way,</i></p> <p><i>Stoke Golding High Street and Station Road.</i></p>

9.3 As a result, it is intended that the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will have a Town and District Centres policy/policies, which will be designed to promote the vitality and viability of Town, District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres.

It will be supported by key pieces of evidence, including an updated District Local and Neighbourhood Centres Review, Community Facilities Review, and Town Centre Strategy & Masterplan. The policy will respond positively to changes in national policy and national targets, and to the ongoing change in the state of the retail market and high street sustainability.



The Policy will embrace the idea that vitality of town centres requires flexibility for the market to respond to new interests; it will seek to promote a concentration of a wider mix of town centre uses. It will also encourage residential use in centres; this will improve the health and vitality of centres by introducing additional custom, footfall outside of trading hours and a presence of people to aid surveillance and reduce crime. However, the Borough Council will ensure that residential uses will be located in the most appropriate places, ensuring that core shopping fronts are sustained where appropriate. Through the development of the policy and through the update to key evidence, the borough will explore the introduction of Article 4 directions to withdraw permitted development rights for residential use in appropriate locations.

9.4 To maintain the health and vitality of the centres, the Borough Council will employ a multi-disciplinary approach involving town centre management, promotion of tourism, arts, leisure, culture, sport and education, investment in improvements to street infrastructure including better facilities and connections for active travel. Collaboration with landowners, businesses and other operators in centres will be sought including the creation and support of business improvement districts as appropriate. Collaboration with other council team's will also be key to delivery, such as Cultural and Leisure Services and Green Spaces.



9.5 Furthermore, the regeneration and sustainability of Hinckley Town Centre will be supported through preparation of a Hinckley Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan which will support the Local Plan. This will address the following planning matters:

- Promote the town centre as a destination for shopping, leisure, tourism, culture, health and education and as a place to live;
- Review the town centre area boundary;
- Review the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) and Core Frontages to promote the concentration of active town centre uses in the heart of the town centre;
- Identify spatial opportunities for new development of all main town centre uses and other appropriate uses including health, education and residential use;
- Seek to enhance the cultural and heritage offer of the centre;
- Promote the evening economy;
- Improve Hinckley's tourism offer, including improved visitor facilities that complement the wider visitor attractions of the borough;
- Encourage provision of centrally located accommodation for overnight stays with appropriate provision or arrangements for car parking;
- Seek to improve the public realm, including streets and spaces for activities and events;
- Seek to enhance the quality of key approaches and gateways into the town centre;
- Improve active travel connectivity with surrounding neighbourhoods, employment areas and open spaces; and
- Promote the attractiveness, accessibility and inclusivity of the centre to all age and user groups.

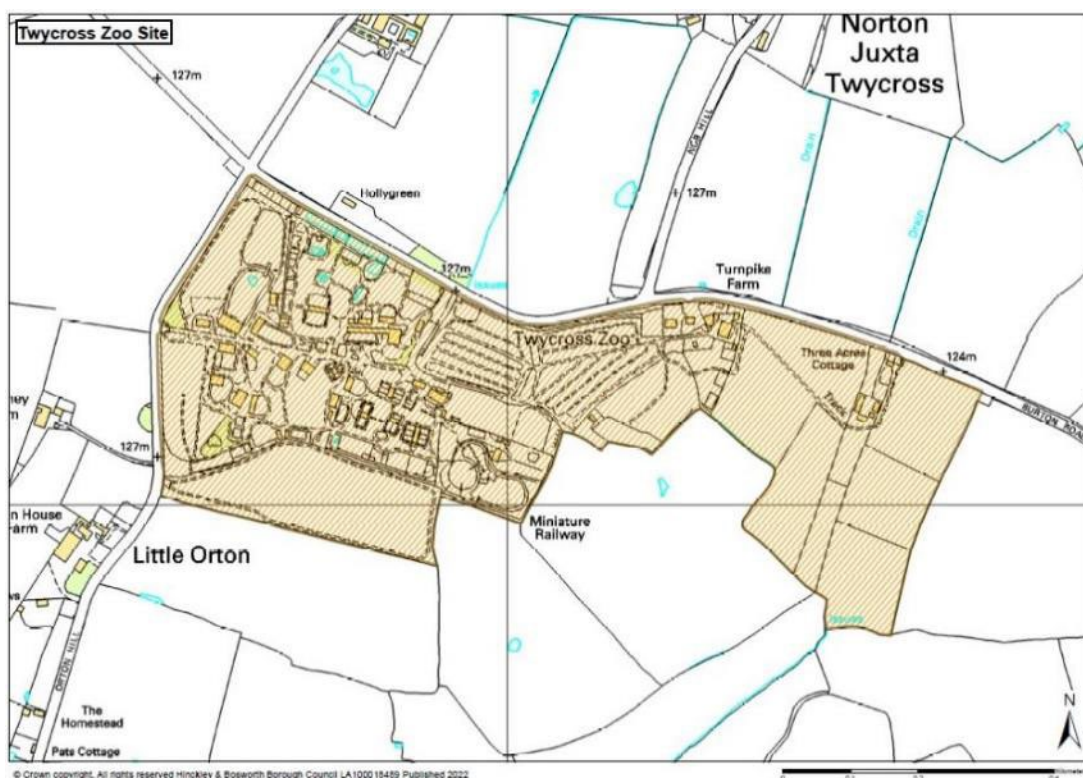
## 10 Communities, Leisure and Tourism

### SP19 Twycross Zoo

*Within the Twycross Zoo Special Policy Area, as shown in Figure 2 below, proposals for the following will normally be supported:*

- a) Developments directly related to the Zoo as a visitor and tourist facility; and/or*
- b) Proportionate facilities related to life sciences and animal conservation, research and education.*

Figure 2: Twycross Zoo Site Boundary



- 10.1 Twycross Zoo is the largest conservation zoo in the Midlands and is a major tourism asset welcoming over 5,000,000 visitors in 2023. Development that provides enhanced visitor opportunities will be supported.
- 10.2 The Zoo has a vision to educate and inspire people to care about and save other species that share our planet, and to become a recognised 'Centre of Excellence' that contributes to the welfare and conservation of animals.
- 10.3 In early 2024, planning permission was granted at Twycross Zoo for the

development of a new National Science and Conservation Centre (NSCC). The NSCC is a higher education campus facility with educational, research, and ancillary residential facilities to study orangutans as well as over 100 other endangered species. The scheme has been supported by the Government's Levelling Up Fund, which was secured via a bid by the Borough Council in partnership with Twycross Zoo in 2021. Facilities within the Twycross Zoo Special Policy Area related to life sciences and animal conservation, research and education will be supported where these are proportionate to the Zoo itself.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Through proactive engagement between the Borough Council and Twycross Zoo  
Twycross Zoo Conservation Strategy 2023-2030<sup>38</sup>

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
4. Tourism
10. Positive Planning
12. Economic Growth and Resilience

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for this Local Plan.

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<sup>38</sup> Twycross Zoo Conservation Strategy 2023-2030 - [tz-conservation-strategy-2023.pdf \(twycrosszoo.org\)](https://www.twycrosszoo.org/tz-conservation-strategy-2023.pdf)

## 11 Natural Environment

### SP20 Green Infrastructure

*Development proposals are required to create high quality places people can enjoy living and working in and which contribute positively to healthy lifestyles and wellbeing, nature, climate resilience and prosperity for disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the growth and enhancement of the borough's multi-functional green infrastructure network, in line with the following requirements:*

- a) On-site green infrastructure requirements should be planned and designed from the outset as a network of connected, multifunctional spaces which identify and respond to the site's local context. Green infrastructure should comprise of a variety of types and sizes of green and blue spaces, green routes and environmental feature which provide a range of functions.*
- b) Proposals for major new development will be supported by a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan setting out how the development will deliver Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework and be informed by the priority opportunities identified in the latest Borough Council Green Infrastructure Strategy and relevant Blue Infrastructure policy (SP28);*
- c) Major developments within the borough will be encouraged and supported to adopt the 'Building with Nature' standards;*
- d) The scheme identifies important local character features as a starting point for the green infrastructure proposals and incorporates them into the scheme to reference, reflect and enhance the local environment and its biodiversity; Green infrastructure proposals should provide a sense of place and be accessible green spaces which support active lifestyles and promote traffic free routes which attract people from all backgrounds and age groups;*
- e) Proposals should ensure that green infrastructure is nature rich which supports nature to recover; resilient to climate change; minimises the scheme's environmental impact with respect to air, soil, light, noise and water; enhances the quality of air, soil and water; and is pollinator friendly;*
- f) Development shall contribute to the green network through the integration of multi-functional green infrastructure into masterplans, or where it can be demonstrated to be more appropriate, through delivery of enhancements or expansion of the green network through off-site delivery, having regard to the latest Borough Council Green Infrastructure Strategy. Proposals should take account of the existing on-and off-site green infrastructure assets and developments should demonstrate how the design and layout has been informed by and developed in response to these assets; and*

***g) Developers must consider the long-term management and maintenance (for a minimum of 30 years) of green infrastructure and should demonstrate how these considerations have informed site proposals. Details of maintenance requirements and arrangements must be set out, including who is responsible for these requirements. Funding arrangements for delivery of the long-term maintenance requirements should be demonstrated to the local authority before construction starts, including measures to secure biodiversity through all phases and stages of the development.***

11.0 Green infrastructure (GI) is the network of natural and semi-natural spaces and corridors within an area. This can include open spaces, such as parks but also allotments woodlands, fields, hedges, water courses, bridleways, cycle routes and foot paths/public rights of way. It is multi-functional and can deliver numerous benefits to people as well as to biodiversity and the wider landscape.

11.1 The NPPF (2023) provides strong support for enhancing green infrastructure due to the wide range of benefits it provides. The Borough Council has a duty to act on climate change, generate employment, maintain healthy functioning ecosystems, maximise physical and mental health and protect and promote cultural and heritage assets. Green infrastructure helps to achieve all of these objectives. The NPPF (paragraph 20) sets out that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and sufficient provision of green Infrastructure should be made. The PPG adds that 'strategic policies can identify the location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks and set out appropriate policies for their protection and enhancement'. It continues to state that green infrastructure opportunities and requirements need to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals and will require sustainable management and maintenance if it is to provide benefits and services in the long term.

11.2 Natural England published the Green Infrastructure Framework in January 2023 which was a commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. This Framework consists of a series of principles and standards which aim to green England's towns and cities and improve existing infrastructure. To ensure high quality multi-functional green infrastructure is delivered in the borough, Policy SP20 requires major development proposals to be supported by a Green Infrastructure Plan (which can be part of the Design and Access Statement) setting out how the proposal is in accordance with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework. SP20 reflects the GI Framework 'what' and 'why' principles to enable developments to provide varied, multifunctional and nature rich green spaces which are accessible to the community. The Green Infrastructure Plan should also set out how Blue Infrastructure is addressed through the application process. Applicants should use the Natural England Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide (2023) to aid the design of good quality green infrastructure.

11.3 There are a number of overarching issues which underline the need for a robust green

infrastructure network within Hinckley & Bosworth. This includes the Climate Emergency declared by the Borough Council and that the green infrastructure network can play a pivotal role in both mitigating against climate change and boosting resilience to its impacts. Additional growth within the borough and socio-demographic changes will also place additional pressures on the green infrastructure network. This includes threats to pollinators, for instance seasonal changes such as disrupted flowering patterns can affect food sources; and extreme weather such as more frequent and severe floods, drought or changes in temperature, can also have a huge impact. Green infrastructure proposals which are pollinator friendly will incorporate native flower species which are rich in nectar into its landscaping schemes and will positively improve and increase local biodiversity.

11.4 The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020)<sup>39</sup> identifies three green infrastructure (GI) zones:

- Southern GI Zone: high population density in the south with some concentrations of poor health and of young and old demographics, resulting in higher GI needs and vulnerability to pressures such as climate change;
- Western GI Zone: a green and open landscape character with scattered settlements to the west, with a wealth of cultural and tourist assets but relatively low biodiversity value; and
- North-Eastern GI Zone: the distinctive combination of the National Forest and Charnwood Forest fringe and strategic infrastructure to the northeast, resulting in both high biodiversity value and high pollution pressures.

11.5 Figure 5.1 of the Green Infrastructure Strategy shows the three green infrastructure zones along with the distribution of the borough's multi-functional green infrastructure assets.

11.6 The Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies 11 priority opportunities, and these are illustrated in Figure 1.1 of the Strategy. These can be used as a starting point in master planning and negotiations with developers as a way of directing developer contributions and the Strategy provides further detail on how these green infrastructure gains can be achieved. A number of these priority opportunities can be provided on-site as part of new development, and this will vary depending on the nature and type of development proposed. The opportunities set out below can be 'designed in' at the early stages of a proposal as on-site green infrastructure gains:

#### **On-Site Green Infrastructure Gains**

- Managing Spaces for biodiversity;
- Making space for play;
- Private gardens as 'stepping stone' habitats; and
- Enhancing the southern green wedge.

11.7 In regard to managing spaces for biodiversity, the Borough Council's Habitat Study (2020) notes the importance of green infrastructure including vertical, horizontal and elevated habitats to optimise the permeability of the built environment for biodiversity to breed, feed and disperse. This provides a varied green infrastructure environment

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<sup>39</sup> [Green Infrastructure Strategy | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/green-infrastructure-strategy)

supporting climate resilience and habitat connectivity. Depending, on the location of new development, it may be appropriate for development to contribute to off-site green infrastructure enhancements which will help boost the integrity of the overall network. This will also aid the achievement of biodiversity net-gain. The following opportunity areas have been identified as off-site green infrastructure gains:



**Off-Site Green Infrastructure Gains:**

- Expanding woodland cover;
- Wayfinding strategy for mixed ability walkers;
- A ‘northern gateway’ for Hinckley;
- Greenways through Hinckley;
- A more resilient Burbage Common and Woods; and
- The Battlefield Trail.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

The policy seeks to achieve green infrastructure gains in accordance with the NPPF and PPG. Green Infrastructure has been woven into the Local Plan so that it is not treated in silo. Hinckley & Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020)  
Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework  
Natural England Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide (2023)s  
NERC Building with Nature Standards

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
4. Tourism
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
9. Built Environment and Townscape
10. Positive Planning
12. Economic Growth and Resilience

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP20 replaces Policy 20 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP21 Green Wedges**

**The Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge provide the following function:**

- i. Preventing the merging of settlements;***
- ii. Guiding Development Form;***
- iii. Providing a green lung into urban areas; and***
- iv. A recreational resource.***

**Within the green wedges uses will be encouraged that provide appropriate recreational facilities which promote healthy and active lifestyles within easy reach of urban residents and promote the positive management of land to ensure that the green wedges remain or are enhanced as an attractive contribution to the quality of life of nearby urban residents. The following land uses will be acceptable in the Green Wedge, provided the operational development associated with such uses does not damage the function of the Green Wedge:**

- a. Agriculture, including horticulture not accompanied by retail development;***
- b. Recreation, including allotments and community gardens;***
- c. Forestry, including community woodlands and orchards;***
- d. Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways;***
- e. Burial grounds;***
- f. Use for nature conservation; and***
- g. Environmental Education Centre.***

**Any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge must:**

- h. Retain the function of the Green Wedge;***
- i. Retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas;***
- j. Retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation and active travel modes;***
- k. Retain the visual appearance of the area; and***
- l. In the case of Rothley Brook Meadow, retain and enhance function as a floodplain and infiltration basin Use for nature conservation; and***
- m. Environmental Education Centre.***

**Any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge must:**

- n. Retain the function of the Green Wedge;***
- o. Retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas;***
- p. Retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation;***



- q. *Retain the visual appearance of the area; and*
- r. *In the case of Rothley Brook Meadow, retain and enhance function as a floodplain and infiltration basin.*

11.8 Green wedges primarily seek to guide the development form of urban areas. The presence of a green wedge helps to maintain settlement identity whilst providing green infrastructure links between settlements as a 'green lung' and recreational resource.

11.9 The National Planning Policy Framework states that '*Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development*'. The NPPF also highlights that plans should '*enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs*' – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure' (paragraph 96). The location of the green wedges adjacent to urban communities enable opportunities for people to make healthier lifestyle choices in terms of active travel and exercise. Opportunities to enhance the green wedges are encouraged so that attractive, safe and accessible environments are created which in turn improves the quality of life and well-being of both individuals and the community as a whole.

11.10 The purpose of Green Wedges is not to restrict the growth of an urban area but to ensure that, as urban development extends, open land is incorporated within it. It is a multi-functional designation which provides the following uses:

- Recreational opportunities for the local and wider community;
- Performs an agricultural role;
- Haven for flora and fauna; and
- Provides links into the countryside from the urban areas providing connectivity.

11.11 There are two green wedges within the borough which will be identified on the Policies Map and/or evidence base documents, these are:

- Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Burbage Green Wedge; and
- Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge.

11.12 The Green Wedge between Hinckley, Barwell, Burbage and Earl Shilton (or the 'southern green wedge') protects the separation of the four settlements helping to protect their individual identities and provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces contributing to the quality of life for these residents. A small section of the Green Wedge falls within Blaby District. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) identifies that the southern green wedge could benefit from enhancement in regard to

its function of providing a 'green lung' to the local community through encouraging and facilitating the use of land for allotments/community gardens, community woodlands and orchards and an environmental education centre for children.

11.13 The Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge is adjacent to Groby and Ratby and extends beyond the borough boundary into the administrative areas of Charnwood Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Leicester City Council. Work has been undertaken within sections of the green wedge to improve its recreational and biodiversity functions; however, there are still opportunities for further enhancement to increase its amenity as well as its ecological and functional flood plain value.

11.14 The Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Burbage Green Wedge Review (2020)<sup>40</sup> and the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Review (2020) undertook a full assessment of the green wedges and evaluated whether boundary amendments were required within the Local Plan. In relation to Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Burbage Green Wedge to reflect planning application decisions the following areas have been removed: Dorothy Goodman Upper School, Barwell Lane and Land at Crabtree Farm, Barwell. In regard to Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge the boundary has been amended on Ratby Road to reflect a recent planning decision. The green wedge reviews demonstrated that both green wedges have multi-functional roles which are well used by the communities they abut.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Review (2020)

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Review (2020)

Hinckley & Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020)

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places

4. Tourism

6. Natural Environment

7. Climate Change

8. Achieving Good Design

10. Positive Planning

#### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP21 replaces Policy 6 & Policy 9 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

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<sup>40</sup> [Overview | Green Wedges | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council \(hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk\)](https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk)

## SP24 Protecting Biodiversity

### Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites

*International and Nationally Designated Sites will be safeguarded. Development which is likely to have any adverse impact on the notified features of a nationally designated site will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, a proposal may be found acceptable where it can be demonstrated that:*

- a) A suitable alternative site with a lesser impact than that proposed is not available;*
- b) The on-site benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on the notified features of the site and where applicable, the overall SSSI or habitat network;*
- c) All appropriate mitigation measures have been addressed through the development management process*
- d) Does not prevent future attainment of nationally protected sites from meeting Favourable Condition, or to provide enhancements to enable the nationally designated sites to meet Favourable Condition as per their Conservation Objectives; and*
- e) Development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will be subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations and will not be permitted unless adverse effects can be fully avoided, mitigated and/or compensated.*

*Development proposals should not have an adverse impact on the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Where a significant effect on the SAC is identified an 'Appropriate Assessment' will be required.*

### Irreplaceable Habitats

*Proposals which are likely to result in the loss or deterioration of an irreplaceable habitat (such as ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, old species-rich grassland, including that marked by ridge and furrow, and species-rich hedgerows that meet Hedgerow Regulations ecological criteria and as stipulated in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitats) Regulations 2024) would only be acceptable where:*

- e) The need and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss;*
- f) It has been adequately demonstrated that the irreplaceable habitat cannot be retained with the proposed scheme; and*
- g) Appropriate compensation measures are provided on site wherever possible and off site where this not is feasible.*

### Locally Important Sites

*Development proposals affecting locally important sites should always seek to contribute to their favourable management in the long term.*

*Where a proposal is likely to result in harm to locally important sites (including*

*habitats or species of principal importance for biodiversity, and sites that meet the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland criteria for designation as a Local Wildlife Site), developers will be required to accord with the following sequential approach:*

- h) Firstly, seek an alternative site with a lesser impact than that proposed;*
- i) Secondly, and if the first is not possible, demonstrate mitigation measures can be taken on site; and*
- j) Thirdly, and as a last resort, seek appropriate compensation measures, on site wherever possible and off site where this is not feasible including long term management and maintenance.*

11.15 National policy seeks to protect and enhance sites of biodiversity and geological conservation interest and requires local plans to distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and the protection afforded to them.

11.16 Developers should take into account separate legislation, acts, regulations, planning guidance and any subsequent replacement Supplementary Planning Documents and laws preventing interference with protected species. They should also be aware of the need to undertake relevant assessments, studies and surveys as required prior to the submission of a planning application. All proposals should consider protection and enhancement of biodiversity from the outset and seek to protect features such as trees, hedgerows, ponds and woodland.

11.17 Where there is a reason to suspect the presence of protected species, development proposals should be accompanied by a protected species survey undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist and submitted with the application. The survey should include an appraisal of the likelihood and level of presence of the protected species.

### **Sites of International and National Importance**

11.18 The north-western tip of the borough, north of Twycross, stands within the catchment area of the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This is an internationally important site protected under the 'Habitats Directive' which seeks to protect the most valuable and threatened habitats and species as identified by the Directive. Any developments which are likely to have significant effects on this SAC will be required to prepare an appropriate assessment to identify the implications for the site in respect of the site's conservation objectives. The Conservation objectives are to *'ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:*

- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats;*
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species;*
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely;*

- *The populations of qualifying species;*
- *The distribution of qualifying species within the site; and*
- *The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species.*<sup>41</sup>

11.19 Development may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the proposal conforms to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

11.20 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are afforded protection at the national level under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) due to the significance of the wildlife and geological features within them. A SSSI can include a range of habitats and features of ecological interest ranging from marshy grasslands, woodland and natural water features to species rich in flora and fauna.

11.21 Geological SSSI represent the best sites of geological interest, chosen for their past, current and future contributions to the science of geology and include amongst others, quarries, cuttings and active landforms.

11.22 Hinckley & Bosworth has seven SSSI of both biodiversity and geological value:

- a) Ashby Canal;
- b) Botcheston Bog;
- c) Burbage Wood and Aston Firs;
- d) Cliffe Hill Quarry;
- e) Groby Pool and Wood;
- f) Kendall's Meadow; and
- g) Sheepy Fields.

11.23 Development which is likely to result in adverse impacts upon a SSSI will not normally be permitted. Planning permission will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site and the SSSI network throughout the borough and beyond. The applicant will also be required to demonstrate that all possible alternative sites have been considered and all measures required to mitigate the impact of the development have been incorporated into the scheme.

### **Sites of Local Importance**

11.24 In addition to these nationally designated sites the borough enjoys numerous Local Wildlife and Geological Sites and Local Nature Reserves (LNR) which are non-statutory and locally designated. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are designated by Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Wildlife Site Panel made up of local nature conservation experts. A register of LWS is maintained by the Leicestershire

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<sup>41</sup> - [Natural England \(2018\) European Site Conservation Objectives for River Mease Special Area of Conservation Site](#) Code: UK0030258

and Rutland Environmental Records Centre. The designation of these sites is based upon criteria established in local and national Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priorities for habitats and species and as such is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 11.25 Local geological sites are considered worthy of protection for their educational, research, historical or aesthetic importance. The long-term conservation of geological sites often requires a positive approach to management, for example, through vegetation clearance to maintain rock exposure.
- 11.26 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are locally designated areas with wildlife or geological features of local interest but are designed so the countryside and environment can be enjoyed recreationally by the public. Two LNRs are located in the borough, Billa Barra Hill (Markfield) and Burbage Common and Woods.
- 11.27 Ancient woodlands are areas which have had continuous tree cover since at least 1600 AD and are protected for their historic interest and value. Veteran trees are identified as a priority habitat within the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland BAP and are considered an important resource for hole-nesting birds, roosting bats, fungi, lichens and saproxylic insects. National policy seeks to protect both categories from development unless the need for, and benefits of, development in the location clearly outweigh the loss.

### **District Level Licensing**

- 11.28 Great crested newts have protected status through UK and European legislation and must be considered as part of the planning application process. Ponds are critical to great crested newts for breeding. Whilst on land, great crested newts are also dependent upon other habitats such as woodland, hedgerows, rough grassland and scrub. They are generally found within 500m of ponds, although may travel further than this.
- 11.29 Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council are part of the Natural England led District Level Licensing scheme for Great Crested Newts which is a type of strategic mitigation licence for great crested newts. Applicants proposing to develop land, can pay to join a district level licensing scheme and further information is available from Natural England.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2020)

NPPF (2021) and PPG

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change

8. Achieving Good Design

10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP24 replaces Policy DM6 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP25 Enhancing Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity**

*Development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve and enhance features of nature conservation and geological value and shall be considered in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate and then compensate. Proposals must also show how their long-term future management will be achieved and how the scheme is pollinator friendly.*

*Development proposals should create new habitats, and links between habitats, in line with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, the Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Water Cycle Study (once complete) and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (once completed), to maintain and enhance a network of wildlife sites and corridors, to minimise habitat fragmentation and provide opportunities for species to respond and adapt to climate change.*

*Biodiversity Net Gain shall be secured and delivered in accordance with the statutory framework and shall maximise opportunities for the enhancement of ecological networks within the Borough and where appropriate support nature-based solutions to climate change. A Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy must be submitted with non-exempt development proposals setting out how the required Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved, which must include a completed draft metric for proposed scheme and information demonstrating the following:*

- a) How the mitigation hierarchy has been followed;*
- b) How the metric principles and good practice principles are being adhered to;*
- c) How the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has been followed;*
- d) Whether proposals for onsite habitat creation or enhancement are appropriate taking account of other requirements for greenspace within the development;*
- e) How any need for offsite units will be met; and*
- f) Whether there is an excess of onsite biodiversity units that are intended to be used for other developments or sell to the market.*

*Major developments in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to:*

- a) Restore and enhance existing features on site;*
- b) Create additional habitats and ecological networks; and*
- c) The linking of existing habitats to create links between ecological networks and where possible, with adjoining features.*

***Proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity or geological interest will be permitted where they comply with other relevant policies in the Plan.***

***The retention and enhancement of linear features which enables strong connectivity of biodiversity as part of an integrated habitat network will be supported; this includes networks of hedgerows and ditches; enhanced habitats along the River Sence and Ashby Canal; roadside verges; and (cumulatively) private gardens, disused railway lines or other linear landscape features.***

***On site features should be retained, buffered and managed favourably to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. The removal or damage of such features shall only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated the proposal will result in no net loss of biodiversity and where the integrity of the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites identified in Policy SP25 is secured.***

***If the harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against or appropriate compensation measures provided, planning permission will be refused.***

- 11.30 The Borough Council declared a Biodiversity emergency in July 2023 and the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024-2028 sets out how the Borough Council will protect, celebrate, increase, and enhance biodiversity. To repair and improve the biodiversity network and habitat connectivity within the borough it will require protecting and creating further non-designated sites. In response to this and in recognition of the importance and value of biodiversity in the borough, the Local Planning Authority will first and foremost follow the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate and then compensate.
- 11.31 For a scheme to be considered pollinator friendly the applicant must demonstrate that the development improves or creates nectar-rich habitats that provides food and shelter for pollinating insects. This can be achieved, for example, by including wildflower meadows, semi-natural grassland, flowering trees, hedgerows, nectar-rich ornamental plants and herbs, window boxes, green roofs, living walls and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These measures will expand the pollinators' habitats, while creating attractive and greener developments.
- 11.32 Leicestershire County Council are the responsible authority for the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Leicestershire and the Strategy is currently being prepared. The LNRS is currently at the delivery stage (May 2024) and is progressing well with a public consultation scheduled to take place in January and February 2025 and publication in July 2025. The Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural Environment allows the Borough Council to identify evidence to support the delivery of biodiversity net gain and direct habitat creation and enhancement. The Borough Council have identified that the most up to date Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Hinckley and



Bosworth), Joint Water Cycle Study and Green Infrastructure Strategy (Hinckley and Bosworth) include localised evidence to guide biodiversity net gain. In seeking to contribute toward environmental gain, the connection or reconnection of habitats or the provision of compensatory measures, proposals should seek to contribute towards the objectives for priority habitats and species identified in the UK and Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) and delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Table 7 below shows the following habitat types that were identified within the borough as 'priority habitats' by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (2016):

**Table 7: Priority Habitats within the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan**

Priority Habitats	
Broadleaved woodland	Wet woodland
Eutrophic standing water	Rivers ( <i>in preparation</i> )
Field margins	Floodplain wetland
Heath-grassland	Mature trees
Hedgerows	Roadside verges
Lowland wood-pasture and parkland	Rocks and built structures
Mesotrophic lakes	Sphagnum ponds
Neutral grassland	Springs and flushes
Reedbed	Urban habitats

11.33 The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) highlighted that habitat connectivity was a key challenge for biodiversity in Hinckley & Bosworth. In response to this and linked to the challenge of the climate crisis it is important that habitats do not become isolated as species find themselves less able to respond to natural fluctuations and can face heightened risk of decline and extinction. Waterways such as Ashby Canal and the River Sence provide a degree of connectivity between the borough's locally designated sites however their impact is limited. This is due to the sizeable agricultural area of the borough which has limited value for wildlife, therefore linear features which create strong connecting links across the biodiversity network will be supported by the Borough Council. The Green Infrastructure Strategy sets out those areas identified by Natural England as priorities for habitat network enhancement, which focus on buffers around sites including:

- Sheepy Fields and Manor Farm Meadows (in the Western GI Zone);
- Burbage Common (in the South Eastern GI Zone);
- Groby Pool and land between Barlestone and Nailstone (in the North Eastern GI Zone); and,
- Newton Burgoland Marshes, on the borough's northern border.

11.34 The Green Infrastructure Strategy also highlights important linear features which could create strong connectivity include networks of hedgerows and ditches; enhanced habitats along the River Sence and Ashby canal; roadside verges; and (cumulatively) private gardens. The disappearance of field ponds is also identified as

a threat to habitat connectivity.

- 11.35 Once the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is produced for the area that includes the borough it will guide the delivery of biodiversity net gain and other nature recovery measures through illustrating where the most valuable existing habitats are located and will focus on habitat creation and/or improvement where it will achieve the best outcomes. Prior to the Local Nature Recovery Strategies produced the Borough Council will work with applicants and relevant stakeholders to identify locations for offsetting and off-site enhancements and habitat creation.
- 11.36 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is the achievement of measurable gains for biodiversity through new development and occurs when a development leaves biodiversity in a better state than before development. Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). The principle of BNG is also set out in the NPPF 2023 which states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.
- 11.37 Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, every non-exempt grant of planning permission is required to deliver at least a 10% increase in relation to the pre-development biodiversity value of the development granted permission. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.
- 11.38 Policy SP25 sets out the expected delivery of BNG in the borough. It seeks to maximise opportunities to reduce notable fragmentation of both designated and non-designated biodiversity assets within the borough. This fragmentation is evidenced in the both the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Phase 1 Habitat Study (2020). The Borough Council's Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2020) found that habitats of conservation value are generally more abundant in the east and north, within deciduous and ancient woodlands while intensively farmed land across much of the centre and west offers relatively limited area and diversity of such habitats. The current network of habitats is characterised by fragmentation and there is a need to expand and re-connect existing areas and restore habitats where they have been destroyed.
- 11.39 The Statutory Framework for biodiversity net gain has been designed as a post permission matter to ensure that the biodiversity gain objective of achieving at least 10% gain in biodiversity value will be met through development. However, the PPG for Biodiversity Net Gain notes that the biodiversity is not just a post permission matter, and the biodiversity gain objective is considered throughout the planning process. To enable this, Policy SP25 sets out the information required to be submitted at the planning application stage so that the Borough Council can understand the ecological outcomes of the proposal throughout the consideration of the development proposal. The Borough Council will take a proportionate approach depending on the nature of the scheme.

### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2020)

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (2016)

Leicestershire County Council and Partners Biodiversity Net Gain and Ecology Advice Service in Leicestershire and Rutland Research and Recommendations Report (2023)

Biodiversity Net Gain: Exempt Developments (2024) DEFRA

What you can count towards a development's biodiversity net gain (2024) DEFRA

NPPF and PPG

### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
10. Positive Planning

### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP25 replaces Policy DM6 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP26 Development in the Countryside and Settlement Separation**

*Outside the existing, committed and allocated built form of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell, Earl Shilton, Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages, but excluding Green Wedges, development will be permitted where it is required for the following purposes:*

*a. agriculture, horticulture, woodland management or other similar uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, such as:*

*i. local food initiatives, including farm shops and small-scale food and drink processing,*

*ii. tourist attractions and facilities that respect the character of the countryside,*

*iii. tourist accommodation, if it is of a scale that is proportionate to the identified tourism need,*

*iv. equestrian uses;*

*b. outdoor sport and recreation and associated buildings and it can be demonstrated that the proposed scheme cannot be provided within or adjacent to settlement boundaries;*

*c. minerals and waste development;*

- d. renewable energy production in line with Policy SP07;*
- e. where it is necessary for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation that is compatible with its setting in the countryside;*
- f. rural housing in accordance with paragraph 84 of the NPPF;*
- g. the conversion or re-use of permanent and substantial buildings, including proposals for the optimum viable use of a heritage asset;*
- h. minor extensions to existing dwellings and to other buildings that are subordinate in scale and appearance to the existing building;*
- i. the provision or diversification of a community services including public house, village shop or post office; or*
- j. other uses which justify and are compatible with a countryside location.*

**And where:**

- i. It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside in line with Policy SP27.*
- ii. It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements;*
- iii. It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development;*
- iv. The residual traffic and transport impacts are addressed, as necessary, in accordance with Policies SP29 to SP30.*
- v. If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line with Policy SP21; and*
- vi. If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy and the National Forest 25 Year Vision.*

11.40 National policy recognises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment including recognising the character and beauty of the countryside. This includes both designated landscapes and the wider countryside as a whole.

11.41 Given the borough's predominantly rural nature, the countryside in Hinckley and Bosworth is hugely important to the character and identity of the area. All efforts will be made to protect the intrinsic value, beauty and open character of the countryside. Therefore, beyond the defined settlement boundaries development will be restricted to proposals which fulfil the criteria of this Policy, with the exception of the Green Wedge. Proposals within the Green Wedge would be required to demonstrate how they conform to relevant Green Wedge Policy.

11.42 This Policy reinforces the value of maintaining the physical and perceived separation between settlements across the entire borough, this is in recognition of the importance placed by communities on their individual, separate settlement identities

across the borough, as evidenced through the Areas of Separation Review (March 2012). It was decided that the Areas of Separation Review would not be updated for this Local Plan, as the policy approach ensures parity for all and consistency in application and decision making and ensures that communities retain their sense of place and identity through the prevention of settlement coalescence. It is recognised that some development is necessary to support rural communities and the local economy. The Policy sets out a small number of exceptions to the overall approach, but these must also fulfil criteria (i) – (vi) of this Policy.

- 11.43 Proposals for outdoor sport and recreation will generally only be supported in countryside locations where it is demonstrated it is not possible to accommodate the scheme within or adjacent to settlement boundaries. Proposals for intensive sports facilities often have high levels of traffic, noise and light pollution associated with them, which can result in a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the landscape, and these should be avoided in rural locations and intrinsically dark landscapes.
- 11.44 The re-use of disused buildings in the countryside can afford a number of benefits, including supporting the vitality of rural communities, minimising the need for new built development and retaining historic features which reflect the local vernacular. Any proposal which relates to the re-use of redundant buildings in the countryside must have specific regard to relevant development management policy. Where a building is of historic or architectural merit applicants must also have specific regard to relevant heritage and conservation policy.
- 11.45 Recognition of the need to support rural communities and in line with national policy, proposals which assist the diversification of the rural economy without detriment to the environment will be supported in principle. Rural enterprise can entail a variety of activities which can all contribute to job creation and economic growth, including but not exclusively, uses related to agriculture, tourism, business and community uses.
- 11.46 A significant proportion of land within the National Forest boundary within the administrative boundaries of the borough lies within area defined as countryside. Current countryside policy makes explicit that proposals which seek to deliver the aims of the prevailing National Forest Strategy and 25-year vision, where it stands within the boundaries of the National Forest and adheres to other policy provisions, would be considered an exception to development in the countryside.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

The Areas of Separation Review (March 2012)

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
4. Tourism
6. Natural Environment

7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
9. Built Environment and Townscape
10. Positive Planning
11. Land for Development
12. Economic Growth and Resilience

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP26 replaces DM4 in the Local Plan 2006-2026.

### **SP27 Landscape Character**

***Development proposals will conserve and enhance the key landscape features and visual sensitivities of the landscape character areas identified in the latest Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Study.***

***Proposals will be required to:***

- a) Where appropriate, incorporate and implement the landscape strategies and/or guidance set out in the most up to date Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Study;***
- b) Protect and enhance the character and qualities of the local landscape through appropriate design and management;***
- c) Make provision for the retention and enhancement of features of landscape importance;***
- d) Where appropriate, provide landscape mitigation; and***
- e) Where significant landscape impacts are likely to occur a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) should be submitted.***

***Proposals in an edge of settlement location will be expected to create a positive interface between the urban and rural environments. This should be demonstrated by meeting the criteria above, and by giving appropriate consideration to layout, density, scale, massing and urban form in accordance with Policy SP08.***

11.47 Hinckley & Bosworth is a predominantly rural borough with a high quality, varied and distinctive landscape. It is of great historic importance and includes the site of the Bosworth Battlefield as well as areas retaining a strong sense of tranquillity. Part of the National Forest falls within the borough, as does Charnwood Forest. There are no national landscape designations such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Parks and so it is the subtle qualities of the local landscape character and local values which add to sense of place, that it is so important to conserve, enhance

and manage.

- 11.48 The distinctive landscape character of the borough arises from the varying combination of natural and cultural elements, particularly topography, geology and land use. There is a marked contrast in topography across the borough from the steep, high ground of the Charnwood Forest area in the north-east, to the flat lowlands of the Sence Valley in the south-west.
- 11.49 England is identified as having 159 natural character areas, each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. The borough falls within the Leicestershire Vales National Character Area and is characterised by large, relatively open, uniform landscape composed of low-lying clay vales interrupted by a range of varied river valleys. Its sense of place comes less from its overall landform and more from its visually dominant settlements and views towards surrounding higher ground.
- 11.50 A Landscape Character Assessment is a method of understanding what the landscape is like, how it came to be like that and how it may change in the future. It also describes and classifies the recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that makes one landscape different from another. Character is what makes each part of the landscape distinct and gives each area its particular sense of place. The landscape character approach considers that all landscapes are valuable and seeks to protect their essential character. The purpose of a Landscape Character Assessment is to help ensure that change does not undermine whatever is characteristic or valued about a particular place and ensure that ways of improving the character of a place can be considered.
- 11.51 The Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment identifies 10 Landscape Character Areas which are based on their physical, cultural, natural and perceptual characteristics. However, it is important to note that the boundary between one character area and the next is transitional and there is rarely a clear-cut change. The 10 Landscape Character Areas are listed in the table below with a general description of the character of the landscape.

**Table 8: Landscape Character Areas**

Landscape Character Area		General Description
A	Charnwood Forest	Settled Forest Hills: Comprehensive forest cover on elevated landform with large open waterbodies influenced by a rich history in mining.
B	Charnwood Fringe	
C	Bosworth Parkland	Agricultural Parkland: Rolling farmland and estate parkland with scattered trees and woodland around

Landscape Character Area		General Description
D	Gopsall Parkland	former agricultural villages.
E	Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland	Rolling Farmland: A sparsely settled area of undulating mixed farmland with local variations in topography influenced by small streams.
F	Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland	
G	Burbage Common Rolling Farmland	
H	Sence Lowlands	Lowlands: Flat, low-lying vale landscape that is largely influenced by the River Sence and associated tributaries.
I	Twycross Open Farmland	Open Farmland: An open area of arable land situated on an elevated plateau with a rural and dispersed settlement pattern of nucleated hilltop villages and isolated farmsteads that feed into the headwaters of the upper Mease tributaries, part of the River Mease SAC catchment area.
J	Barton Village Farmlands	Village Farmlands: Regular pattern of mixed arable and pasture farmland around small linear hilltop villages which are well-integrated into the landscape by scattered trees and small copses.

- 11.52 For each local landscape character area, a detailed description of the landscape character is given in the Landscape Character Assessment that identifies the key landscape features and values. In addition, guidelines for future landscape strategies are provided as broad principles to manage and direct landscape change.
- 11.53 A Landscape Sensitivity Study (2017) has also been prepared for the borough, it is at a landscape character area scale and provides a general overview of comparative landscape sensitivity around key settlements based on landscape character.
- 11.54 Where significant landscape impacts are likely to occur, for example for larger development proposals, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) should be prepared and submitted alongside a planning application to identify the nature, scale and magnitude of landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The LVIA should also help to identify ways of avoiding, reducing and mitigating any adverse effects. Where landscape effects cannot be sufficiently mitigated, development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they are essential for the economic or social well-being of the area.
- 11.55 Landscape issues should not be considered in isolation, as landscape provides the context and integrating framework for other environmental services and benefits.



Landscape provides the setting for existing and proposed development, new and historic. Landscape can provide the framework for identifying and implementing strategic green infrastructure, which is, by its definition, multifunctional. Landscape can also be a key feature that enables a new development to blend into the surrounding area, both the built form and the natural environment beyond, for example on edge of settlement locations, where a new development site may sit on the edge of rural and urban.

- 11.56 Green infrastructure, as a network of green space, is considered to contribute positively to landscape value, but can also have benefits for human health, biodiversity and the economy. As such, landscape considerations should be integrated with decisions regarding the historic environment, green infrastructure, biodiversity, health and other sustainability topics in order to maximise benefits in all of these areas.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Landscape Character Assessment (2017)

Landscape Sensitivity Study (2017)

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
9. Built Environment and Townscape
10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for this Local Plan.

### **SP28 Blue Infrastructure**

***New development will be required to contribute towards the delivery of a high quality multi-functional Blue Infrastructure network by expecting Blue Infrastructure assets to be provided, protected, maintained and enhanced to deliver multiple water management benefits and services for biodiversity, nutrient neutrality recreation and landscape.***

***Proposals will be supported that:***

- a) Demonstrate how they will support improving the status of vulnerable waterbodies such as the Ashby Canal;***
- b) Do not involve the culverting of watercourses, except where essential to allow highways and/or other infrastructure to cross;***
- c) Protect, enhance and support the creation of ‘wet woodland’ habitats, ponds, scrapes, lakes, reed beds, raingardens and floodplain meadows;***
- d) Make appropriate provision to protect, enhance, improve and maintain accessible networks of Blue Infrastructure, including through de-culverting and re-naturalisation of hard banks if appropriate including through de-culverting and re-naturalisation of hard banks if appropriate and removal of barriers to fish movement;***
- e) Maintain and enhance natural drainage features;***
- f) Provide ‘buffer strips’ of vegetation along the banks of all water courses;***
- g) Provide enhancements to the rural habitat mosaic including around the River Sence Local Wildlife site to benefit both water quality and flood attenuation;***
- h) Provide enhancements to the River Tweed Corridor so it acts as a multi-functional linear green and blue infrastructure corridor; and***
- i) Where appropriate, provide improvements to support active travel modes and recreational routes.***

***Proposals for built development will be required to be at least eight metres away from the top of the bank of the nearest watercourse or main river. New development proposals on or adjacent to a canal or river corridor should also include provision or provide enhancements to existing routes to allow for safe and convenient walking and cycling access wherever possible.***

***Developers must consider the long-term management and maintenance (at least 30 years) of blue infrastructure and should demonstrate how these considerations have informed site proposals. Details of maintenance requirements and arrangements must be set out, including who is responsible for these requirements. Funding arrangements for delivery of the long-term maintenance requirements should be demonstrated to the local authority before construction starts, including measures to secure biodiversity through all phases and stages of the development.***

provided by the green infrastructure network. The borough has a network of natural and manmade rivers, streams, ponds, canals and other wetland habitats. Ashby Canal, which dates back to 1804, was a route to bring coal from the coalfields around Moira and Measham to the main canal network and is a defining landscape feature acting as a 'spine' of the borough's green infrastructure assets. It forms an important linear asset for nature conservation and recreation as well as a valued heritage asset, whilst linking a number of urban areas and smaller settlements.

11.58 The River Sence flows southwest out of the borough with the network of tributaries flowing through low land creating a generally wide river valley landscape of predominantly flat land to the west. The River Mease also has a marginal influence on the area as tributaries flow from an area of higher ground in the west around Twycross, flowing north through lower flat ground with the River Tweed near Barwell also being identified as a key blue infrastructure asset. In contrast, in the northeast from Thornton and near Groby, tributaries of the River Soar flow through steeper valleys before again reaching flatter land towards the edge of the borough boundary towards Leicester.



11.59 The Government have highlighted the importance of blue infrastructure in the 25 Year Environment Plan and identify that blue spaces are essential for our health and happiness. It highlights that blue infrastructure is an important element of delivering the Nature Recovery Network as it will aid the improvement of wildlife habitat, whilst linking existing protected sites and landscapes. Policy SP20 Green Infrastructure requires major development proposals to be supported by a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (which can be part of the Design and Access Statement) this should incorporate consideration of Policy SP28 Blue Infrastructure as set out in the Policy (SP20). This will demonstrate that the Natural England Green Infrastructure Principle 'improved water management' is considered through the proposal. To aid the incorporation of well-designed blue infrastructure applicants should utilise Natural England's Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide (2023).

11.60 The borough is also home to a number of relatively substantial still water bodies that are pronounced landscape features including those at former mineral sites in the north of the borough such as Thornton Reservoir and Groby Pool.

11.61 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019) has identified that one of the main flooding risks, along with surface water, is culverted watercourses within the borough.

Therefore, there is a presumption against culverting of open watercourses except where essential to allow highways and/or other infrastructure to cross, in line with CIRIA's Culvert design and operation guide, (C689) and a restriction of development over culverts.

- 11.62 The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) has highlighted that due to the intensive management of agricultural land there is a real threat to the quality of water through nutrient loading and sedimentation. To mitigate this, riparian woodlands or 'wet woodlands' can be introduced which thrive in poorly drained soils such as lakesides and river banks. By using wet woodlands this acts as a filter to prevent agricultural chemicals entering and degrading waterways as well as being a natural flood management tool.
- 11.63 The Ashby Canal sits within a largely farmed landscape and as such vulnerable to pollution from agricultural sources which in turn impacts on water quality. Protection from contamination can be enhanced by providing more robust 'buffer strips' of vegetation along the banks of the canal to slow, filter and trap pollutants before they enter ditches or water courses. This approach is supported by Natural England in their publication 'Farming for cleaner water and healthier soil' (2009).
- 11.64 The rural habitat mosaic around the River Sence Local Wildlife Site, Manor Farm Meadows Local Wildlife Site and Sheepy Fields SSSI, in the west of the borough, encompasses tributaries to the Sence ditches and woodland copses. Restoration of this area which has been significantly impacted by agricultural intensification in the vicinity is important in order to promote the habitat mosaic within this area of the borough.
- 11.65 The River Tweed Corridor has the potential to be a key biodiversity corridor, provide flood attenuation and as a route for informal recreation. Enhancements of the River Tweed corridor will be supported so that a 'linear' corridor is formed which allows for accessible and natural and semi-natural green space which provides permeability on the urban edge and enables access to the wider countryside along the River Tweed corridor. Any developments along the corridor should contain a mix of wet and dry attenuation basins/ponds as part of a sustainable urban drainage strategy.
- 11.66 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019) has identified that to enable the preservation of watercourse corridor there should be no built development within 8m from the top of a watercourse or Main River. This will allow for the enhancement of wildlife habitats, flood flow conveyance and future watercourse maintenance and/or improvement.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Hinckley & Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020)

Hinckley & Bosworth Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 (2019)

Natural England Farming for cleaner water and healthier soil (2009)

Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework

Natural England Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide (2023)

Water Cycle Study – currently being prepared

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places4 – Tourism
6. Natural Environment
7. Climate Change
8. Achieving Good Design
10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for this Local Plan.

## 12 Transport

### SP29 Transport, Movement and Access

Where development proposals are likely to have a significant impact on transport, movement and access to services and facilities – in particular, the capacity of the highway network to accommodate additional traffic – such proposals must take account of the need to reduce the transport impact of development and reflect the following hierarchy:

1. Reducing travel demand and the need to travel by the co-location of services and development;
2. Facilitating active travel opportunities and promoting walking and cycling;
3. Supporting and enhancing the provision of and access to public transport;
4. Accommodating powered two-wheel vehicles such as mopeds and motorbikes;
5. Reflecting the needs of other road users.

Major development proposals that are expected to have a significant transport impact should include a Travel Plan that demonstrates how car use will be minimised and be supported by an appropriate and up to date Transport Assessment. The Transport Assessment should set out:

- a. *The best use of existing and proposed new public transport services and, where appropriate, measures to improve and sustain the viability of those services has been secured;*
- b. *That there is convenient and safe access for walking and cycling to local services and facilities;*
- c. *That new sustainable transport infrastructure is well designed, integrated with the Green Infrastructure and contributes towards making high quality places; and,*
- d. *That there is no adverse impact on highway safety; and in the case of development that generates significant movements:*
  - i. *The development is designed so that the need to travel by private motor vehicle will be minimised and the opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes can be enhanced, including the provision of cycle storage/spaces;*
  - ii. *The residual cumulative impacts of development on the transport network are not severe;*
  - iii. *The requirements for Active Travel have been met or exceeded; and,*
  - iv. *The location, layout and design of the development can be demonstrated to encourage modal shift away from private motor vehicles to more sustainable transport modes; and,*
  - v. *There is provision for electric vehicle charging points, in accordance with the latest Government guidance.*

All proposals for new development and changes of use should have regard to the highway design standards that are set out in the most up to date guidance adopted by the relevant highways authority and Active Travel England, and where appropriate, be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

**A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan shall be proportional to the scale and location of the new development proposal. New development proposals that demonstrate an impact on key junctions on the Strategic Road Network will be required to demonstrate that a proposal has been suitably tested through highway modelling, including models used by Leicestershire County Council as the Local Highway Authority, National Highways and neighbouring Local Highway Authority's modelling, as appropriate.**

**Where the impacts of the development taken cumulatively with other schemes would have a significantly adverse effect on the transport network, the Council will seek measures including, where necessary, a financial contribution fairly and reasonably related to the development to mitigate the impact of the scheme in accordance with Policy SP31.**

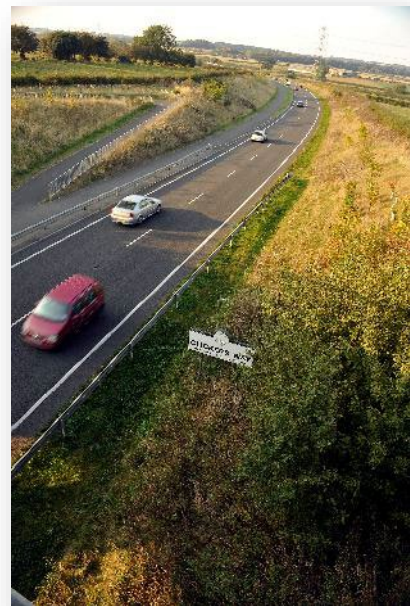
- 12.1 The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of maximising the use of sustainable modes of transport and minimising the adverse impacts of development on the transport network and the environment.
- 12.2 The protection, maintenance and expansion of the local highway network is the responsibility of Leicestershire County Council as the Local Highways Authority. The County Council have produced a comprehensive guidance document, the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide<sup>42</sup>, which provides clear and consistent advice to developers working in the area on how development proposals should have regard to transport infrastructure. It is an online resource providing up-to-date guidance to all parties involved in development proposals which have the potential to have an impact on the transport network.

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<sup>42</sup> [Leicestershire County Council, Highways Design Guide](#)

12.3 It is important that new development is undertaken in such a way that highway safety is not adversely affected. Proposals for new development will be expected to demonstrate a safe access to the highway and ensure that the local highway network will continue to function effectively. Development proposals should also seek to ensure that they contribute towards a pattern of development that will enable all end users to make use of sustainable modes of transport and improve accessibility to facilities, services and recreational opportunities and in doing so contribute to wider sustainability and health objectives.

12.4 Leicestershire County Council (as the Local Highways Authority) provides advice through the Highways Design Guide on the development thresholds for the submission of transport assessments, transport statements, travel plans and their scope. Applicants will be required to demonstrate through a transport assessment that sustainable transport options have informed the design of the proposed development from the outset. Travel plans should seek to exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes.



12.5 Where necessary and relevant, the Council will expect development proposals to contribute towards improvements, or schemes to mitigate the adverse impacts to the highways and transportation network. Such measures may be necessary from the impacts of an individual scheme, or where they result from cumulative impacts with other schemes. This may, for example, be secured by way of a condition, S106 agreement or S278 agreement. Where required, this could include the preparation, amendment and implementation of any traffic regulation orders, any necessary works, and the acquisition of any third-party land to enable the works to be undertaken. Where development would have an impact on the strategic road network or have cross-boundary implications, liaison with neighbouring

highway authorities and/or National Highways will need to be demonstrated.



**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Leicestershire Highway Design Guide – Leicestershire County Council

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

- 2. Safe and Inclusive Communities
- 3. Infrastructure
- 5. Transport
- 10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP29 replaces Policy DM17 in the Local Plan 2006-2026

**SP30 A5 Improvement Corridor**

*Where the impacts of a development taken cumulatively with other schemes would have a significantly adverse effect on the A5 and junctions connecting with the A5, the Council will seek financial contributions that are fairly and reasonably related to the development, to contribute towards the A5 as identified in the Council's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan, A5 Strategy and National Highways Capital Programme.*

- 12.6 The A5 is a key strategic route - operated and managed by Highways England - that runs along the western edge of the borough with key junctions that serve the main urban area of Hinckley and Burbage, including J1 of the M69. The A5 has an important local as well as strategic role, which is key to ensuring that development and economic growth along the corridor is not constrained from coming forward.

**The A5 Strategy**

- 12.7 The A5 Partnership is comprised of a number of local planning authorities, highways authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Highways England within a large geographical area. The Partnership was established to ensure future development along the corridor is managed and appropriate schemes are delivered to help facilitate and support economic growth. The A5 Strategy sets out the vision for the A5 by providing a framework for maintaining and improving the corridor to 2031, including the ongoing need for good transport infrastructure and connectivity along the corridor.



- 12.8 The strategy includes a number of policies to support the aim of delivering growth

along the A5 corridor which seek to ensure that the levels of growth and development that will occur in the vicinity of the A5 corridor are adequately mitigated. The A5 Partnership and local authorities work with developers and site promoters to identify the appropriate essential transport infrastructure and necessary additional capacity to provide the necessary mitigation of their development.

### **Midlands Connect**

- 12.9 The Midlands Connect Strategy has been prepared jointly by the Midlands Connect Partnership and government agencies. It sets out a series of long-term transport investment priorities to help unlock jobs and growth.

### **Strategic Growth Plan**

- 12.10 The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan identifies the A5 as an improvement corridor and is classified as an 'Express Way', and notes improvements are essential to manage housing growth in the area, including the widening of the highway between the Dodwells and Longshoot roundabouts.

### **Strategic interventions**

- 12.11 The A5 Strategy identifies a number of key strategic interventions to be delivered over the period to 2031. The Borough Council is presently testing the potential impacts of the proposed Local Plan growth on the major and local road network. This assessment will understand the level of mitigation necessary to minimise the impacts of the proposed level of growth, including the interventions required to manage the impacts on the A5.
- 12.12 However, where evidence identifies measures to support priorities, local authorities will continue to seek improvements via the appropriate funding mechanism, for example developer contributions and central government bidding opportunities. Funding for much of the improvements required along the corridor is not secure, as a result Highways England and, where appropriate, local authorities will utilise appropriate funding opportunities as they arise.

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

A5 Strategy - Supporting Growth and Movement in the Midlands 2018-2031 (A5 Partnership, 2018)  
Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (2018)

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

- 3. Infrastructure
- 5. Transport

10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP30 replaces Policy 5 in the Local Plan 2006-2026

## 13 Infrastructure

### **SP31 Infrastructure and Delivery**

***Where development will create a need to provide additional or improved infrastructure, amenities or facilities, developers will be expected to:***

- a) Provide the physical, social and environmental infrastructure necessary to support the needs associated with the development in accordance with the policies in the Local Plan; and***
- b) Undertake measures to directly mitigate the developments impact to make it acceptable in planning terms in accordance with the preferred measures of mitigation and interventions in respective policies of the Local Plan.***

***The Borough Council will seek developer contributions towards critical and essential infrastructure and, where applicable, delivery of the respective schemes set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.***

***In order to secure and co-ordinate the timely delivery of infrastructure, the Borough Council will work in partnership with other local delivery bodies, local authorities, developers and service providers, throughout all stages of the development process to deliver the infrastructure required to support the policies in the Local Plan and, but not limited to, the prevailing Infrastructure Delivery Plan.***

***Where viability is proposed as a justification to deliver a reduced level of infrastructure provision and/or planning obligations than that required by policy, developers are required to provide the appropriate evidence, including viability assessment to support this justification. The evidence will need to provide a comparative assessment against the Local Plan viability assessment and identify the changes to justify a change in the type of infrastructure and/or funding as requested by the Borough Council.***

12.13 Infrastructure planning is necessary to identify the physical, social and environmental infrastructure needed to support and enable the delivery of the spatial strategy for an area in a sustainable way. National policy states local plans should make provision for a range of infrastructure to support the delivery of housing and employment and should plan accordingly to address deficiencies in infrastructure provision.

12.14 Planning for infrastructure is a key part of preparing a Local Plan. National policy and guidance advocate for early engagement with the relevant infrastructure and service providers and key stakeholders to identify infrastructure requirements, deficiencies and the opportunities to address them. The Borough Council has completed the first phase of its Infrastructure Capacity Study (ICS) in 2020 and this has recently been updated with the second phase also underway. The first phase provides a baseline assessment of existing infrastructure services, networks and facilities in Hinckley & Bosworth, and the existing capacity surpluses and deficits on a borough wide and, for

some infrastructure types, a settlement-by-settlement basis. This assessment will assist the Council in identifying the infrastructure that is needed to support the delivery of the proposals in the Local Plan going forward. It has also been used to help inform the strategic site allocations contained in this Regulation 18 document.

- 12.15 The Borough Council will continue to work with a range of infrastructure and service providers to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) as the Local Plan progresses. The purpose of the IDP is to identify the additional infrastructure required to support the proposed level of growth in the Local Plan, including indicative costs for their delivery and identification of potential funding streams.
- 12.16 The IDP will be a live document which the Borough Council will seek to update periodically to capture changes in infrastructure requirements, the proposed schemes or to account for schemes which are brought forward and as and when new information regarding associated costs, funding sources and capital programmes is made available. The Borough Council will continue to engage with the relevant infrastructure and service providers to ensure that the latest information is captured in the IDP.
- 12.17 The IDP will provide the key information source for applicants to identify the infrastructure they may directly deliver or make financial contributions towards as part of a package of infrastructure measures necessary to support the delivery of growth in the borough over the lifetime of the Local Plan. Where specific items of infrastructure cannot be provided directly within a development, or it is not appropriate to be located on the development site itself, developers will be required to pay for or contribute to the cost of necessary infrastructure through Section 106 agreements. Where available, the council will also seek to use other funding streams to contribute towards delivery of identified infrastructure requirements, drawing upon those set out in the IDP.
- 12.18 The Infrastructure Capacity Study defines whether infrastructure is critical, essential or desirable to support the delivery of development proposals and is set out below. This will also assist the Council in prioritising infrastructure delivery in the IDP.
- 12.19 **Critical Infrastructure:**
- Highways;
  - Bus Services;
  - Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Telecommunications);
  - Water Supply and Sewerage;
  - Flood Management;
  - Waste Management Facilities;
  - Primary and Secondary Schools;
  - Special Educational Needs;
  - Further Education;

- Primary Healthcare;
- Secondary Healthcare;
- Social and Care Services; and
- Emergency Services (Police/Fire/Ambulance).

#### 12.20 **Essential Infrastructure:**

- Active Travel and Cycling Provision;
- Early Years Provision;
- Libraries;
- Formal Parks and Gardens;
- Natural Open Space;
- Children/Teenage Provision;
- Indoor Sports Provision;
- Outdoor Sports Provision;
- Cemeteries and Churchyards; and
- Public Realm.

#### 12.21 **Desirable Infrastructure:**

- Car Parking Management;
- Rail Services;
- Public Conveniences;
- Amenity Green Space;
- Allotments; and
- Green/Blue Infrastructure (off-site).

### **School Provision**

12.22 The Borough Council will work with the Local Education Authority to understand education needs in order to inform planning for new schools associated with new development and inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

12.23 Funding from major housing development that would generate a need for new school places financial contributions will be sought that can be used to extend capacity at existing schools, help provide any additional specialist facilities that might be required, for example Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) or early years provision or contribute toward provision of new schools. On larger housing and mixed-use developments provision of land for new schools may be required as well as financial contributions and these will be set out in the respective site specific policies

## Other considerations

- 12.24 In some instances, desirable infrastructure may also be required for their multi-functional benefits and are necessary to mitigate the impact of development, are important to deliver schemes which will contribute towards achieving sustainable development, or where such infrastructure is necessary, for example the provision of green infrastructure for flood risk mitigation and the provision of SuDS.
- 12.25 The Borough Council needs to strike a balance between encouraging development which supports the aspirations for sustainable growth and delivers the infrastructure needs in the borough, whilst not seeking to inhibit development. The Borough Council will carefully balance the impact of proposals on the timing and level of affordable housing and their impact on achieving other planning objectives and infrastructure provision, with the planning benefits of bringing forward the scheme.
- 12.26 The proposals and policies in the Local Plan have been subject to a whole plan viability assessment to determine whether the proposals are viable and deliverable whilst meeting all of the policy and infrastructure requirements necessary to support their delivery. This is an iterative process and further viability work will be undertaken as necessary going forward.
- 12.27 Where a site promoter for a Local Plan allocation considers that a reduced level of infrastructure provision will be necessary, they will be required to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the planning application stage. National planning guidance states that where a viability assessment is submitted to accompany a planning application, this should be based upon and refer back to the viability assessment that informed the Local Plan, and the applicant should provide evidence of what has changed since it was published.

### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Infrastructure Capacity Study Phase 1: Baseline Capacity Assessment Report (2020)

### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places
3. Infrastructure
5. Transport
10. Positive Planning

### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP3 replaces Policy DM3 in the Local Plan 2006-2026

### **SP32 Water Supply and Wastewater Management**

***Development will be required to minimise water use and aim to be water neutral as far as practicable by incorporating appropriate water efficiency and water recycling measures. A collaborative approach is encouraged between the Council, statutory agencies, water companies and site promoters/developers to promote innovation in water efficiency and re-use within and outside of dwellings and commercial buildings, including demand reduction to improve longer term water resilience.***

***All new residential developments (including replacement dwellings) will meet the Building Regulation optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, as set out in Building Regulations part G2. Planning conditions will be applied to new residential development to ensure that the water efficiency standards are met.***

***For non-residential development of 1000 sqm gross floor area or more will be expected to meet BREEAM excellent credits for WAT 01 are being targeted (with at least a 40% improvement in water consumption against the baseline performance of the building) and this will be secured by a planning condition. An assessment of the buildings water efficiency performance should be carried out and submitted as part of the planning application.***

***Applicants of all major development will need to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the relevant authority that there is, or will be, adequate water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure and capacity in place to serve the development at the time of occupation.***

***Any new water supply, sewerage or wastewater treatment infrastructure must be in place prior to the occupation of the development, or if applicable, the respective phase of development.***

#### **What evidence has informed the Policy?**

A9: Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (STW, 2018)

Water Resources Management Plan (STW, 2019)

#### **Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places

3. Infrastructure

10. Positive Planning

#### **Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

This Policy is a new policy for this Local Plan.



- 12.28 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) sets out that ‘plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change’ (paragraph 158) including taking into account the long-term implications of water supply. As set out in government guidance the Council has the option to set additional technical requirements in the Local Plan on exceeding the minimum standard required by the Building Regulations relating to water efficiency. The Environment Agency published the Water Stressed Areas – Final Classification Report in July 2021, the borough falls within the Severn Trent area which has been classed as ‘seriously water stressed’. There is a clear local need for the tighter requirement of 110 litres per person per day due to due to this classification.
- 12.29 In order to demonstrate compliance with this Policy for non-residential development for 1,000 sqm of floor space or more an assessment carried out by an approved BREEAM assessor should be submitted as part of the planning application. This will need to demonstrate that BREEAM excellent credits for WAT01 are being targeted, with compliance secured by planning condition. The assessment of the efficiency of the building’s domestic water consuming components should be undertaken using the BREEAM Wat 01 calculator.
- 12.30 Water supply, the treatment of wastewater and provision of the associated infrastructure in the borough is the responsibility of Seven Trent Water as the statutory undertaker. Developers are required to fund additional sewerage infrastructure necessary to accommodate flows from a proposed development.
- 12.31 The Draft Severn Trent Water Resources Management Plan (2024) sets out Severn Trent’s understanding of population growth, drought, environmental obligations and climate change, and how it will balance supply and demand over a 25-year period. The Plan includes a number of measures that are intended to reduce the amount of water needing to be put into the supply, and for the remaining sources of supply, taking measures to improve habitats and avoid environmental degradation.
- 12.32 The Borough Council are in the process of producing a Water Cycle Study in collaboration with Blaby District Council, Harbough District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. A Water Cycle Study is a voluntary document which enables organisations to work together to plan for sustainable growth, it will provide an understanding of environmental and infrastructure capacity and can identify joined up and cost-effective solutions that are resilient to climate change.
- 12.33 The Severn Trent Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (2023) sets out investments needed over a five-year period from 2025 to 2030 and longer-term targets. The plan incorporates modelling of sewer management and flood water routing, in order to identify locations of stress and requirements for investment.
- 12.34 Severn Trent have identified a number of sewage treatment works that serve the borough where there is a risk of the eventual sewage treatment works capacity being exceeded as a result of new development. However, despite the potential for exceeding capacity, Severn Trent has not expressed any fundamental concern in its

ability to address demands arising from new development. Whilst Severn Trent are aware of the development intended to be delivered over the plan period, their broad approach is to address the demand for additional capacity once there is more certainty that the development will be delivered. This is to ensure that no investment is made on the basis of speculative development. This approach is taken to ensure that charges are spent where the development occurs and requires sewage improvements. This Policy requires applicants to work with Seven Trent Water to identify the water supply and wastewater infrastructure needs of the proposed development and to demonstrate sufficient capacity is or can be made available in the foul sewerage network in time to serve the development.

### **SP33 Telecommunications Infrastructure**

#### **Telecommunications Infrastructure:**

***All new build major residential and commercial development should be served by a full fibre connection in line with the latest Government target. Developers will liaise with electronic communications infrastructure providers to ensure that a suitable connection is made.***

***The connection will need to be directly accessed from the nearest exchange and suitable for easy access to enable future repair, replacement and upgrading.***

***Exceptions will be made to the above, where applicants have demonstrated through consultation with providers, that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable.***

#### **Telecommunications Development:**

***The provision of essential infrastructure for telecommunications will be supported where it has been demonstrated that:***

- a) There are no opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure already in the area;***
- b) They are appropriately situated in the least visually obtrusive location available and appropriately designed to take account of their surroundings;***
- c) Technologies to miniaturise and camouflage have been sufficiently explored; and***
- d) The proposal is in conformity with the latest International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Guidelines for public exposure.***

***The operator will also be required to remove any telecommunications equipment when it is redundant.***

- 12.35 The NPPF states that advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. The key consideration for telecommunications in the Local Plan is to ensure that new development is fully equipped and future-proofed to provide superfast broadband provision. The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks will also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services and employment.
- 12.36 The Policy seeks to ensure that high quality digital infrastructure will be delivered and accessible from a range of providers for both residential and commercial development. The Government has set targets in terms of what it considers to be fast and reliable broadband, but it should be recognised that this is a fast-changing technology. Developers should provide digital connections to meet the latest Government target.
- 12.37 Leicestershire County Council has previously been involved in project Superfast Leicestershire which aimed to provide superfast broadband to as many premises in Leicestershire as possible. Between 2013 and 2021 the project brought high-speed broadband, with a minimum download speed of at least 24Mbps, to more than 75,000 Leicestershire premises.
- 12.38 Currently, Leicestershire County Council is taking part in the government led project Gigabit in which £5 billion has been invested in gigabit broadband networks, with an ambition to get gigabit broadband to at least 85% of premises by 2025 and over 99% by 2030. Independent broadband provider CityFibre will deliver top-of-the-range full fibre connections in Leicestershire.
- 12.39 The key consideration for telecommunications provision is to ensure that new development is fully equipped and future-proofed to provide full-fibre broadband infrastructure and ensure retrospective installation is not required.
- 12.40 The Policy also addresses planning applications or prior notification applications for the installation of satellite dishes, microwave antennae, radio masts, cabinet boxes and other types of telecommunications apparatus which require planning permission. When considering such applications, the Borough Council will also have regard to the legal requirements placed upon telecommunications operators to provide an adequate service, and any technical and operational constraints that may be faced.
- 12.41 Planning applications for masts and antennae development must be accompanied by supplementary information on details of any consultation undertaken, details of the proposed structure and measures to minimise its visual impact, photomontages and technical justification for the proposed development.
- 12.42 Measures to reduce the visual impact of a proposal will be secured by planning condition where necessary. To avoid the proliferation and visual impact of new telecommunications installations, preference will be to accommodate new

installations on existing masts and/or within existing telecommunication apparatus sites where this represents the least environmentally damaging and visually obtrusive option. Applicants who choose not to mast or site share where there is an opportunity to do so should submit a statement setting out the extent of the area of search and fully justify their reasons for discounting this option.

- 12.43 The NPPF asserts that local planning authorities should not question the need for telecommunication systems or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure. As such, applicants are required to submit information to certify compliance with the International Commission of Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) standards to demonstrate the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on people's health.
- 12.44 Due to the rapid pace of change in technology, permissions will normally be temporary so that masts are required to be removed when they are no longer necessary.

**What evidence has informed the Policy?**

Superfast Leicestershire

Project Gigabit

International Commission of Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines

UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy (2023)

**Which spatial objectives will the Policy help deliver?**

1. Healthy Communities and Places

3. Infrastructure

8. Achieving Good Design

10. Positive Planning

**Which Policy from the Local Plan 2006-2026 will this Policy replace?**

Policy SP33 replaces Policy DM16 in the Local Plan 2006-2026