

Harborough District Council Local Plan 2020-41 – Development Strategy Paper (February 2025)

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Introduction/Purpose

Harborough District Council is preparing a new local plan to replace the 2019 Local Plan. The new plan covers the period 2020 to 2041 and sets out a vision and a framework for the future pattern, scale and quality of development in Harborough District. It will address the needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places that contribute to healthy communities.

The local plan includes the allocation of sites for new housing, employment, retail and leisure uses to meet the identified needs of the District. This paper sets out the approach used by the Council in identify the development strategy for the Local Plan. The approach is evidence based and forms part of a wider process of ensuring the plan meets the objectives of sustainable development. It is informed by the comments made in response to the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation in January and February 2024.

The paper should be read in conjunction with the Harborough Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Report (February 2025).

Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and is based on a fundamental aim to secure sustainable development through balancing economic, social and environmental objectives.

The NPPF requires Local Plans to be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).

This approach has been used to inform the preparation of each of the elements of the development strategy, including:

- The overall scale of growth; and,
- the spatial distribution of development;

IDENTIFYING A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR NEW HOMES IN HARBOROUGH

Setting the strategy for the scale and distribution of housing development is a crucial element of the plan-making process.

A robust approach to plan-making should involve testing different approaches to how the plan objectives can be achieved. Therefore, there is a need to examine the evidence behind development needs and understand the implications of meeting such needs in a range of different (but reasonable) ways.

The spatial strategy will draw together conclusions from different elements of the plan-making process (including SA findings) that relate to housing and employment. The Spatial Strategy and options development process involved three key steps:

- **An Initial set of reasonable options/alternatives** - developed to inform the Issues and Options Consultation (January 2024).
- **A refined set of options/alternatives** - developed mid 2024
- **Selection of a preferred option** - developed for the Local Plan submission version (regulation 19) (March 2025).

An initial set of reasonable alternatives were consulted on from January to February 2024 under regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended. This consultation was supported by a sustainability appraisal report. The consultation was called “Harborough District Council New Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation”.

Following on from this consultation, a refined list of reasonable alternatives were identified for the purposes of testing through more detailed evidence and sustainability appraisal, to inform selection of the preferred option/strategy. This section sets out this process, including how reasonable alternatives/options were identified, a summary of the findings and the rationale for selecting or discounting the different alternatives.

An Initial Set of Reasonable Alternatives

The Reasons for Selecting the Housing Options

Before commencing the alternatives development process, it was necessary to establish some key issues and principles that would shape the development strategy for Harborough (listed below). This is important, as reasonable alternatives (options) for housing growth must be deliverable and contribute to the achievement of the Plan objectives:

- Government Policy.
- Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire – which promotes the delivery of housing on Strategic Sites in key locations. For Harborough District it suggests a focus of development in a growth corridor close to the Leicester Urban Area and identifies an A5 improvement Corridor.
- Evidence about the services and facilities in settlements in the District and the role and functions they perform (Settlement Hierarchy).

- The need for homes and how this compares to the availability of land and potential opportunities for new supply identified in the Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).

Taking these factors into account, an important starting point was to look at the level of growth that should be provided in the District and the places this could reasonably be delivered.

It is considered less meaningful to test growth scenarios without an understanding of where this growth would be located. Therefore, the options have been identified by a consideration of both the scale of growth and distribution approaches at the same time. Each element is discussed below individually, before drawing them together to identify the options that have been tested.

The Scale of Housing Growth

The NPPF (December 2023) paragraph 61 is clear that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, the Local Plan should be informed by a Local Housing Need (LHN) assessment, conducted using the Government's standard method in national planning practice guidance (PPG). The outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting-point and there may be exceptional circumstances which justify an alternative approach, including relating to particular demographic characteristics of an area. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

The PPG sets out that the standard method does not predict the impact that future Government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors may have. It also states there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates, and outlines circumstances where this may be appropriate, which include:

- Where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (i.e. Housing Deals, City Growth Deals, etc.); or
- Where strategic infrastructure improvements are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or
- An authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a Statement of Common Ground.

The PPG also requires consideration to be given to the inter-relationship with the assessed need for affordable housing. An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.

The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (June 2022) (HENA) at paragraph 8.1 – 8.37 considered whether there was a need to adjust the housing need to take account of up-to-date demographic evidence, to support economic growth or the delivery of affordable housing (Although it noted that affordable housing need was a consideration in setting housing targets). It did not find any evidence of exceptional circumstances to depart from the standard method as a starting point for Harborough District or the Leicester and Leicester Housing Market Area (HMA).

Taking this into account, it is considered unreasonable to provide for housing land below the standard method. There is no evidence to suggest there are exceptional circumstances that would justify departing from the standard method for a lower figure.

With regards to the scale of housing growth, many local authorities respond to local housing need by planning to meet this need in full. This involves setting a housing requirement at the LHN figure and identifying a supply through policies sufficient to deliver this requirement (at a suitable rate/trajectory over time) which invariably requires a supply buffer or contingency to mitigate against the risk of unforeseen delivery issues, such as economic factors or site-specific issues which may unexpectedly slow build rates over the next 15 years or so. To ensure the housing requirement is met, the Local Plan will need to identify a supply of housing greater than the target - known as a supply buffer or contingency.

A decision on the scale of any supply contingency will depend on a number of factors and will be informed by the outcome of regulation 18 consultation and further evidence. Examples nationally range significantly, but housing supply contingencies generally range between 5% and 25% above the housing requirement. At the time of its adoption in 2019, the current Local Plan contained a housing supply contingency of about 16%. Given the considerable uncertainty of the type and size of sites that will make up the housing supply of the Local Plan, a cautious 20% supply buffer was selected and added to the housing requirement when developing the initial options to ensure the impacts (positive and negative) of a sizable supply contingency were taken into account from the outset. Whilst the final size of the supply contingency may evolve, any changes would be subject to sustainability appraisal as the initial options are refined down to the preferred option. It was not considered reasonable to test a supply of homes without a supply contingency as it would be very difficult to meet national policy requirements of maintaining a supply of homes across the plan period.

The Initial Options are based on a plan period of 2020 to 2041. A base date of 2020 for the plan period is justified as it aligns with the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) and associated Housing and Employment Distribution Papers (2022). An end date of 2041 is justified because NPPF (2023) paragraph 22 requires authorities to plan at least 15 years ahead from the date of adoption of the new Local Plan which is scheduled for 2026.

Low, Medium and High scales of housing growth were therefore developed as follows, for the purposes of initial testing:

Plan period 2020-2041	Option A Harborough's LHN	Option B Harborough's LHN + a proportion of Leicester's unmet LHN	Option C Harborough's LHN + 46%
Dwellings per annum	534	534 + 123 = 657	534 + 46% = 780
Total housing need (21 years)	11214	11214 + 2583 = 13797	16380
20% buffer	2242.80	2759.40	3276
Need + 20% buffer	13456.80	16556.40	19656

Existing commitments completions, existing allocations	10427	10427	10427
Residual requirement	3029.80	6129.40	9229

Option A: Low Growth was developed using the standard method result for Harborough District as the starting point. The starting point for identifying growth options for the Issues and Options Consultation (2024) was therefore a figure of 11,214 dwellings 2020-41 (534 dpa) for Harborough District. A cautious 20% supply contingency was added, increasing the figure of 11,214 to 13,457 homes 2020-41 (641 dpa). Taking away existing commitments, completions and already allocated sites expected to be delivered in the plan period, left a residual ‘to be found’ figure of 3,030 new homes over the plan period 2020-41 (144 dpa). The first growth option is therefore to plan for a total of 13,457 homes 2020-41 (641 dpa), with 3,030 homes 2020-41 (144 dpa) provided through the allocation of land.

In certain circumstances it can be appropriate to set a housing requirement that departs from LHN. Although the evidence (see HENA para 8.1 – 8.37) does not support planning for a lower amount than the LHN, the NPPF says in addition to LHN, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas (referred to as unmet need) should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

Neighbouring Leicester City Council has an unmet housing need because there is insufficient land available in its area to meet its own housing need in full. In September 2020 the City published a Draft Local Plan for public consultation which indicated a potential unmet housing need of about 8,000 homes. Immediately after the consultation closed, Government increased the number of homes by 35% for the 20 biggest cities (including Leicester) to meet its national target to build 300,000 homes per year by the mid-2020s and help regenerate cities. This added a further 10,000 homes to Leicester’s housing need between 2020 and 2036.

Providing for this number of additional homes in the City would have required more than a doubling of the housing allocations set out in their Draft Local Plan (regulation 18) consultation. The City’s evidence shows it will not be possible to meet their housing need and other Government policy obligations of a sound and deliverable plan. The latest version of the City’s Local Plan at the time (Regulation 19 January 2023) indicated an unmet need of 18,700 homes between 2020 and 2036. In this context, it is necessary to seek to agree a Statement of Common Ground to deal with this matter.

Government policy and statute requires Local Planning Authorities to work with neighbouring authorities. To get a new Local Plan in place national policy requires us to demonstrate that our plan is, amongst other things:

- Informed by agreements, so unmet need is accommodated where practical to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- Based on effective joint working on cross-boundary matters (like the City’s unmet need) that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by a statement of common ground.

To meet Government requirements, the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities jointly commissioned independent consultants to prepare a Housing Distribution Paper (June 2022) setting out an evidence-led approach to apportioning Leicester's unmet housing need to neighbouring authorities including Harborough District. This evidence informed a Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) apportioning Leicester's unmet housing and employment needs to the surrounding Districts/Boroughs from 2020 to 2036.

The starting point for this work was each authority's Local Housing Need figure which for Harbough was 534 homes per year (calculated in 2022). Taking into account various factors, including the District's functional relationship with Leicester (migration and commuting) and the alignment of the number of jobs and homes, this evidence suggests Harborough's housing requirement should be increased above LHN by 123 homes (23%) per year to 657 homes to help meet Leicester's housing need.

Option B: Medium Growth was informed by this context. Applying the figure of 657 homes per year over the plan period and a 20% supply buffer gives a total of 16,556 homes 2020-41 (788 dpa). Taking account of completions, commitments and allocations at the time, left a residual 'to be found' figure of 6,129 homes. The second option (Medium Growth) is therefore to plan for a supply of 16,556 homes 2020-41 (788 dpa), with 6,129 homes to be provided through the allocation of land.

This is considered to be a reasonable alternative justified by the NPPF, the SoCG, the HENA and associated Housing Distribution Paper 2022.

Option C: High Growth 46% higher than the Local Housing Need was also tested. This would increase Harborough's housing requirement above Local Housing Need by 246 homes (46%) per year to 780 homes per year. Applying the figure of 780 homes per year over the plan period and adding a 20% supply buffer gives a total supply of 19,656 homes 2020-41 (936 dpa). Taking account of completions, commitments and allocations at the time, left a 'to be found' figure of 9,229 homes. This third option (High Growth) is therefore to plan for a supply of 19,656 homes 2020-41 (936 dpa), with 9,229 homes provided through the allocation of land.

Since 2011 housing completions across the District have averaged 637 homes per year 2011-2023, with the highest rates in more recent years. A supply of 936 homes per year 2020-41 is substantially higher (300 dpa) than the 637 dpa long-term average. Testing scales of housing growth above 936 dpa was therefore not considered reasonable. This scale of growth strikes a balance by testing an amount of homes that is meaningfully different to Option B and significantly higher than the long-term average housing completions. It is therefore considered to be a reasonable alternative that would help to understand the effects (positive and negative) of allocating substantially more land to maximize the likelihood of meeting housing needs over the plan period.

It would be possible to test a very large number of additional growth options lying between these three housing options of 13,457, 16,556 and 19,656 homes. However, at this stage it was considered proportionate and appropriate to compare these three distinct levels of housing delivery. This allows for a good understanding of the implications of land release. The growth options are sufficiently distinct to allow meaningful conclusions to be reached and to inform debate about the relative merits of such approaches.

Housing Distribution

An important starting point – in respect of decision-making on the broad distribution options that should feed into reasonable growth scenarios for the Local Plan – was the settlement hierarchy, which was the focus of detailed work in 2023. The Settlement Hierarchy was published as evidence alongside the Issues & Options Consultation in January 2024 and was carried out to help understand the relative sustainability of settlements in the area. In general those settlements in higher tiers of the hierarchy are considered to be more sustainable locations for growth than settlements in lower tiers.

There is a clear need to take the settlement hierarchy as a primary starting point when seeking to define reasonable growth options. However, there is also a need to remain open to the possibility of strategic growth at a settlement over-and-above that which the settlement's position in the hierarchy indicates as appropriate, where it is the case that strategic growth would support achievement of strategic objectives, for example the provision of a significant piece of infrastructure that might not otherwise be forthcoming.

Equally, there is a need to remain open to the possibility of lower growth at a settlement than its position in the settlement hierarchy would serve to suggest as appropriate, for example due constraints.

Initial work to identify strategic options for the distribution of new housing development also took into account land known to be available through the Harborough Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (2022) (SHELAA). The NPPF requires LPAs to have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites.

An initial 'call for sites' was carried out in 2021 which informed the SHELAA 2022 process. Sites were assessed in accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance.

The options were presented according to the amount of growth being allocated to different tiers in the Settlement Hierarchy Assessment. One of the important factors was to ensure different levels of growth were tested at all tiers of the hierarchy to give an understanding of the impacts (positive and negative) of focussing growth in particular areas. The minimum amount of growth for each tier of the hierarchy was dictated by the level of housing completions, commitments and allocations which were expected to be delivered. The maximum amount of homes was limited by the potential capacity of each tier of the settlement hierarchy in the SHELAA.

It was not considered reasonable to test levels of growth outside of these ranges as options must be deliverable.

At the top of the hierarchy is settlements and land adjoining the Leicester Urban Area which includes the built-up area of Leicester City, Oadby and Wigston. Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough) are in the second tier of the settlement hierarchy, followed by Large, Medium and Small Villages:

Settlement Hierarchy Tier	Settlements
Tier 1: Adjoining Leicester Urban Area	Scraptoft, Thurnby, Bushby and land adjoining the built-up areas of Leicester City and the Borough of Oadby and Wigston
Tier 2: Market Towns	Lutterworth, Market Harborough
Tier 3: Large Villages	Broughton Astley, Fleckney, Great Glen, Kibworth (Beauchamp and Harcourt)
Tier 4: Medium Villages	Billesdon, Great Bowden, Houghton on the Hill, Husbands Bosworth, Ullesthorpe
Tier 5: Small Villages	Arnesby, Bitteswell, Church Langton, Claybrooke Magna, Dunton Bassett, Foxton, Gilmorton, Great Easton, Hallaton, Leire, Lubenham, Medbourne, North Kilworth, South Kilworth, Swinford, Tilton on the Hill, Tugby, Walcote
Tier 6: Other Villages/ Hamlets	Other settlements not specifically listed in the hierarchy

A large number of options could be explored, but there is a need to ensure that options are meaningful and discrete. It is also necessary to limit the number of alternatives that are tested and presented for consultation to aid in the decision-making process. Too many options can make it difficult for communities and stakeholders to engage.

With these factors in mind, the following approaches to distribution were identified as reasonable by the Council:

- Option 1: Local Plan Strategy – This option is based on a continuation of the strategy in the currently adopted Harborough Local Plan 2019. It focuses significant growth towards the Market Towns. Settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area and Large Villages would accommodate a similar level of housing growth overall, but due to the relatively low number of commitments in the Large Villages, the amount of additional homes to be planned/allocated in the new Local Plan would be higher than in the settlements adjoining Leicester.
- Option 2: Proportional Growth – This option spreads development according to the number of households in each settlement. This option reduces the amount of growth in settlements at the top end of the hierarchy (settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area, Market Towns and Large Villages) and increases growth at the lower end (Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other settlements). This option would see higher levels of growth at the Large, Medium, Small and Other Villages/Settlements.
- Option 3: Urban Area Focus – This option focuses development towards the District’s most sustainable locations: the settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area (Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby). The rest of the District will see lower levels of growth. Note: Large Strategic Sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes were not included in this option as they are considered through Option 4.
- Option 4: Strategic Sites Focus – This option focuses development towards large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes in total (as identified

through the SHELAA 2022). These large strategic sites are generally located around the South and East of the Leicester Urban Area. The rest of the District will see lower levels of growth.

- Option 5: Market Town Focus – This option focuses growth towards the Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough) with less growth in the rest of the District.
- Option 6: Large Village Focus – This option focuses growth towards the Large Villages (Broughton Astley, Great Glen, Fleckney and Kibworth) with less growth in the rest of the District.

Strategic Sites offer the potential opportunity to deliver a level of social and other infrastructure, as well as a degree of self-containment that can help reduce car-borne transport. As a general rule, the larger the site, the greater the opportunity for infrastructure funding and sustainable benefits. Strategic Sites capable of accommodating over 1,500 homes in the SHELAA was therefore identified as a discrete option at this stage to enable an understanding of potential impacts (positive and negative) of large strategic sites (Option 4), including some sites capable of accommodating large standalone or co-dependant new settlements (>5,000 homes). Whilst strategic growth less than 1,500 homes may provide a degree sustainable benefits, they are unlikely to be significant enough to justify a scale of growth at a settlement over-and-above that which the settlement's position in hierarchy would support.

Other broad approaches to distribution were identified but subsequently dismissed as unreasonable. The outline reasons for this are presented below:

- **Large standalone/co-dependant new settlement – Option 4: Strategic Sites** considered all large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes in the SHELAA, including two very large sites capable of accommodating a standalone/codependent new settlement. A standalone/co-dependant new settlement was not therefore taken forward as a discrete option at this stage.
- **Focus on growth at smaller settlements and rural areas** - This approach was dismissed as unreasonable as it would not reflect the settlement hierarchy, nor the principles of sustainable development in the NPPF. It was therefore not considered reasonable to test levels of growth higher than Option 2 at lower end of the settlement hierarchy.
- **Even Spread Option** - Spreading development evenly across the settlement hierarchy was not considered reasonable as it would not comply with the settlement hierarchy and the principles of sustainable development.

Combining the Scale of Housing Growth and Distribution Alternatives

In order to give the appraisal context and meaning, the three scales of growth (Low, Medium, High) were combined with each of the six spatial options. This is to enable a broad understanding of effects to be identified for each of the spatial options, and how these effects would differ should the level of growth be higher or lower.

This combination resulted in 18 discrete options that were tested in the SA. For each of the options, an indicative amount of growth was apportioned to different levels of the settlement hierarchy (2024) in the District to enable an appraisal of potential effects across the District. Appendix A contains a breakdown of the 6 initial options.

These housing figures are different depending upon the focus of each distribution strategy; but also take account of the availability of deliverable and developable land in the SHELAA (2022) land. At this stage, specific sites for allocation were not identified apart from the 5 strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes in option 4.

Assessing the Initial Spatial Options

After the Issues and Options Consultation (January/February 2024) the six initial high-level options were assessed against a range of factors and the assessment used to refine them into a discrete set of more location-specific options for more detailed testing (before then selecting a preferred strategy).

With this in mind, the performance of the six initial high-level options were considered against the following factors (see Appendix E):

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Issues & Options 2024 Consultation Responses.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

Some options were considered to be more sustainable than others and were ranked accordingly (see table below). It is important to emphasise the spatial distribution options were not mutually exclusive and it was recognised that choices may need to be made about which elements of these options would be taken forward. The assessment therefore recognises potential strengths and weaknesses of the different spatial options and recommends a number of the spatial options are partially taken forward for consideration.

Rank	Spatial Option	Conclusion
1	Option 4: Strategic Sites Focus	Partially Taken Forward
2	Option 3: Urban Area Focus	Partially Taken Forward
3	Option 5: Market Towns Focus	Partially Taken Forward
4	Option 1: Local Plan	Not Taken Forward
5	Option 6: Large Village Focus	Partially Taken Forward
6	Option 2: Proportionate Growth	Not Taken Forward

Option 1- Local Plan: **Not taken forward**. This option is considered to perform forth best overall. Against the SA Objectives this option does not perform as well as Option 4: Large Strategic Sites, Option 3: Urban Area Focus and Option 5: Market Town focus. It performs slightly better than Option 2: Proportionate Growth and Option 6: Large Village Focus. This option rolls forward the broad distribution of the previous Local Plan 2011-31. Whilst this option has a spread of growth across the most sustainable locations, it focusses more growth towards the Large Villages than the Leicester Urban Area, reflecting to a degree a period of significant

unplanned speculative development prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in 2019. The Local Plan 2019 strategy was also developed on the basis of not meeting unmet need from Leicester. This option was therefore not taken forward for further consideration.

Option 2 – Proportionate Growth: **Not taken forward**. Although this option performs well in some elements (particularly in terms of supporting the vitality of rural communities and deliverability of housing), it is considered to perform the least well overall. The SA identified potential significant adverse/negative effects around access to healthcare; services and facilities; and sustainable transport. This option would not align growth and infrastructure, and would result in the least sustainable pattern of development compared to other options. As a result, it would be challenging to achieve the emerging Local Plan Objectives and compliance with the NPPF. This option demonstrates focussing significant amounts of growth in more rural areas is not sustainable and it was therefore not taken forward for further consideration.

Option 3 - Urban Area Focus: **Partially taken forward**. There are clear potential sustainable benefits of focussing growth at settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area and this option is considered to perform second best overall (after Option 4: Strategic Sites). The SA shows this option performed better compared to the other options, apart from Option 4: Large Strategic Sites which has more positive and less negative effects. It performed similar overall to Option 5: Market Towns but with the benefit of slightly less negative effects. Although the potential sites in this location would not appear to pose a deliverability challenge, the potential concentration of sites in one relatively small geographic location (Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby) may make this option challenging to deliver. There would also be very limited growth in rural areas which would not support the vitality rural communities. This option was therefore only partially taken forward as on its own, it could be challenging to meet some elements of the emerging Local Plan Objectives and the NPPF.

Option 4 – Strategic Sites Focus: **Partially taken forward**. This option strongly focusses development towards Large Strategic Sites (>1,500 homes) with limited growth in existing settlements. This option is considered to perform the best overall. The SA identified this option has the most positive and least negative effects against the SA objectives. It also performs well in terms of meeting the emerging Local Plan Objectives and compliance with the NPPF which recognises the role Strategic Sites can have in meeting need in a sustainable way. Notwithstanding the potential sustainable benefits, an over reliance on large strategic sites can present risks to delivery and limit the ability to provide a mix of sites across different locations to meet local needs. This option was therefore only partially taken forward to mitigate potential challenges that could arise from a strategy that over reliant large strategic sites.

Option 5 - Market Towns Focus: **Partially taken forward**. There are clear potential sustainable benefits of focussing growth towards the Market Towns and this option is considered to perform third best overall (after Option 4: Strategic Sites and Option 3: Urban Area Focus). Against the SA Objectives this option performed well compared to other options although it had less positive and more negative effects than Option 4: Large Strategic Sites and it performed similar overall to Option 3: Urban Area Focus but had slightly more negative effects. There was also a good degree of compliance with the emerging Local Plan Objectives and the NPPF. However, the strong focus towards the Market Towns could lead to deliverability challenges and limit the ability to meet the needs at other tiers of the settlement Hierarchy including at the Leicester Urban Area and in more rural communities. This option was therefore partially taken forward to mitigate these potential risks.

Option 6 - Large Village Focus: **Partially taken forward**. This option has a strong focus of growth towards Large Villages with limited growth in all other settlements. This Option is considered to perform fifth best overall, demonstrating that a strategy reliant on high concentrations of growth in the Large Villages would not be sustainable. Against the SA objectives this option had the least positive effects (slightly less than option 2: Proportionate Growth) and relatively high negative effects. Deliverability could be challenging although there is a spread of growth across the 4 Large Villages. It doesn't perform well against the emerging Local Plan Objectives or NPPF compliance, particularly in terms of climate change and aligning growth and infrastructure. A strategy with an over reliance on large scale growth in the Large villages would therefore not be considered sustainable. However, this option is partially taken forward on the basis that some development at the Large Villages, proportionate to their tier in the Settlement Hierarchy would provide some sustainable benefits in terms of meeting housing need. This option was therefore partially taken forward.

A Refined set of Alternatives/Options

The Scale of Housing Growth

The initial six options were considered at three different scales of growth (Low, Medium, High), informed by the latest housing monitoring data at the time (March 2023). When considering what scale(s) of growth should be taken forward into the refined options the following were taken into account:

- The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) (HENA)
- The Housing Distribution Paper (2022)
- The Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (2024) (L&L SoCG)
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Issues and Options (Regulation 18) Consultation Responses
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The NPPF (December 2023) paragraph 61 is clear that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, the Local Plan should be informed by a Local Housing Need (LHN) assessment, conducted using the Government's standard method in national planning practice guidance (PPG). The outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting-point and there may be exceptional circumstances which justify an alternative approach, including relating to particular demographic characteristics of an area. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

The PPG sets out that the standard method does not predict the impact that future Government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors may have. It also states there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates, and outlines circumstances where this may be appropriate, which include:

- Where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (i.e. Housing Deals, City Growth Deals, etc.); or
- Where strategic infrastructure improvements are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or
- An authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a Statement of Common Ground.

The PPG also requires consideration to be given to the inter-relationship with the assessed need for affordable housing. An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.

Option A - Low Growth was not taken forward for consideration through the refined options. Although the Low Scale of Growth had lower positive impact on social objectives in the SA, it does have the least negative impacts across all 6 of the Initial Spatial Options. This is to be expected as the environmental impact is likely to be lower for a smaller level of growth. However, the NPPF is clear that in addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. Given the scale of unmet need in Leicester City and the associated evidence (including the HENA, Housing Distribution Paper and the L&L SoCG), it was not considered reasonable to base the new Local Plan on the low growth option which made no provision for unmet housing need. Such an approach would not be justified or consistent with NPPF/PPG. The Low Scale of Growth was therefore not taken forward into the Refined Options.

Option B - Medium Growth was taken forward for consideration through the Refined Options. Although the Medium scale of growth had more positive impacts on social objectives in the SA, it does have more negative impacts across all 6 of the Initial Spatial Options compared to Low growth. This is to be expected as the environmental impact is likely to be higher for a larger scale of growth. The NPPF is clear that in addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. This option makes provision for a proportion of Leicester's unmet need based on above evidence (including the HENA, Housing Distribution Paper and the L&L SoCG). The affordability adjustment within the standard method represents a significant uplift to the household projections which should deal with the needs of concealed/overcrowded households and contribute to boosting both the delivery of market and affordable housing. The Medium Scale of Growth also includes a significant uplift above the standard method for Leicester's unmet housing need which will also help boost the delivery of homes (market and affordable) across the District. Option B – Medium Growth was therefore considered to be justified, consistent with NPPF/PPG, and was taken forward into the Refined Options.

Option C - High Growth was rejected and not taken forward for consideration. The SA indicates the high scale of growth option would lead to the most negative impacts across all 6 of the initial spatial options compared to the Medium and Low growth options, with comparable positive social impacts compared to Option B Medium Growth. The HENA, Housing Distribution Paper suggests there is no justification for making upwards adjustments for demographic trends, strategic infrastructure or economic growth. The area is not a growth area with funding in place to facilitate additional growth, nor are there any known strategic infrastructure improvements in place likely to drive an increase in homes locally. Whilst the PPG indicates an increase in

housing may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes, there is no basis for affordable housing specifically driving the assessment of overall housing need. The Medium Scale of Growth plans for a level of growth which is higher than the demographic base which should help the delivery of homes. Option C – High Growth was therefore not considered to be justified, consistent with the NPPF/PPG, and was not taken forward into the Refined Options.

During the Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) a number of comments were received relating to the scale of housing growth, including some of the assumptions. In light of this, all assumptions relating to Initial Option B: Medium Scale of Growth were reviewed and refined where appropriate, as set out in the table below and text that follows:

Plan period 2020-2041	Refined Option B
Local Housing Need	LHN x Plan Period (2020-41) $534 \times 21 = 11,214$
Unmet Need	SoCG unmet need 2020-36 $123 \times 16 = 1,968$
Total housing requirement (21 years)	$11,214 + 1,968 = 13,182$
15% buffer	(Requirement – Completions 2020-23) + 15% $(13,182 - 2,965) \times 0.15 = 1,533$
Requirement + 15% buffer	$13,182 + 1,533 = 14,715$
Existing completions, commitments, allocations and windfalls* deliverable by 2041	8,417
Residual requirement	$14,715 - 8,417 = 6,298$

*This does not include any supply from the Scraftoft North SDA which at the time (summer 2024) was subject to a planning application. Delivery of the site was uncertain due to viability evidence. More refined assumptions around the timing and delivery rates at Lutterworth East SDA were also taken into account. This is why the level of housing commitments was lower than for the six initial options.

- Local Housing Need Assumptions – Local Housing Need was calculated using the Government’s standard method. The figure of 534 home per year was calculated based on data published in 2022. The latest data (2024) suggests the housing need for the District is 510 homes per year. This figure is not significantly different and the 2022

figure was used to inform the Housing & Economic Needs Assessment, Housing Distribution Paper 2022, the L&L SoCG and Local Housing and Employment Evidence. Using the figure of 534 as a starting point is therefore considered to be justified by the evidence and consistent with the NPPF.

- Plan Period - The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities have agreed a SoCG to deal with Leicester's unmet housing need. Leicester City's Regulation 19 Local Plan (January 2023) has a plan period of 2020 to 2036. The Harborough Local Plan therefore has a base date of 2020 to align with the City and plan for the unmet need over a consistent period. However, the Harborough Local Plan runs to 2041 to ensure the plan complies with the NPPF requirement to plan 15 years ahead from the date of adoption (currently estimated to be in 2026).
- Leicester's Unmet Needs Assumptions - The L&L SoCG (2022) apportions an additional 123 homes per year between 2020 and 2036 to Harborough District (i.e. 1,968 homes in total) to help meet Leicester's unmet need. This aligns with the Plan Period of Leicester's Local Plan which is currently progressing through the Examination process. It is not considered justified to make further provision for unmet need beyond 2036 at present. Leicester City is one of the 20 biggest cities/urban areas in England. It is the most sustainable location for growth in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area with significant potential for brownfield development opportunities compared Harborough District. Leicester's Local Plan (regulation 19) is based on a comprehensive assessment of capacity to 2036. It is therefore not considered appropriate to accommodate unmet need beyond 2036 in the absence of a full and comprehensive assessment of capacity over this timescale. Identifying urban capacity is particularly difficult to do over long timescales as it is difficult to predict what new opportunities (including brownfield redevelopment opportunities) may become available in the medium/long term. Planning for additional unmet need in a rural district like Harborough in the absence of a full and comprehensive review of Leicester's capacity post 2036 is therefore not considered to be justified as it could result in an unsustainable pattern of growth across the HMA.
- Contingency Assumptions – It is not considered justified to apply a supply contingency to homes that have already been built as there is no risk of non/slow delivery from this element of the housing supply. When developing the Initial Options for the Issues & Options Consultation, there was considerable uncertainty of the type and size of sites that would make up the housing supply of the Local Plan, a cautious 20% supply buffer was therefore applied to the Initial Options. In selecting an appropriate contingency for the Refined Options, consideration was given to the type of sites each option could potentially deliver, including the role of strategic sites (see below). Taking this into account, a 15% contingency is considered a reasonable balance between the need to ensure the plan has sufficient flexibility to respond to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. slower build rates or delays on bringing sites forward) and the need to protect the environment of the District. Whilst the final size of the supply contingency may evolve when selecting the preferred option, the scale of growth would be subject to sustainability appraisal and further consideration.

- Existing Housing Completions, Commitments Allocations and Windfall assumptions – Housing completions are monitored annually and contribute towards meeting the housing requirement in the plan. The latest data indicated 2,965 homes were built between 2020 and 2023. Sites with planning permission and allocated (in the existing Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans) have been assessed. Those considered deliverable by 2041 were included. Based on the latest information at the time, 1,500 (of the 2,750 homes) have been included from Lutterworth East SDA by 2041 which has hybrid planning permission. The Scraftoft North SDA allocated for 1,200 homes in the current Local Plan 2019 was not included as it does not have planning permission and there is considerable uncertainty about its delivery and viability. A windfall allowance was also included, based on the latest evidence of 450 homes (i.e. 45 homes per year from 2031 to 2041). This will be reviewed as new data becomes available.

Refined Option B: Medium Growth would provide land to accommodate 14,715 homes 2020-41. This is based on similar principles as Initial Option B above). However, the approach has been refined as set out above by removing any contribution to unmet need post 2036; applying a 15% buffer (rather than 20%); and not applying the buffer to homes already built. Using the figure of 14,715 homes 2020-41 and taking away existing commitments, completions, allocated sites expected to be delivered in the plan period and windfalls, leaves a ‘to be found’ figure of 6,300 (rounded) new homes over the plan period. Refined Option B: Medium Growth is to therefore plan for a supply of 14,715 new homes 2020-41, with 6,300 (rounded) through the allocation of land.

This is considered to be a reasonable alternative justified by the NPPF, the HENA 2022, the Housing Distribution Paper 2022, the L&L SoCG 2024.

Housing Distribution

The Role of Large Strategic Sites (>1,500 homes) - There are clear sustainable benefits of large strategic sites (>1,500 homes) and the SA showed this option has the most positive and least negative effects. NPPF paragraph 74 says the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities. This provided a strong starting point for developing the refined spatial options.

Notwithstanding the sustainable benefits and potential for positive effects, long lead-in times highlighted significant risks of a strategy over reliant on large strategic sites, including the ability to maintain a supply of homes across the plan period and the need to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, with specific deliverable sites for the first five years, and specific developable sites or broad locations for years 6-10 and, where possible for years 11-15 (NPPF paragraph 69).

Taking this into account the refined options were developed on the basis of including no more than 2 large strategic sites (over 1,500 homes). There is already 1 site greater than 1,500 homes in the housing supply at Lutterworth East. This is a commitment with hybrid planning permission for 2,750 homes and associated infrastructure. This leaves the potential for no more than 1 new large strategic site (>1,500 homes) to be allocated through the new Local Plan.

Initial Option 4: Strategic Sites Focus relied on the delivery of a number of large Strategic Sites (>1,500) and was therefore only partially taken forward for further consideration despite the potential sustainable benefits of this option.

The refined options were therefore developed with the potential benefits of large strategic sites in mind, but with a limit of up to two Strategic Sites in the supply (i.e. 1 new large Strategic Site) to ensure the refined options were consistent with the NPPF – i.e. deliverable, able to maintain a supply of housing land over the plan period, and provide a mix of specific deliverable and developable sites.

Given the potential impact of large strategic sites on the distribution of growth and the need for the refined options to be more location specific, Large Strategic Sites (over 1,500 homes) were assessed (Appendix D), including sites submitted through the Call for sites 2024. The table below sets out the conclusion (more detail can be found in Appendix D):

SHELAA Reference	Site Name	Potential Capacity (Homes)	Conclusion
21/8229	Farmcare Estate, Stoughton	10,000	Not taken forward into the Refined Options
21/8217	Whetstone Pastures Garden Village, Willoughby Waterleys	5,000 – 6,000 (1,017 in HDC* and 4,000 – 5,000 in BDC**)	Not taken forward into the Refined Options
21/8192 & 24/10498	Land east of Broughton Astley and North of Dunton Bassett and Ashby Magna	5,000 – 5,677	Not taken forward into the Refined Options
21/8178 & 24/10137	Land at Newton Harcourt (Newton Croft)	3,176 – 3,237	Not taken forward into the Refined Options
21/8093	Land at Stretton Hall Farm, Chestnut Drive, Great Glen	1,707	Not taken forward into the Refined Options
24/8631	Land South of Gartree Road and land at Stretton Hall Farm	4,000 (3,000 in HDC and 1,000 in OWBC***)	Taken Forward into the Refined Options
24/10433	Land South of the A4303, Lutterworth	2,415	Taken Forward into the Refined Options

*Harborough District Council **Blaby District Council ***Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

The assessment therefore concludes Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm (24/8631) and Land South of the A4303 (24/10433), should be taken forward into the refined options for further consideration as part of the development strategy. The scale of these developments and proximity to sustainable settlements (along with other considerations) means these two sites were taken forward.

Combining Housing Distribution Options – Option 4: Strategic Sites was tested as a separate discrete option in the initial six options to understand the potential impacts (positive and negative) of focussing growth towards Large Strategic Sites (>1,500). However, Option 3: Urban Area Focus and Option 5: Market Towns focus also demonstrated clear sustainable benefits and were broadly comparable in terms of positive and negative effects when assessed through the SA.

Given the potential sustainable benefits of development at Large Strategic Sites, followed by development at the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns, the two selected large strategic sites were combined into a new Refined Urban Area Spatial Option, and a new Refined Market

Towns Spatial Option (as one site adjoins the Leicester Urban Area at Oadby and the other adjoins the Market Town of Lutterworth). A third option was also developed which was a combination (or hybrid) of the Refined Urban Area and Market Towns options.

These three options tested different combinations of growth at the higher tiers of settlement hierarchy, including the Large Villages. Although the sustainable benefits of a Large Village focussed strategy (Initial Option 6 above) performed less well than Strategic Sites, Urban Area and Market Towns there were some potential positive impacts. The Large Villages contain a significant proportion of the Districts existing homes, population and have a reasonable level of services/facilities. In this respect, they are a sustainable location for growth and have a strategically important role to play in the delivery of homes across the District, in line with their level in the settlement hierarchy. Different levels of growth were therefore considered for Large Villages across the 3 options.

Harborough District is predominantly rural. In rural areas the NPPF (para 82 and 83) requires planning policies to be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

Initial Option 2: Proportionate Growth had tested high numbers of homes at the lower tiers of the settlement hierarchy, including Medium and Small Villages, and it was the least sustainable option. In developing the refined options, the amount of growth at Medium and Small Villages was held constant, reflecting the fact that significant amounts of growth at these tiers of the settlement hierarchy was not sustainable and therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the District-wide strategy. Notwithstanding this, a limited amount of growth could play an important role in maintaining the vitality of rural communities in line with national policy. The amount of growth for the Medium and Small villages is considered to provide an appropriate balance between maintaining and enhancing the vitality of rural communities, whilst avoiding unsustainable levels of growth in rural areas.

Taking this into account, the six initial spatial options were refined into three new options testing different combinations of growth between settlement tiers (i.e. Urban Area, Market Towns and Large Villages). These options were developed to give an understanding of the most sustainable strategy whilst also being deliverable and capable of providing a mix of sites across the District (further detail on the Refined Options are set out in Appendix B):

- **Refined Option 1: Market Towns Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth).** This option focusses high levels of growth towards the two Market Towns, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes at Lutterworth. Most of the remaining growth then cascades down to the next tier of the settlement hierarchy (Large Villages) which also receive a high-level of growth under this option. The Urban Area has a low level of growth under this option.
- **Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Oadby).** This option has high levels of growth towards the Urban Area, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes adjoining Oadby. This option gives low levels of growth at the two Market Towns and Large Villages.

- Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site at Oadby).** This option is a combination of Refined Options 1 and 2 above. It focusses medium levels of growth towards the Urban Area (including a new strategic site at Oadby over 1,500 homes), Market Towns and Large Villages compared to the options above. In the Market Towns this option sees a higher level of growth at Market Harborough and a lower level of growth Lutterworth reflecting the difference in size between the two settlements.

The justification for Option 3 testing a higher level of growth at Market Harborough and lower level of growth at Lutterworth takes into account the size of each settlement and the level of existing housing completions and commitments. Although a Market Town, Lutterworth has less than half the households that Market Harborough has. It also has a high level of completions and commitments relative to its size which mean that existing completions and commitments (including the 2,750 homes at Lutterworth East) would result in an increase of around 70% in the size of settlement. This is a substantial level of growth for a settlement of this size, and justifies the approach taken in Option 3 as reasonable.

Combining the Refined Scale of Housing Growth and Distribution Alternatives

In order to give the appraisal context and meaning, the Refined Option B: Medium Scale of Growth was combined with each of the three refined spatial options. This is to enable an understanding of effects (positive and negative) for each of the refined spatial options.

This combination resulted in 3 discrete options that were tested in the SA (see table below).

Housing Distribution Strategy	Refined Option B: Medium (14,715 homes)
Refined Option 1: Market Town Focus (including strategic site adjoining Lutterworth)	RO1
Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including strategic site adjoining Oadby)	RO2
Refined Option 3: Urban Area (including Strategic Site at Oadby) and Market Town Focus	RO3

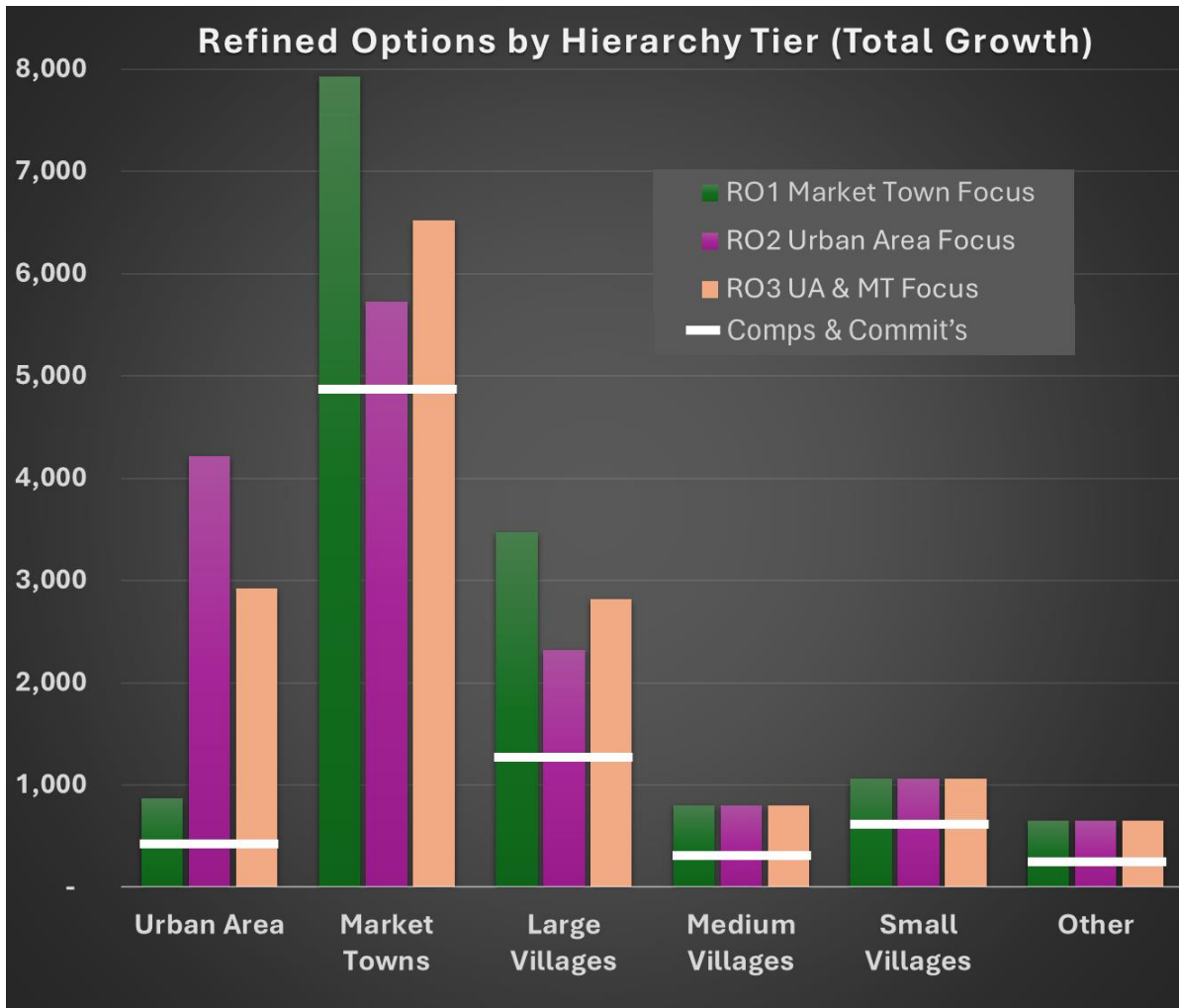
For each of the options in the table above, an indicative amount of growth was apportioned to different levels of the settlement hierarchy (2024) in the District to enable an appraisal of potential effects at the settlement level as well as for the District as a whole.

These housing figures are different depending upon the focus of each distribution strategy. The options are broken down in detail in Appendix B, setting out the broad indication of housing that each settlement may accommodate under each option, taking account of land availability and the need for a mix of sites.

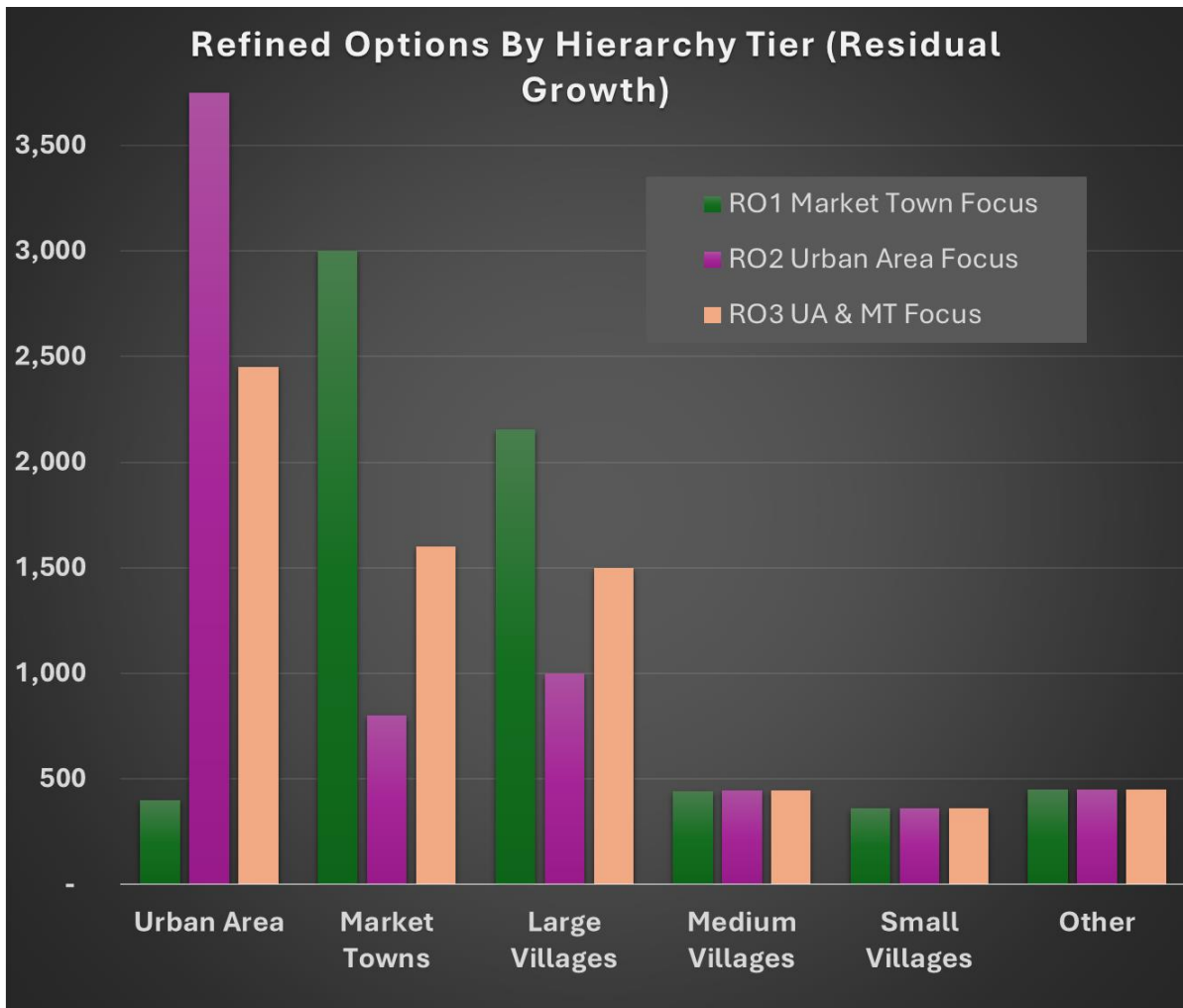
The graph below sets out the levels of growth at each tier of the Settlement Hierarchy for the three Refined Options. It shows 'Total Growth' over the plan period and therefore includes:

- Completions 2020-23;
- Commitments at 1st April 2023 which are expected to be built by the end of the plan period (2041); and,
- Additional homes requiring allocation through the new Local Plan

Note: For the two potential new large strategic sites at the Leicester Urban Area (Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm; and Lutterworth (Land South of the A4303) only 1,200 homes were assumed to be delivered by 2041. The white horizontal lines show the level of completions, commitments and allocations to be delivered by 2041.

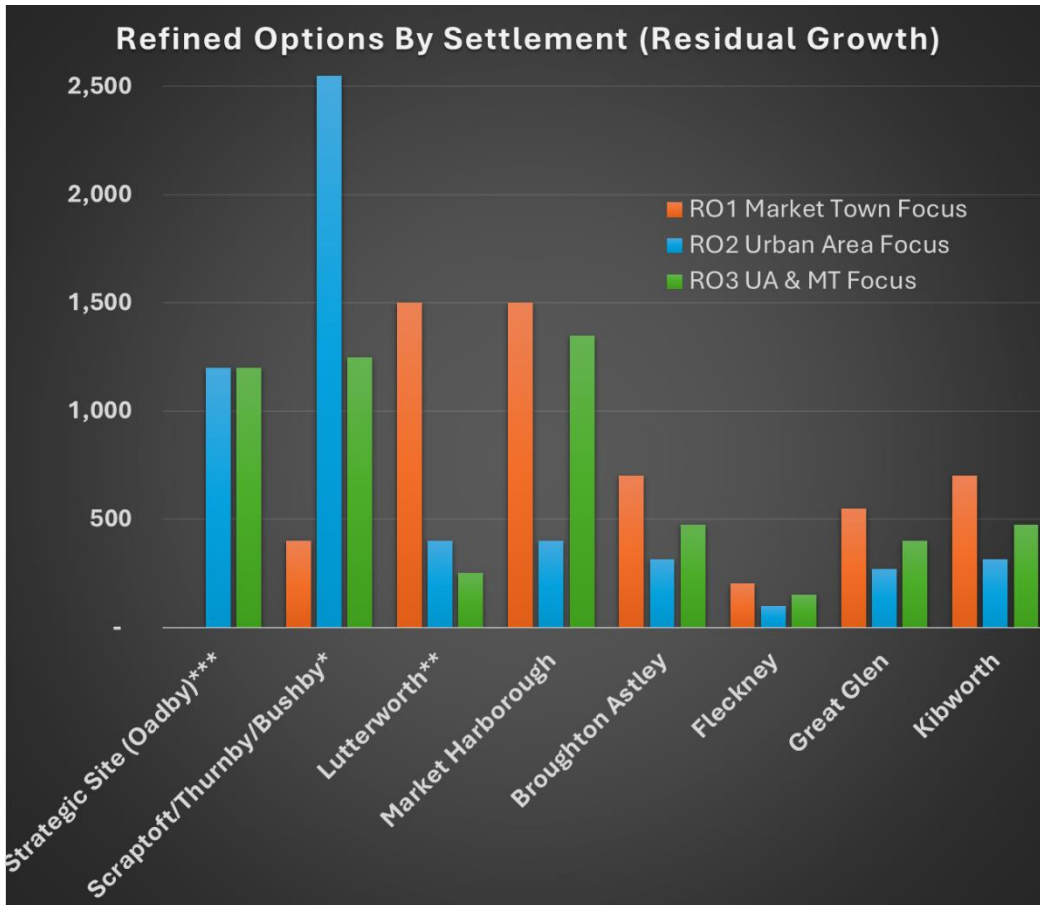
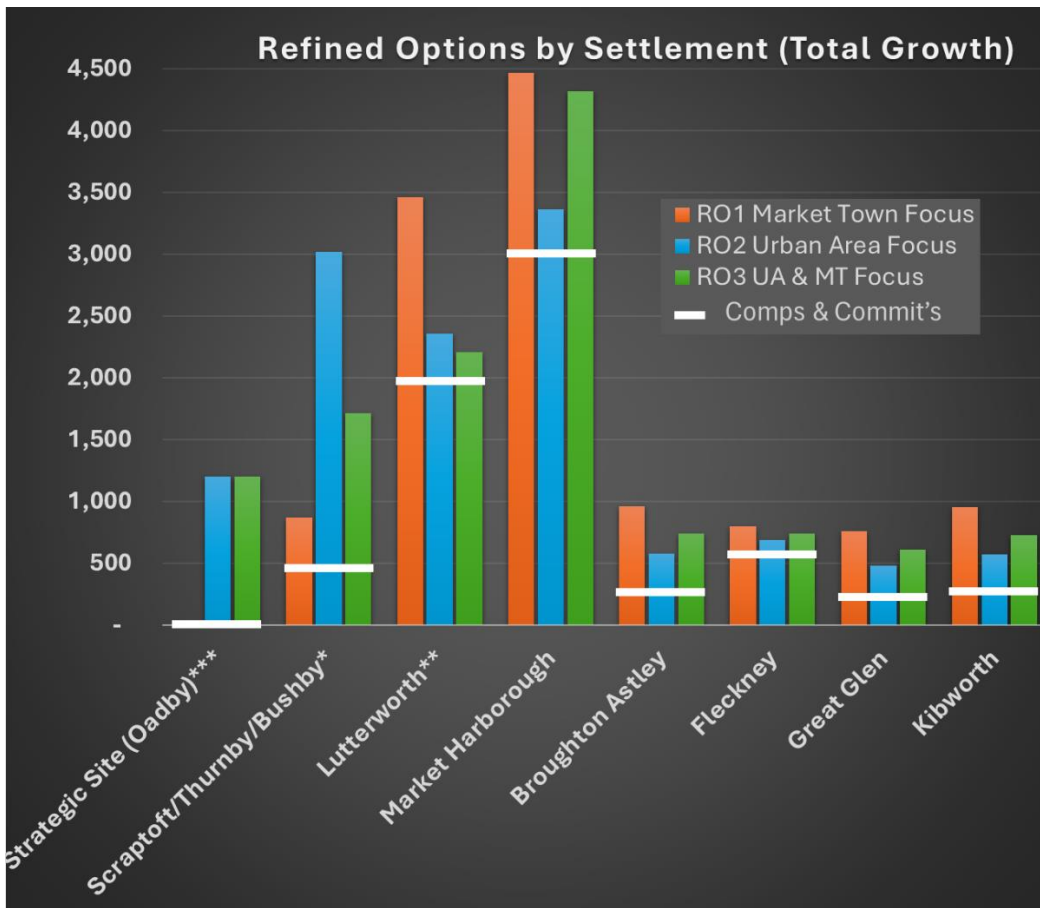


The Graph below shows how the residual 'to be found' figure of 6,300 homes was distributed to each tier of the Settlement Hierarchy across the three refined options:



The Graphs above show the range of housing growth tested across the three refined spatial options which result in high, medium and low levels tested at each tier of the hierarchy depending on how the housing is distributed across the District. Option 3: Market Town & Urban Area focus generally falls towards the middle of the range for each tier.

The Graph below shows the impact of the 3 refined spatial options at the settlement level from Large Villages upwards.



The graphs above show the range of housing growth tested across the three refined spatial options generally result in high, medium and low levels tested at each settlement depending on how the housing is distributed across the District. Option 3: Market Town & Urban Area focus generally falls towards the middle of the range for each settlement. The notable exception being in the Market Towns. This is because Option 3 has a low level of growth at Lutterworth and a high level of growth at Market Harborough. There are a significant number of housing completions and commitments in both Market Towns, with Lutterworth having about 2,000 and Market Harborough about 3,000 expected to be built by 2041.

Although Lutterworth and Market Harborough are both at the same tier of the Settlement Hierarchy, representations were received about the size and roles of the two Market Towns. Although the Council consider the settlement hierarchy to be justified, it is recognised that there are some differences, including that Lutterworth is significantly smaller than Market Harborough and does not have a railway station.

Census data from 2021 indicates that Lutterworth contained 4,560 households while Market Harborough is more than double that size with 10,800. The housing completions and commitments above only include 1,500 homes of the 2,750 which have planning permission at Lutterworth East. If this is taken into account, the level of housing completions and commitments rises to 3,209 homes in Lutterworth compared to 2,967 in Market Harborough. 3,209 homes represents a 70% increase in households at Lutterworth compared to a 27% increase at Market Harborough.

Option 3: Urban Area and Market Town Focus therefore focusses significant additional growth towards Market Harborough with low growth at Lutterworth, reflecting the relative difference in size and services. The impact of this means that under Refined Option 3, Market Harborough would grow by 41% during the plan period (2020-41) with Lutterworth at 50% (2020-41), rising to 70% (taking into account full build-out at Lutterworth East post 2041).

Assessing the Refined Spatial Options

The refined options were assessed against a range of factors and the assessment used to inform the preferred option (Appendix F). Part of the Council's evidence base includes Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 1) carried out jointly with authorities across South Leicestershire (Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Blaby District, Oadby & Wigston Borough and Harborough District). This work is strategic in nature and assessed the high-level impact of 3 different spatial options across south Leicestershire. The spatial options considered for Harborough District broadly reflect the 3 Refined Options above. This work concluded at the south Leicestershire level, that there were no substantial cumulative differences across the options, which suggest that none of the spatial growth options is significantly better or worse in terms of transport related impacts and mitigation needs. Although it suggested that Option 3 (which includes Refined Option 3 above) may be more favourable to support the delivery of mitigation.

The Refined Options were considered against the following factors (Appendix F):

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

Some options were considered to be more sustainable than others and were ranked accordingly (see table below). The approach therefore recognises potential strengths and weaknesses of the different spatial options.

Rank	Spatial Option	Conclusion
1	Refined Option 3: Urban Area & Market Town Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby)	Taken Forward
2	Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby)	Not Taken Forward
3	Refined Option 1: Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth)	Not Taken Forward

Refined Option 1: Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth). **Not taken forward.** This Option focusses higher levels of growth towards the two Market Towns (including a new Large Strategic Site south of Lutterworth) and the Large Villages. It therefore has less growth towards the Leicester Urban Area at the top of the settlement hierarchy than the other refined options. This option has the least positive and most negative impacts against the SA objectives. It is considered the most challenging from a deliverability perspective, taking into account the high level and nature of existing housing commitments at Lutterworth in particular, and performs least well against the emerging Local Plan objectives, including Delivering Homes, Tackling Climate Change, and Enabling Supporting Infrastructure. Compliance with the NPPF would also be challenging given the limited growth at the top of the settlement hierarchy and the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester. This option was therefore ranked third and not taken forward.

Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby). **Not taken forward.** This Option performs better than Refined Option 1 but slightly worse than Refined Option 3 and is therefore ranked second overall. Against the SA objectives it performs better than refined option 1 with more positive impacts, and similar to refined option 3 but slightly worse against one objective. Although it contains high levels of growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy, it proposes substantial growth at Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby. Delivering this amount of growth by 2041 in a small area is likely to be challenging. Whilst it broadly meets the emerging Local Plan objectives, the limited growth in the Market Towns in particular carries a degree to risk to some objectives. This option is broadly compliant with the NPPF, however, deliverability challenges for the scale of growth at the Leicester Urban Area and alignment of growth and infrastructure due to the limited development at the Market Towns could make compliance challenging. This option is therefore ranked second overall and not taken forward.

Refined Option 3: Urban Area & Market Town Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby) **Taken Forward as Preferred Option.** This option combines elements of refined options 1 and 2 and performs best overall. The SA indicates this option performs similarly to refined option 2

when considered against the majority of SA objectives, largely due to the comparable scale of overall growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy with similar environmental sensitivities at the proposed development locations. However, Refined Option 3 is considered to perform better against SA Objective 9: Housing by spreading development more evenly across the highest tiers of the settlement hierarchy. The spread of growth also makes this option the most deliverable option by avoiding overconcentration of development at Lutterworth and Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby which could cause deliverability challenges in the other options. This option also performs well against the emerging Local Plan objectives including objective 1: Delivering Homes, Objective 3: Tackling Climate Change, and Objective 5: Enabling Supporting Infrastructure. This option is also considered to comply with NPPF by focussing development towards the most sustainable locations at a scale that is deliverable and capable of providing a mix of sites and types of homes to meet needs, taking into account the potential role of district in meeting unmet need from the Leicester. The approach would help best align growth and infrastructure, and help mitigate the impacts of climate change. This option is therefore considered to be an appropriate strategy to inform new Local Plan and was therefore taken forward as the preferred Development Strategy.

Selection of a Preferred Option

Two stages of appraisal have been undertaken to establish the implications of the spatial strategy options. The first tested six initial high-level options at three different scales of growth (Appendix A). These options were assessed (Appendix E) and the outcome of this assessment used to inform a period of options refinement informed by an assessment of Large Strategic Sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes (Appendix D). Three Refined Options were developed (Appendix B) and a second stage of appraisal was undertaken (Appendix F). This process has therefore considered 21 discrete options in total (i.e. 6 initial high-level options at 3 scales of growth, and 3 refined options).

Refined Option 3 is considered to be the best overall and was therefore considered to be an appropriate strategy that is deliverable, able to meet the areas development needs (including unmet need) and consistent with the NPPF. It was therefore selected as the preferred option for the Local Plan Development Strategy. This development strategy informed the selection of sites for allocation (see site selection methodology paper).

Due to the capacity of sites, the site selection process resulted in some very minor differences in the overall number of homes at settlements/tiers of the hierarchy. Appendix C sets out the final Local Plan housing distribution strategy. The differences relate to the capacity of allocated sites at Lutterworth which are 70 homes higher than in Refined Option 3 and the Medium Village site allocations have a capacity of 2 homes higher than Refined Option 3.

Identifying a Development Strategy for Employment Land

In order to contribute to the achievement of economic growth aspirations, it is important that the Local Plan identifies the need for employment land and an appropriate distribution strategy for meeting such needs.

It is crucial that housing and employment needs are well balanced, and for the plan to promote a strategy that supports good accessibility to job opportunities for communities.

This section discusses how the evidence has been considered, and potential alternatives relating to developing a development strategy for employment. The approach to meeting the

needs of Strategic Warehousing (i.e. large B8 units larger than 9,000 sqm floorspace) are considered in separate evidence due to the specific requirements of the strategic warehousing sector.

The options process for employment land provision have been informed primarily by the conclusions of the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Needs Assessment 2022 (HENA) and the Harborough Local Housing & Employment Evidence (2025), taking into account the NPPF, Sustainability Appraisal, emerging Local Plan Objectives, and consultation responses where appropriate.

Government policy requires plans to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt taking into account local business needs, wider opportunities for development and the specific locational requirements of different sectors. As with housing, this requires an appropriate strategy considering reasonable alternatives based on proportionate evidence and taking into account any needs that cannot be met in neighbouring areas (unmet need).

Identifying an appropriate the development strategy for employment followed 2 main stages:

- Stage 1: A set of three spatial options and three scales of employment growth (Low, Medium and High).
- Stage 2: Selection of the Preferred Employment Strategy.

Stage 1 – Initial Options:

The Issues and Options consultation (Jan/Feb 2024) set out 3 options for the scale and location of employment growth across the District over the proposed plan period 2020 to 2041.

Scale of Employment Growth

The starting point for determining the amount of economic growth, or employment land and jobs, that should be planned for is an economic needs assessment. The initial options were developed based on the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) published in June 2022. It identified Employment Land needs for the District and Functional Economic Market Area (i.e. Leicester & Leicestershire) to 2041.

Total Employment Needs 2021 - 2041		
Harborough District	Square metres	Hectares
Offices including Research and Development	29,200	8.3
Industrial and Distribution (excluding strategic warehousing)	194,100	48.5
Total	223,300	56.9

Taking into account completions, commitments and allocations at the time left the following residual requirement to 2041 or ‘to be found’ figure:

	Offices including Research and Development		Industrial and Distribution (excluding strategic warehousing)		Total
	Hectares	Sqm	Hectares	Sqm	
Need to 2041	8.3	29,200	48.5	194,100	56.9 hectares (223,300sqm)
<u>Minus</u> Total (Net) Completions 2020/21 – 2022/23	-0.5	-301	4.1	12,629	3.6 hectares (12,328sqm)
<u>Minus</u> (Net) Commitments at 31/3/23	17.2	70,900	45.3	157,656	62.5 hectares (228,556sqm)
Residual requirement to 2041	-8.4	-41,399	-0.9	+23,815	-9.2 hectares (-17,584sqm)

The table shows the amount of new employment land needed to 2041 (the residual requirement) is negative which meant there was enough land identified for both offices and industrial uses to meet the need identified in the HENA to 2041 at that time. However, looking longer term to 2051 and taking into account the current oversupply the HENA indicated a long-term need an additional 10.2 hectares.

Neighbouring Leicester City has an unmet industrial need to 2036. To meet Government requirements, the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities commissioned consultants to prepare an Employment Distribution Paper apportioning the unmet industrial need to neighbouring districts. This evidence, which informed the Statement of Common Ground, suggests there should be no increase to Harborough's employment requirement. The situation regarding any unmet employment needs in the FEMA beyond 2036 is unknown.

Taking the above into account three alternative options for the scale of employment growth were identified and consulted on through the Issues and Options consultation:

- **Option A (Low Growth):** Make no additional allocations of employment land in Harborough District.
- **Option B (Medium Growth):** Adopt a longer-term approach and allocate additional land for employment to maintain a flexible supply and support sustainable development.
- **Option C (High Growth):** Plan for greater growth to meet any enhanced economic aspirations or regeneration priorities for the District.

Options for the Location of Employment Growth

Government policy requires local plans to promote a sustainable pattern of development.

The current focus for employment development is within and adjoining Market Harborough and Lutterworth, and to a lesser extent some of the District's larger villages. Going forward any distribution of employment growth will need to address local business needs.

Depending on the scale of growth, the following three broad locational options were identified:

- **Option 1:** Intensifying the density of employment uses in existing employment areas in appropriate and sustainable locations. This option focuses on making more efficient use

of land and recognises the marginal viability of employment development in Harborough District.

- **Option 2:** Continue with the current approach of focussing new employment land in the District’s main economic centres (Market Harborough, Lutterworth) and larger sustainable settlements. This would concentrate growth in our most sustainable settlements which accommodate or are most accessible to the resident workforce.
- **Option 3:** Align new employment land provision with areas of significant housing growth. This would achieve a balance of jobs and homes in areas of significant growth, be that settlements or strategic sites.

Stage 2: Selection of the Preferred Employment Strategy

After the Issues and Options Consultation (January/February 2024) the options were considered against a range of factors used to inform a preferred option.

Scale of Employment Growth Appraisal

The Scale of Growth Options (Low, Medium and High) were assessed and taken forward as follows:

Scale of Employment Growth Option	Conclusion
Option A (Low Growth): No additional allocations of employment land.	Not Taken Forward
Option B (Medium Growth): Adopt a longer-term approach and allocate additional land for employment to maintain a flexible supply and support sustainable development.	Taken Forward
Option C (High Growth): Plan for greater growth to meet any enhanced economic aspirations or regeneration priorities.	Not Taken Forward

Option A (Low Growth): No additional allocations - was not taken forward as the preferred option. The Sustainability Appraisal identified the low growth option proposes to make no employment allocations and therefore is likely to result in negligible effects against the SA objectives. However, the Local Housing and Employment Study (2025) identified an employment need slightly higher than the HENA 2022 with limited opportunity for intensification. This option would therefore not meet the employment needs of the area and was not considered to be compliant with the NPPF, or aligned with the emerging Local Plan objective of creating jobs and diversifying the economy.

Option B (Medium Growth): Adopt a longer-term approach and allocate additional land for employment to maintain a flexible supply and support sustainable development – was

taken forward as the preferred option for the scale of growth. The Sustainability Appraisal identified comparable effects for the medium and high growth options, with both resulting in an equal number of negative effects as a result of employment-related development. The Local Housing and Employment Study (2025) indicates there is a limited need to allocate additional land to meet employment needs, provide flexibility in supply and support sustainable development. Planning for significantly higher growth than needed could be challenging to deliver and increases the potential for negative effects against the SA Objectives due to the release of additional greenfield sites. This option was therefore taken forward as is considered to perform best overall by complying with; the NPPF requirements to support economic growth, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development; the emerging Local Plan objective of creating jobs and diversifying the economy; at a scale of growth that would be deliverable.

Option C (High Growth): Plan for greater growth to meet any enhanced economic aspirations or regeneration priorities – Was not taken forward as the preferred option. The Sustainability Appraisal shows this option performs the best as it plans for greater growth and would provide the largest variety of employment opportunities. However, it would result in an equal number of negative effects as Option 2 (Medium Growth) but the larger scale of development under the high growth option could mean these negative effects are more likely to occur. The Local Housing & Employment Study (2025) identified that only a limited amount of additional employment would be required to meet employment land needs, and provide a flexible supply supporting sustainable development. Planning for additional large-scale growth across the District could make negative effects more likely to occur and is more likely to be challenging to achieve from a deliverability perspective. This option was therefore not taken forward as the preferred option.

Options for the Location of Employment Growth Appraisal

It is important to emphasise the spatial distribution options were not mutually exclusive and it was recognised that choices may need to be made about which elements of these options would be taken forward. The approach therefore recognises potential strengths and weaknesses of the different options. The performance of the locational options was considered against the following factors (Appendix G):

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Issues & Options 2024 Consultation Responses.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

Location of Employment Growth Option	Conclusion
Option 1: Intensifying the density of employment uses in existing employment areas in appropriate and sustainable locations.	Not Taken Forward
Option 2: Continue with the current approach of focussing new employment land in the District’s main economic centres (Market Harborough, Lutterworth) and larger sustainable settlements.	Partially Taken Forward
Option 3: Align new employment land provision with areas of significant housing growth.	Partially Taken Forward

Option 1: Intensifying the density of employment uses in existing employment areas in appropriate and sustainable locations – The Sustainability Appraisal indicates this option has the least negative effects as it supports intensifying the density of existing employment uses. This will minimise the take up of new land for development, including greenfield land and offers the opportunity to take advantage of existing sustainable transport options by locating development in the most sustainable locations. However, the Local Housing Employment evidence has identified a slightly higher need than the HENA (2022) and limited opportunities for intensification. This option is therefore unlikely to meet employment needs which would conflict with the requirements of the NPPF, the emerging Local Plan objective of creating jobs and diversifying the economy. This option was therefore not taken forward

Option 2: Continue with the current approach of focussing new employment land in the District’s main economic centres (Market Harborough, Lutterworth) and larger sustainable settlements – The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that overall this option has the highest number of negative effects, although only slightly more than Option 3. However, this option focuses employment development to the main economic centres which includes Market Harborough/Lutterworth and larger sustainable settlements. These locations are the most sustainable and therefore could offer opportunities to take advantage of sustainable transport options. Focussing development towards these locations would give potential to provide a varied portfolio of employment provision in a range of geographical locations which are attractive and offer a choice to the market, as well as, aligning the provision of jobs with the largest concentrations of existing and future residential development in the District. This option is therefore considered to be compliant with NPPF, emerging Local Plan objectives and be deliverable by providing a range locations for employment land in locations that are attractive to market. This option was therefore taken forward, along with Option 3 below.

Option 3: Align new employment land provision with areas of significant housing growth – The Sustainability Appraisal indicates this option supports the development of land for employment use which could result in the loss of greenfield land and negative effects are

therefore expected against a number of SA objectives. Aligning employment development with areas of significant housing growth could help to minimise commuting distances and offer opportunities for residents take up active travel opportunities to commute to work. The Local Housing & Employment Study (2025) recommends limited additional provision to help address the issue of flexibility ensuring delivery against need across all employment uses, and to address a geographical gap in employment provision around the Leicester urban fringe area as part of any strategic development area (to help support a balance of homes and jobs and the delivery of sustainable places). There is a degree of overlap with Option 2 which focuses employment development towards main economic centres aligning with areas of significant housing growth. However, a key part of the Development Strategy for housing includes a Large Strategic Site on Land South of Gartree Road adjoining the Leicester Urban Area where there is a potential gap in employment provision. This option is therefore taken forward (in combination with Option 2) to support the co-location of jobs and homes, including on a key strategic site for delivering the housing strategy. This approach ensures the employment strategy supports a sustainable new community with access to employment opportunities within the development itself in-line with the NPPF; meets a geographic gap in employment provision; provides flexibility and choice to the employment land supply in an area attractive to the market.

Conclusion on Preferred Employment Development Strategy

Taking into account the above, the preferred option for the employment development strategy is Option B (Medium Growth) and a combination of Spatial Option 2 and 3 above. The Local Housing & Employment Study (2025) indicates there is only a limited need for additional allocations to meet needs, provide flexibility in supply and meet geographical gaps in provision. Protecting and providing new employment land in the main economic and residential centres, will result in a mix of sites that are attractive to market and provide sustainable benefits in terms of the co-location of jobs and homes, both for existing and future populations as new residential development comes forward. This approach aligns with the NPPF, emerging local plan objectives and is likely to be more deliverable.

Delivering the Preferred Employment Strategy

The Local Housing and Employment Study (2025) carried out by the consultancy Icen, tests the findings on employment land needs set out in the Leicester and Leicester HENA to take account of local circumstances and market dynamics, and to reflect the plan period (2020-41).

Drawing the analysis together across commercial uses, a total local employment land need is shown for 60.1 ha of land over the 2020-41 plan period. This is very marginally higher than the 57 ha in the Leicester & Leicestershire HENA (2022). When compared to employment land completions and commitments, a modest shortfall remains.

The Local Housing and Employment Study (2025) therefore recommends that additional employment land allocations through the new Local Plan should be considered to address the modest shortfall, and recommends that where is significant un-consented land within proposed Key Employment Area and General Employment Area designations, the land should be allocated in the new Local Plan. The table below sets out the supply and demand balance assuming this land is allocated.

	E(g)(i) Offices	E(g)(ii) R&D	E(g)(iii) Light Industrial	B2 Industrial	Non- Strategic B8 (units <9,000 sqm)	Total (Ha)
Need, 2020-41	6.8	2.8	13.0	23.5	14.1	60.2
Gross Completions 2020/21 – 2022/23)	0.3	0.0	2.1	1.1	1.8	5.1
Commitments at 31/03/23*	11.3	-0.6	4.5	11.6	23.4	50.2
Residual Need to plan for (at 31/03/23)	+4.8	-3.4	-6.5	-10.8	+11.1	-4.8
Recommended allocations to roll forward	4.1	2.4	3.5	0.8	0.0	10.8
Supply/Demand Balance	+8.9	-1.0	-3.0	-10.0	+11.1	+5.9

The quantitative supply-demand position identifies a modest total surplus of 5.9 ha of employment land at the district level. The current supply position provides a varied portfolio of employment provision in a range of geographical locations which are attractive and offer a choice to the market. There is therefore limited need to identify new allocations, beyond allocating vacant land within the Key and General Employment Areas, to meet the district's need to 2041.

However, the evidence points to limited existing employment floorspace provision around the Leicester urban fringe despite the strong access to labour. Whilst this is not a primary industrial market, there are key A-road corridors which run through the area – the A6 and A46 – which offer the potential to accommodate modest industrial schemes to support local SME occupiers; and the Local Housing and Employment Study (2025) considers there is a particular case for employment land provision should major urban extensions to the Leicester Urban Area be brought forwards to provide a choice of local employment opportunities.

The new Local Plan includes a Large Strategic Site (Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm) adjoining the Leicester Urban Area. The NPPF says that in planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or extensions to existing towns authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should ensure the size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself, or in larger towns to which there is good access. Given the identified gap in employment at the Leicester Urban Fringe a modest allocation of 5ha of employment land has been included on Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm allocation, to support sustainable communities in-line with the NPPF.

Taking this into account and an additional allocation site for 0.6 Ha (Land OS3070, Leicester Road Market Harborough), the quantitative supply-demand position identifies a total surplus of 10.5 ha of employment land at the district level.

The approach taken to the location of employment land ensures land is identified in areas attractive to the market and align with the main centres of population (current and future).

APPENDIX A – Breakdown of Initial Housing Distribution Options

An initial range of 6 reasonable alternatives were identified. Each option has been appraised consistently to allow for a fair comparison. This will ultimately feed into the decision-making process about what the preferred approach should be. The options are based primarily on housing growth and distribution. Each option sets out a level of housing to be distributed to different spatial options based on the settlement hierarchy. The initial spatial options are:

- Option 1: Local Plan Strategy – This option is based on a continuation of the strategy in the currently adopted Harborough Local Plan 2019. It focuses significant growth towards the Market Towns. Settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area and Large Villages would accommodate a similar level of housing growth overall, but due to the relatively low number of commitments in the Large Villages, the amount of additional homes to be planned/allocated in the new Local Plan would be higher than in the settlements adjoining Leicester.
- Option 2: Proportional Growth – This option spreads development according to the number of households in each settlement. This option reduces the amount of growth in settlements at the top end of the hierarchy (settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area, Market Towns and Large Villages) and increases growth at the lower end (Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other settlements). This option would see higher levels of growth at the Large, Medium, Small and Other Villages/Settlements.
- Option 3: Urban Area Focus – This option focuses development towards the District’s most sustainable locations: the settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area (Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby). The rest of the District will see lower levels of growth. Note: Large Strategic Sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes were not included in this option as they are considered through Option 4.
- Option 4: Strategic Sites Focus – This option focuses development towards large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes in total (as identified through the SHELAA 2022). These large strategic sites are generally located around the South and East of the Leicester Urban Area. The rest of the District will see lower levels of growth.
- Option 5: Market Town Focus – This option focuses growth towards the Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough) with less growth in the rest of the District.
- Option 6: Large Village Focus – This option focuses growth towards the Large Villages (Broughton Astley, Great Glen, Fleckney and Kibworth) with less growth in the rest of the District.

The tables below set out the 6 options and the distribution of homes and percentages across the settlement hierarchy. The tables under ‘TOTAL 2020-2041 (homes)’ shows the total number of homes, including completions, commitments and new local plan growth (i.e. residual to be planned). The ‘RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)’ shows the amount of homes to be identified and planned for through the new local plan with existing completions and commitments removed.

Breakdown of Initial Housing Distribution Options:

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
LOW GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	3,030	-	-
	Urban Area	349	-	3,030	-	-	-
	Market Towns	807	-	-	-	3,030	-
	Large Villages	1,168	1,437	-	-	-	3,030
	Medium Villages	309	377	-	-	-	-
	Small Villages	149	453	-	-	-	-
	Other	248	763	-	-	-	-
	Total	3,030	3,030	3,030	3,030	3,030	3,030

TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
LOW GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	3,030	-	-
	Urban Area	2,017	1,668	4,698	1,668	1,668	1,668
	Market Towns	6,983	6,176	6,176	6,176	9,206	6,176
	Large Villages	2,488	2,757	1,320	1,320	1,320	4,350
	Medium Villages	664	732	355	355	355	355
	Small Villages	852	1,156	703	703	703	703
	Other	453	968	205	205	205	205
	Total	13,457	13,457	13,457	13,457	13,457	13,457

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
MEDIUM GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	6,129	-	-
	Urban Area	959	-	4,267	-	-	-
	Market Towns	1,948	850	797	-	6,129	-
	Large Villages	1,921	2,542	797	-	-	6,129
	Medium Villages	510	671	238	-	-	-
	Small Villages	407	916	31	-	-	-
	Other	385	1,151	-	-	-	-
	Total	6,129	6,129	6,129	6,129	6,129	6,129

TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
MEDIUM GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	6,129	-	-
	Urban Area	2,627	1,668	5,935	1,668	1,668	1,668
	Market Towns	8,124	7,026	6,973	6,176	12,305	6,176
	Large Villages	3,241	3,862	2,117	1,320	1,320	7,449
	Medium Villages	865	1,026	593	355	355	355
	Small Villages	1,110	1,619	734	703	703	703
	Other	590	1,356	205	205	205	205
	Total	16,556	16,556	16,556	16,556	16,556	16,556

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
HIGH GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	7,607	-	-
	Urban Area	1,569	-	4,267	461	-	-
	Market Towns	3,090	1,863	2,123	539	9,229	-
	Large Villages	2,674	3,567	2,123	277	-	9,229
	Medium Villages	711	943	634	138	-	-
	Small Villages	664	1,346	82	207	-	-
	Other	522	1,510	-	-	-	-
	Total	9,229	9,229	9,229	9,229	9,229	9,229

TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
HIGH GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	7,607	-	-
	Urban Area	3,237	1,668	5,935	2,129	1,668	1,668
	Market Towns	9,266	8,039	8,299	6,715	15,405	6,176
	Large Villages	3,994	4,887	3,443	1,597	1,320	10,549
	Medium Villages	1,066	1,298	989	493	355	355
	Small Villages	1,367	2,049	785	910	703	703
	Other	727	1,715	205	205	205	205
	Total	19,656	19,656	19,656	19,656	19,656	19,656

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (3,030 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
LOW GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	100%	-	-
	Urban Area	12%	-	100%	-	-	-
	Market Towns	27%	-	-	-	100%	-
	Large Villages	39%	47%	-	-	-	100%
	Medium Villages	10%	12%	-	-	-	-
	Small Villages	5%	15%	-	-	-	-
	Other	8%	25%	-	-	-	-
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TOTAL 2020-2041 (13,457 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
LOW GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	23%	-	-
	Urban Area	15%	12%	35%	12%	12%	12%
	Market Towns	52%	46%	46%	46%	68%	46%
	Large Villages	18%	20%	10%	10%	10%	32%
	Medium Villages	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%
	Small Villages	6%	9%	5%	5%	5%	5%
	Other	3%	7%	2%	2%	2%	2%
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (6,129 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
MEDIUM GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	100%	-	-
	Urban Area	16%	-	70%	-	-	-
	Market Towns	32%	14%	13%	-	100%	-
	Large Villages	31%	41%	13%	-	-	100%
	Medium Villages	8%	11%	4%	-	-	-
	Small Villages	7%	15%	-	-	-	-
	Other	6%	19%	-	-	-	-
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TOTAL 2020-2041 (16,556 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
MEDIUM GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	37%	-	-
	Urban Area	16%	10%	36%	10%	10%	10%
	Market Towns	49%	42%	42%	37%	74%	37%
	Large Villages	20%	23%	13%	8%	8%	45%
	Medium Villages	5%	6%	4%	2%	2%	2%
	Small Villages	7%	10%	4%	4%	4%	4%
	Other	4%	8%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (9,229 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
HIGH GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	82%	-	-
	Urban Area	17%	-	46%	5%	-	-
	Market Towns	33%	20%	23%	6%	100%	-
	Large Villages	29%	39%	23%	3%	-	100%
	Medium Villages	8%	10%	7%	2%	-	-
	Small Villages	7%	15%	1%	2%	-	-
	Other	6%	16%	-	-	-	-
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TOTAL 2020-2041 (19,656 homes)

		1. Current Local Plan	2. Proportion	3. Adjoining Urban Area	4. Strategic Sites	5. Market Towns	6. Large Villages
HIGH GROWTH	Strategic Sites	-	-	-	39%	-	-
	Urban Area	16%	8%	30%	11%	8%	8%
	Market Towns	47%	41%	42%	34%	78%	31%
	Large Villages	20%	25%	18%	8%	7%	54%
	Medium Villages	5%	7%	5%	3%	2%	2%
	Small Villages	7%	10%	4%	5%	4%	4%
	Other	4%	9%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

APPENDIX B – Breakdown of Refined Housing Distribution Options

An initial range of 6 reasonable alternatives were identified. Each option was appraised consistently to allow for a fair comparison which informed the development of 3 refined options. This will ultimately feed into the process about what the preferred approach should be. The options are based primarily on housing growth and distribution. Each option sets out a level of housing to be distributed to different spatial options based on the settlement hierarchy. The 3 Refined Spatial Options are:

- **Refined Option 1: Market Towns Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth).** This option focusses high levels of growth towards the two Market Towns, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes at Lutterworth. Most of the remaining growth then cascades down to the next tier of the settlement hierarchy (Large Villages) which also receive a high-level of growth under this option. The Urban Area has a low level of growth under this option.
- **Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Oadby).** This option has high levels of growth towards the Urban Area, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes adjoining Oadby. This option gives low levels of growth at the two Market Towns and Large Villages.
- **Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site at Oadby).** This option is a combination of Refined Options 1 and 2 above. It focusses medium levels of growth towards the Urban Area (including a new strategic site at Oadby over 1,500 homes), Market Towns and Large Villages compared to the options above. In the Market Towns this option sees a higher level of growth at Market Harborough and a lower level of growth Lutterworth reflecting the difference in size between the two settlements.

The tables below set out the 3 Refined Options and the distribution of homes and percentages across the settlement hierarchy. The tables entitled 'TOTAL 2020-2041 (homes)' show the total number of homes, including completions, commitments and new local plan growth. The 'RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)' shows the new local plan growth only (i.e. without completions and commitments).

NUMBER OF HOMES

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	400	3,750	2,450
Market Towns	3,000	800	1,600
Large Villages	2,150	1,000	1,500
Medium Villages	450	450	450
Small Villages	350	350	350
Other	-	-	-
Total	6,350	6,350	6,350

TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	868	4,218	2,918
Market Towns	7,926	5,726	6,526
Large Villages	3,470	2,320	2,820
Medium Villages	795	795	795
Small Villages	1,065	1,065	1,065
Other	193	193	193
Windfall Allowance	450	450	450
Total	14,767	14,767	14,767

PERCENTAGE OF HOMES

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (6,350 homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	6%	59%	39%
Market Towns	47%	13%	25%
Large Villages	34%	16%	24%
Medium Villages	7%	7%	7%
Small Villages	6%	6%	6%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL 2020-2041 (14,767 homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	6%	29%	20%
Market Towns	54%	39%	44%
Large Villages	23%	16%	19%
Medium Villages	5%	5%	5%
Small Villages	7%	7%	7%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Windfall Allowance	3%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

NUMBER OF HOMES

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)

		RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	Land South of Gartree Rd	-	1,200	1,200
	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	400	2,550	1,250
Market Towns	Lutterworth	1,500	400	250
	Market Harborough	1,500	400	1,350
Large Villages	Broughton Astley	700	315	475
	Fleckney	200	100	150
	Great Glen	550	270	400
	Kibworth	700	315	475
Medium Villages	Medium Villages	450	450	450
Small Villages	Small Villages	350	350	350
Other	Other	-	-	-
	Total	6,350	6,350	6,350

TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Land South of Gartree Rd	-	1,200	1,200
Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	868	3,018	1,718
Lutterworth	3,459	2,359	2,209
Market Harborough	4,467	3,367	4,317
Broughton Astley	963	578	738
Fleckney	792	692	742
Great Glen	760	480	610
Kibworth	955	570	730
Medium Villages	795	795	795
Small Villages	1,065	1,065	1,065
Other	193	193	193
Windfall Allowance	450	450	450
Total	14,767	14,767	14,767

PERCENTAGE OF HOMES

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (6,350 Homes)

		RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Urban Area	Land South of Gartree Rd	0%	19%	19%
	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	6%	40%	20%
Market Towns	Lutterworth	24%	6%	4%
	Market Harborough	24%	6%	21%
Large Villages	Broughton Astley	11%	5%	7%
	Fleckney	3%	2%	2%
	Great Glen	9%	4%	6%
	Kibworth	11%	5%	7%
Medium Villages	Medium Villages	7%	7%	7%
Small Villages	Small Villages	6%	6%	6%
Other	Other	0%	0%	0%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL 2020-2041 (14,797 Homes)

	RO1. Market Town	RO2. Urban Area	RO3. Urban Area & Market Towns
Land South of Gartree Rd	0%	8%	8%
Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	6%	20%	12%
Lutterworth	23%	16%	15%
Market Harborough	30%	23%	29%
Broughton Astley	7%	4%	5%
Fleckney	5%	5%	5%
Great Glen	5%	3%	4%
Kibworth	6%	4%	5%
Medium Villages	5%	5%	5%
Small Villages	7%	7%	7%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Windfall Allowance	3%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Appendix C – Breakdown of Preferred Housing Strategy

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (Homes)			TOTAL 2020-2041 (Homes)			
	Settlement	Preferred Option		Preferred Option		
Urban Area	Land South of Gartree Rd	1,200	Land South of Gartree Rd	1,200		
	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	1,250	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	1,718		
Market Towns	Lutterworth	320	Lutterworth	2,279		
	Market Harborough	1,350	Market Harborough	4,317		
Large Villages	Broughton Astley	475	Broughton Astley	738		
	Fleckney	150	Fleckney	742		
	Great Glen	400	Great Glen	610		
	Kibworth	475	Kibworth	730		
Medium Villages	Billesdon	63	Billesdon	139		
	Great Bowden	100	Great Bowden	165		
	Houghton on the Hill	104	Houghton on the Hill	183		
	Husbands Bosworth	105	Husbands Bosworth	166		
	Ullesthorpe	80	Ullesthorpe	144		
Small Villages	Arnesby	11	Arnesby	24		
	Bitteswell	29	Bitteswell	50		
	Church Langton	2	Church Langton	43		
	Dunton Bassett	49	Dunton Bassett	61		
	Foxton	22	Foxton	48		
	Gilmorton	7	Gilmorton	193		
	Great Easton	31	Great Easton	58		
	Hallaton	15	Hallaton	47		
	Leire	23	Leire	37		
	Lubenham	28	Lubenham	64		
	Medbourne	7	Medbourne	62		
	North Kilworth	8	North Kilworth	93		
	South Kilworth	14	South Kilworth	47		
	Swinford	8	Swinford	62		
	Claybrooke Magna	31	Claybrooke Magna	52		
	Tilton	27	Tilton	48		
	Tugby	14	Tugby	40		
	Walcote	24	Walcote	36		
	Other	Other	-	Other	193	
				Windfall Allowance	450	
	Total	6,422	Total	14,839		

RESIDUAL TO BE PLANNED (% of 6,422 Homes)			TOTAL 2020-2041 (%)		
	Settlement	Preferred Option		Preferred Option	
Urban Area	Land South of Gartree Rd	18.7%	Land South of Gartree Rd	8.1%	
	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	19.5%	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	11.6%	
Market Towns	Lutterworth	5.0%	Lutterworth	15.4%	
	Market Harborough	21.0%	Market Harborough	29.1%	
Large Villages	Broughton Astley	7.4%	Broughton Astley	5.0%	
	Fleckney	2.3%	Fleckney	5.0%	
	Great Glen	6.2%	Great Glen	4.1%	
	Kibworth	7.4%	Kibworth	4.9%	
Medium Villages	Billesdon	1.0%	Billesdon	0.9%	
	Great Bowden	1.6%	Great Bowden	1.1%	
	Houghton on the Hill	1.6%	Houghton on the Hill	1.2%	
	Husbands Bosworth	1.6%	Husbands Bosworth	1.1%	
	Ullesthorpe	1.2%	Ullesthorpe	1.0%	
Small Villages	Arnesby	0.2%	Arnesby	0.2%	
	Bitteswell	0.5%	Bitteswell	0.3%	
	Church Langton	0.0%	Church Langton	0.3%	
	Dunton Bassett	0.8%	Dunton Bassett	0.4%	
	Foxton	0.3%	Foxton	0.3%	
	Gilmorton	0.1%	Gilmorton	1.3%	
	Great Easton	0.5%	Great Easton	0.4%	
	Hallaton	0.2%	Hallaton	0.3%	
	Leire	0.4%	Leire	0.2%	
	Lubenham	0.4%	Lubenham	0.4%	
	Medbourne	0.1%	Medbourne	0.4%	
	North Kilworth	0.1%	North Kilworth	0.6%	
	South Kilworth	0.2%	South Kilworth	0.3%	
	Swinford	0.1%	Swinford	0.4%	
	Claybrooke Magna	0.5%	Claybrooke Magna	0.4%	
	Tilton	0.4%	Tilton	0.3%	
Tugby	0.2%	Tugby	0.3%		
Walcote	0.4%	Walcote	0.2%		
Other	Other	0.0%	Other	1.3%	
			Windfall Allowance	3.0%	
	Total	100.0%	Total	100.0%	

Appendix D – Assessment of Large Strategic Sites (capable of accommodating 1,500 homes or more)

Appraisal of the 6 Initial Spatial Options consulted upon during the Issues and Options consultation in January and February 2024 has identified that Large Strategic Sites >1,500 homes can meet identified housing needs in the most sustainable way, however, in order to provide a mix of sites and ensure the council can maintain a 5 year supply of housing land, only 1 new large strategic site should be allocated in the new local plan. The Refined Options were therefore developed on the basis of including 1 new Large Strategic Site and this assessment of large strategic sites informed which of those sites should be taken forward into the Refined Options.

The assessment has taken into account the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Settlement Hierarchy Assessment
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Sustainability Appraisal

The NPPF recognises the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).

Where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way authorities should:

- consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;
- ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;
- set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained.
- make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery.

The assessment was informed by the Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Settlement Hierarchy Assessment, which take into account many different factors, including the points mentioned in the NPPF above. The methodologies and considerations taken into account in these documents is therefore not repeated here.

The scale and location of large strategic development is of particular importance when assessing sites. The assessment has therefore been informed by the following guiding principles:

- The larger the development, the greater the potential to provide sustainable benefits such as infrastructure (including choice of transport modes), services, facilities and employment. For example, a development of 10,000 homes is capable of creating a new settlement (standalone/co-dependent) with a higher degree of self-containment, compared to a development of 1,500 homes that would be far more reliant on existing centres for jobs, services and facilities.
- Developments of less than 5,000 homes would not generally be considered large enough to support the infrastructure, services and facilities required for a standalone/co-dependant new settlement. Sites of less than 5,000 homes would need to be considered as extensions to existing settlements. For extensions to existing settlements, proximity and opportunities to integrate into the existing built form (including via sustainable modes of transport) is an important

consideration. An extension to a settlement of 5,000 homes or less should therefore adjoin the built-up area of a sustainable settlement identified in the settlement hierarchy.

- Sites of 5,000 homes or more may have the potential to be a new standalone settlement capable of providing significant services, facilities and employment to meet the needs of a new communities. It may not be necessary for a site of this scale to adjoin a sustainable settlement. Proximity and access to existing centres for jobs, services and facilities is still an important consideration.

The table below identifies the Large Strategic Sites (>1,500 homes) and contains the assessment and conclusion for each of them.

Site Reference	Site Name	Number of Homes (SHELAA)	Assessment and Conclusion
21/8229 (SHELAA 2022 reference as the site was subsequently withdrawn from consideration by the site promoters and is not included in the latest SHELAA)	Farmcare Estate, Stoughton	10,000	Site not taken forward for consideration in the refined options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500. The site adjoins the Urban Area of Leicester at Oadby. The Leicester Urban Area is at the top of the settlement hierarchy and the site is therefore in a sustainable location in terms of proximity to an existing sustainable settlement. The site is of a scale to provide a large standalone or codependent new settlement. The site is in single ownership and whilst there can be significant sustainable and infrastructure benefits from a development of this scale, a development of this size would have long lead-in times and span multiple Local Plan Periods. Given the scale and associated complexity of bringing forward a site of this nature, there are likely to be limited sustainable benefits during the plan period of this Local Plan (2020-41). This site was put forward through the 2021 Call for Sites, however, a smaller part of the site was actively promoted with adjoining land (see Land South of Gartree Road ref: 24/10433 below) for a smaller extension to the Leicester Urban Area adjoining Oadby. Taking into account that; part of the site was being actively promoted for different type and scale of development; the scale and complexity of the site, and associated long lead-in times with limited sustainable benefits during the proposed plan period for this local plan, the site for 10,000 homes was not taken forward for consideration in the refined options. (Note: Following the 2024 Call for Sites this site for 10,000 homes was subsequently withdrawn from the Local Plan process by the promoters).
21/8217	Whetstone Pastures Garden Village, Willoughby Waterleys	1,036 homes (this site forms part of a larger garden village proposal in neighbouring Blaby District with potential for 4,000 – 5,000 homes).	This site is not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that across sites of all sizes in the District this site is expected to have one of the most significant negative effects across the SA objectives and particular consideration would therefore be needed for mitigation. The SHELAA indicates the site (comprising two parts) is not currently suitable, is achievable and not currently available. The site does not adjoin a sustainable settlement. The development of a site for 1,036 homes does not have the critical mass to provide the infrastructure required for a standalone settlement in this location and would therefore not be capable of being considered sustainable as an isolated site for 1,036 homes. This site has been promoted as part of a much larger garden village proposal (Whetstone Pastures Garden Village), most of which is located in Blaby District. Development of the site in Harborough District site would therefore be reliant on delivery of the garden village in Blaby District. Developing a large standalone/codependent new settlement in this location would require significant infrastructure with long lead-in times, and the site in neighbouring Blaby District currently has no planning status. Development of this site is therefore unlikely to be capable of being delivered within the proposed plan period (2020-41). Given the long lead-in times associated with bringing forward a new settlement in this location; uncertainty about infrastructure; and the reliance on strategic development in neighbouring Blaby District coming forward, the site was not taken forward for consideration in the refined options.
24/10498	Land east of Broughton Astley and North of Dunton Bassett and Ashby Magna	5,677 homes (Site promoter indicates approximately 5,000 homes)	This site is not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. The SHELAA indicates the site is not suitable, is potentially available and not currently achievable. The site does not adjoin a sustainable settlement and has been promoted as a large new settlement called (South Whetstone New Settlement). The proposal includes potential for a new motorway junction on the M1, a service station, and is presented as an opportunity with potential to bring forward infrastructure of regional importance in combination with the Whetstone Pastures Garden Village in Blaby District (see site 21/8217 above), or as a standalone site for 5,000 homes. There is currently no prospect of infrastructure of this nature being delivered within the proposed plan period (2020-41). Whether the site was brought forward as a standalone settlement or in combination with Whetstone Pastures, the infrastructure required to bring forward development in this location would be substantial given the limited road infrastructure and rural nature of the area. The site is in multiple land ownership and whilst there can be significant sustainable and infrastructure benefits from a development of this scale, the size and uncertainty around strategic infrastructure means there is unlikely to be significant development and sustainable benefits during the plan period of this Local Plan (2020-41) in this location. The site was therefore not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options.
21/8192	Land east of Broughton Astley and North of Dunton Bassett and Ashby Magna	5,000 homes	This site is not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. This site was submitted for consideration in 2021 and forms the substantive part

			of the site above (24/10498) which was more recently promoted in 2024. Given the similarities in scale and location, the conclusions are therefore similar. The SHELAA indicates the site is not currently suitable, potentially available and not achievable. The submission acknowledges development in this location may dependant on a new motorway junction. The site does not adjoin a sustainable settlement and there is currently no prospect of infrastructure of this nature being delivered within the proposed plan period (2020-41). Whether the site was brought forward as a standalone settlement or in combination with Whetstone Pastures, the infrastructure required to bring forward development in this location would be substantial given the limited road infrastructure and rural nature of the area. The site is in multiple land ownership and whilst there can be significant sustainable and infrastructure benefits from a development of this scale, the size and uncertainty around strategic infrastructure means there is unlikely to be significant development and sustainable benefits during the plan period of this Local Plan (2020-41) in this location. The site has also more recently been promoted as part a similar proposal (see site 24/10498 above) with amended site boundaries. The site was therefore not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options.
21/8178 & 24/10137	Land at Newton Harcourt (Newton Croft)	3,174 homes (note this site has been promoted for approximately 4,500 which is significantly higher than the standard approach to calculating capacity in the SHELAA)	The site was not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. The site was submitted for consideration in 2021 and subsequently in 2024 and has two references in the SHELAA, although both sites are substantively the same and have therefore been assessed together. The SHELAA indicates the site is not currently suitable, is available and not currently achievable, and notes the site could accommodate approximately 3,174 homes although the site has been promoted for about 4,500 homes. The site is relatively well related to the Leicester Urban area being in close proximity to the built-up area of neighbouring Oadby and Wigston, but does not adjoin the Leicester Urban Area, or another sustainable settlement in the settlement hierarchy. Whilst development at this scale should be able to provide much of its own infrastructure to support the day-to-day needs of residents reducing the need to travel, it would be reliant on existing centres for jobs, services and facilities to some degree. Development at this scale would therefore need to be an extension of an existing settlement rather than a new settlement. The fact that the site does not adjoin an existing sustainable settlement will make the integration of the site into the existing built form challenging. Vehicular access onto the A6 is also likely to be challenging. Given the site does not adjoin a sustainable settlement; is difficult to integrate with the existing built form and is not large enough to be considered a standalone new settlement with associated infrastructure, it was not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options.
21/8093	Land at Stretton Hall Farm, Chestnut Drive, Great Glen.	1,707 homes	This site was not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. The SHELAA indicates the site is potentially suitable, is available and potentially achievable. The site adjoins the Leicester Urban Area at Oadby. The Leicester Urban Area is at the top of the settlement hierarchy and is therefore in a sustainable location in terms of proximity to an existing sustainable settlement. Whilst development at this scale may be able to provide some of its own infrastructure supporting the day-to-day needs of residents reducing the need to travel to some degree, the level of infrastructure is likely to be more limited compared to larger sites, leading to greater reliance on existing centres for jobs, services and facilities. The site was promoted through the call for sites 2021. However, as part of the 2024 Call for Sites, the land promoters submitted a joint proposal for a larger development with the promoters of adjoining land (See Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm below). The site has therefore more recently been actively promoted as part of a larger scheme for 4,000 homes rather than the original site for 1,707 homes. The site was not taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options as the scale of infrastructure, services and facilities (and associated sustainable benefits) that a site of this size could support would be relatively limited compared larger sites and it is now being actively promoted as part of a proposal for a different scale of development.
24/8631	Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm	3,000 homes in Harborough District and approximately 1,000 homes in Oadby & Wigston Borough	This site was taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. The SHELAA indicates the site is potentially suitable, available and potentially achievable. The site adjoins the Urban Area of Leicester at Oadby. The Leicester Urban Area is at the top of the settlement hierarchy and the site is therefore in a sustainable location in terms of proximity to an existing sustainable settlement. Development at this scale should be able to provide much of its own infrastructure to support the day-to-day needs of residents reducing the need to travel, and the proximity of the site to the Leicester Urban Area offers potential opportunities for integration to the existing built-up area, including through sustainable travel. Given the scale of the

			proposal, the potential for significant infrastructure to support day-to-day needs, the proximity of the site to the Leicester Urban Area and the potential opportunities this offers to sustainably integrate with the existing urban area, this site was taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options.
24/10433	Land South of Lutterworth	2,415 homes	This site was taken forward for consideration in the Refined Options. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) indicates the impacts (positive and negative) against the SA objectives are broadly comparable to other large strategic sites capable of accommodating more than 1,500 homes. The SHELAA indicates the site is considered not suitable, not currently available and not currently achievable. The site adjoins the Market Town of Lutterworth which is near the top of the settlement hierarchy. The site is therefore in a sustainable location in terms of proximity to a sustainable settlement. Whilst there is significant road infrastructure to the north of the site (A4303) which may act as a barrier to integration of the site with the existing settlement of Lutterworth, there is an existing road bridge over the A4303 which may provide access to Lutterworth Town Centre as well as along the A426 which would likely form the main point of access. Given the sites proximity to a sustainable settlement with some potential (but fairly limited) opportunities to integrate the site with the existing built form of the settlement, including access to the services and facilities in the town centre, this site was taken forward consideration through the Refined Options.

Appendix E – Initial Housing Options Assessment

The Initial Options were considered against the following factors:

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

The table below contains the assessment of each option against the above factors, followed by a conclusion. These are relatively self-explanatory.

In terms of the consultation responses on the spatial options, it was recognised by a number of respondents that a mix or hybrid of several of the spatial options may be required. This was also reflected in the fact that respondents' indicated a preference for one or more of the options. The mix of responses is reflected in the table below with respondents expressing views on the options individually or in combination other options, with particular option standing out as preferred over another.

For the assessment of the Refined Options against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), each option was considered in a proportionate and consistent way.

The NPPF explains the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner (para. 7).

Achieving sustainable development means the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (para. 8).

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental

These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. Planning policies should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (para.9)

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11). For plan-making this means all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.

The presumption therefore sets out a number of key factors that should be considered to ensure a sustainable pattern of development is promoted through plan-making. These considerations are set out in the bullet points below. Whilst each of the options were assessed against the NPPF as a whole, the considerations in the presumption in favour of sustainable development are used to help guide/structure the assessment of the refined options against the NPPF:

- Meeting development needs - including unmet need
- Aligning growth and infrastructure – including access to services, facilities (e.g. health and education) and sustainable transport.
- Improve the environment - including natural and historic environment.
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Local plans are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are 'sound' if they are:

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

	Sustainability Appraisal	Consultation Responses (Reg 18)	Deliverability	Emerging Local Plan Objectives	Conformity with NPPF	Summary/Conclusion
Option 1: Local Plan Strategy	Across the 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option does not perform as well as Option 4: Large Strategic Sites, Option 3: Urban Area Focus and Option 5: Market Town Focus. It performs slightly better than Option 2: Proportionate Growth and Option 6: Large Village Focus.	This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024)	This option spreads growth across all tiers of the settlement hierarchy with a significant focus on Market Towns and Large Villages. Although this option spreads growth across the settlement hierarchy making it more deliverable to a degree, there is a particular concentration of development in the Market Towns reflecting the strategy of the Local Plan (2019). The focus of development in similar locations could be challenging to deliver during the plan period, particularly at the medium and high scale of growth.	<p>Delivering Homes - This option should be capable of delivering a mix of sites across the District, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Although there is a potential deliverability challenge in certain areas particularly in the Market Towns. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the Council's ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – Focusing a large proportion of housing growth within market towns will support the economy, jobs and town centres. In addition, proposing a proportion of growth within the settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area would also provide good access to employment opportunities. However, there is significant growth at the Large Villages which is significantly higher than the settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area. This reflects the relatively high proportion of speculative unplanned development approved before the plan was adopted in 2019. Although this growth would support the local economy, opportunities to create and diversify the job market may be more limited in the Large Villages.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and any mitigation proposed rather than the overall development strategy. The focus of growth towards the Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help tackle climate change. However, this option also sees significant growth in large villages as it reflects the relatively high level of speculative/unplanned growth that was approved during the plan period, but before the current Local Plan (2019) was adopted. This option is therefore likely to be more reliant on the use of the private car compared to some of the other options.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. Due to the high concentration of historical assets within the Market Towns, particularly Listed Buildings, the distribution of development through Option 1 could have a significant effect on these assets and the historic character.</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - This option should be capable of delivering a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Although there is a potential deliverability challenge in certain areas particularly in the Market Towns. There is also a significant focus towards Large Villages compared to the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, the opportunity to meet this need in sustainable locations close to where it arises could be limited.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – Option 1 proposes to spread growth across the most sustainable locations which includes Market Towns, settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area and Large Villages. Whilst these settlements offer the best accessibility to existing services and facilities and also support the delivery of new services and facilities within the most sustainable locations, there is a strong focus on growth towards the less sustainable Large Villages compared with the Leicester Urban Area. This option is therefore not considered to align growth and infrastructure.</p> <p>Improve the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and any mitigation proposed rather than the overall development strategy. Due to the high concentration of historical assets within the Market Towns, particularly Listed Buildings, the distribution of development through Option 1 could</p>	Not taken forward. This option is considered to perform forth best overall. Against the SA Objectives this option does not perform as well as Option 4: Large Strategic Sites, Option 3: Urban Area Focus and Option 5: Market Town focus. It performs slightly better than Option 2: Proportionate Growth and Option 6: Large Village Focus. This option rolls forward the broad distribution of the previous Local Plan 2011-31. Whilst this option has a spread of growth across the most sustainable locations, it focusses more growth towards the Large Villages than the Leicester Urban Area, reflecting to a degree a period of significant unplanned speculative development prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in 2019. The Local Plan 2019 strategy was also developed on the basis of not meeting unmet need from Leicester. This option was therefore not taken forward for further consideration.

				<p>Enabling supporting infrastructure – Option 1 proposes to spread growth across the most sustainable locations which includes Market Towns, settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area and Large Villages. Whilst these settlements offer the best accessibility to existing services and facilities and also support the delivery of new services and facilities within the most sustainable locations, there is a significantly stronger focus on growth towards the less sustainable Large Villages compared with the Leicester Urban Area. Directing a small level of growth to the medium villages, small villages and other settlements will help support the vitality of these villages including the services and facilities within them.</p>	<p>have a significant effect on these assets and the historic character.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - The focus of growth towards the Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help tackle climate change. However, this option also sees significant growth in large villages as it reflects the relatively high level of speculative/unplanned growth that was approved during the plan period, but before the current Local Plan (2019) was adopted. This option is therefore likely to be more reliant on the use of the private car compared to some of the other options.</p>	
<p>Option 2: Proportionate Growth</p>	<p>Across the 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option is likely to lead to the most negative effects and limited positive effects.</p>	<p>This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024).</p>	<p>This option spreads growth across a large number of settlements, which is likely to lead to a larger number of smaller sites coming forward with potential to be developed quickly. However, the provision and funding of infrastructure could be challenging given spread of growth across a wide geographical area.</p>	<p>Delivering Homes - This option spreads growth across the settlement hierarchy according to size (households) and has the highest levels of growth at the lower tiers of the settlement hierarchy from the Large Villages down to Other Settlements. This option should be capable of delivering a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. However, there would be limited growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy to meet the needs of those settlements.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – high levels of growth in more rural areas could support the rural economy and the vitality of rural communities. However, due to the spread of growth proposed through Option 2, housing growth may not be located in close proximity to employment opportunities in Leicester City or Market Towns. This spread of growth is therefore less likely to support existing Town Centres and jobs and the economy in these areas. It would also be more challenging to deliver additional jobs and employment in rural locations where the housing would be located.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment - All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree as will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and any mitigation proposed rather than the overall development strategy. This option contains a high proportion of growth in the least sustainable locations (i.e. Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements) which have limited access to jobs, services and facilities, and lack opportunity for sustainable travel. As a result, this option is likely to involve greater reliance on the</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - This option spreads growth across the settlement hierarchy according to size (households) and should be capable of providing a mix of sites across the settlement hierarchy, including a mix of homes to meet needs. However, this option has the highest levels of growth at the lower tiers of the settlement hierarchy, with the highest levels of growth in Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements compared to any other option. Whilst this option would support the vitality of rural communities, it could also result in isolated homes in the countryside. This option also has limited growth towards the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, the opportunity to meet this need in sustainable locations close to where it arises would be limited.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option has high levels of growth from large villages down in the settlement hierarchy. These areas have limited access to access to services, facilities (e.g. health and education)</p>	<p>Not taken forward. Although this option performs well in some elements (particularly in terms of supporting the vitality of rural communities and deliverability of housing), it is considered to perform the least well overall. The SA identified potential significant adverse/negative effects around access to healthcare; services and facilities; and sustainable transport. This option would not align growth and infrastructure, and would result in the least sustainable pattern of development compared to other options. As a result, it would be challenging to achieve the emerging Local Plan Objectives and compliance with the NPPF. This option demonstrates focussing significant amounts of growth in more rural areas is not sustainable and it was therefore not taken forward for further consideration.</p>

				<p>private car which could increase greenhouse gas emissions limiting the ability to tackle climate change and meet this objective.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. However, Initial Option 2 proposes the highest level of development within the more rural parts (medium villages, small villages and other settlements) of the District. Whilst this may support the vitality of rural communities to a degree, it also has the greatest potential to negatively impact the rural character of these smaller settlements. There is also a high concentration of listed buildings across the majority of the rural settlements. Therefore, spreading growth in a proportionate way as done in option 2, which sees higher levels of growth in more rural areas could prevent this objective from being achieved.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure - Initial Option 2 proposes the highest level of development within the more rural parts (medium villages, small villages and other settlements) of the District, which have a limited level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements higher up the settlement hierarchy. The lack of existing services and facilities, and the spread of growth across less sustainable locations means there is likely to be more limited potential to deliver and expand infrastructure to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. Meeting this objective would therefore be unlikely under this option.</p>	<p>and sustainable transport. This option does not align growth and infrastructure.</p> <p>Improve the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree as will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and any mitigation proposed rather than the overall development strategy. However, the spread of growth in this option is less likely to provide opportunities for Habitat and Biodiversity improvements and would be more likely to negatively impact the environment in rural areas.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - This option contains a high proportion of growth in the least sustainable locations (i.e. Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements) which have limited access to jobs, services and facilities, and lack opportunity for sustainable travel. As a result, this option is likely to involve greater reliance on the private car which could increase greenhouse gas emissions limiting the ability to mitigate the impact of this option on climate change.</p>	
Option 3: Urban Area Focus	<p>Across all 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option performed well compared to other options although it had less positive and more negative effects than Option 4: Large Strategic Sites. It performed similar overall to Option 5: Market Towns but with the benefit of slightly less negative effects.</p>	<p>This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024)</p>	<p>Note: this option does not include large strategic sites >1,500. Although there is significant development potential at the settlements adjoining the Urban Area (Scraptoft, Thurnby & Bushby), this option would concentrate significant amounts of development towards these settlements leading to a substantial concentration of growth in a small geographic area.</p>	<p>Delivering Homes – Initial Option 3 proposes the highest level of growth at settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area, with some growth in the Market Towns, and Large Villages. Only a small portion of growth in Medium and Small Villages. This would therefore deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes, in the most sustainable settlements. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth towards the Leicester Urban Area under this option would help to meet this requirement in sustainable locations close to where the need arises. However, the scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area at Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby could be challenging to deliver within the plan period, and there is limited growth in smaller settlements would limits the ability to meet the needs of</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - Initial Option 3 proposes the highest level of growth at settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area, with some growth in the Market Towns, and Large Villages. Only a small portion of growth in Medium and Small Villages. This would therefore deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes, in the most sustainable settlements. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth towards the Leicester Urban Area under this option</p>	<p>Partially taken forward. There are clear potential sustainable benefits of focussing growth at settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area and this option is considered to perform second best overall (after Option 4: Strategic Sites). The SA shows this option performed better compared to the other options, apart from Option 4: Large Strategic Sites which has more positive and less negative effects. It</p>

			<p>Whilst some of the sites are of a scale that could be delivered in a reasonable timeframe, the concentration of sites could lead to deliverability challenges in terms of market capacity, particularly at medium and large scales of growth.</p>	<p>more rural communities. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the Council's ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The Leicester Urban Area is at the heart of the Functional Economic Market Area and a significant focus of jobs and employment development. Focussing homes towards this area would therefore support jobs and the economy in this area. However, there could be limited support for the more local economies in the Market Towns (including Town Centres) and Large Villages and the rural areas given the lower scales of growth in these locations under this option.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. The strong focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a significant amount and diversity of jobs, services and facilities in closer proximity; along with some growth in the Market Towns and Large Villages would support fewer and shorter journeys by car compared to some other options. The scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area also offers the potential for improved sustainable transport links which may help reduce reliance on private cars and tackle climate change.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – Whilst this Option would impact the character of the settlements adjoining the Leicester Urban Area in particular, very limited growth is proposed in the Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements. The rural character of these areas would therefore be retained. There is a lower concentration of historical assets within the settlements adjoining Leicester urban area, compared to some other settlements, but growth within these areas could impact on any historic assets present and the character of these settlements.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure – This option has a strong focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a high level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements. The scale of growth in this location has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure in the area to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. However, given the limited scale of growth in Medium Villages, Small Villages enabling services and facilities in these locations could be more challenging.</p>	<p>would help to meet this need in sustainable locations close to where it arises. However, the scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area at Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby could be challenging to deliver within the plan period, and there is limited growth in smaller settlements would limit the opportunities to protect and enhance the vitality of rural communities.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option has a strong focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a high level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements. The scale of growth in this location has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure in the area to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. This option therefore strongly aligns growth and infrastructure. However, given the limited scale of growth in Medium Villages, Small Villages enabling services and facilities in these locations could be more challenging.</p> <p>Improve the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree as will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and any mitigation proposed rather than the overall development strategy. However, this option provides a scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area that may provide opportunities to protect and enhance the natural environment. There is a lower concentration of historical assets within the settlements adjoining Leicester Urban Area, compared to some other settlements, but growth within these areas could impact on any historic assets present and the character of these settlements.</p>	<p>performed similar overall to Option 5: Market Towns but with the benefit of slightly less negative effects. Although the potential sites in this location would not appear to pose a deliverability challenge, the potential concentration of sites in one relatively small geographic location (Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby) may make this option challenging to deliver. There would also be very limited growth in rural areas which would not support the vitality rural communities. This option was therefore only partially taken forward as on its own, it could be challenging to meet some elements of the emerging Local Plan Objectives and the NPPF.</p>
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<p>Option 4: Strategic Site Focus</p>	<p>Across all 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option performed the best against the SA objectives, with the most positive and least negative effects overall. This option performed particularly well in relation to SA Objective 1: Climate Change, SA Objective 10: Economic Growth and SA Objective 13: Sustainable Travel.</p>	<p>This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024)</p>	<p>A development strategy based on Large Strategic Sites (>1,500 homes) alone would be extremely challenging to deliver within the plan period. Long lead-in times on large and complex sites would mean much of development allocated would come forward after 2041 and it would also be challenging to maintain a supply of deliverable sites over the plan period as a whole, particularly in the early years.</p>	<p>Delivering Homes - Initial Option 4 proposes to meet development needs through large strategic sites, with very limited growth at existing settlements. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth towards Large Strategic Sites (which are generally located around the south and east of Leicester) would help to meet this need in locations relatively close proximity to where the it arises. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of homes, the strong focus on Large Strategic Sites and low growth in existing settlements would make it challenging to deliver a mix of sites across the district to meet the needs of existing communities. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – Large Strategic sites can offer the opportunity for mixed use development including an element of employment land which enables the co-location of jobs and homes. Focussing growth towards large strategic sites can therefore support job creation and diversify the economy. This option therefore performs well against this objective. However, the strong focus of growth in these locations would lead to limited support for the local economies of exiting settlements.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment - Whilst large strategic sites may have an impact on the natural environment, they may also offer better opportunities to incorporate mitigation through habitat creation and biodiversity enhancements. Development of strategic sites would generate the provision of on-site infrastructure, services and facilities, and are likely to be of scale that would support sustainable transport improvements. This option therefore has the potential to reduce reliance on private vehicles, by giving residents greater choice of sustainable modes of transport and access to jobs, services and facilities within closer proximity. Development in rural areas (e.g.</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - Initial Option 4 proposes to meet development needs through large strategic sites, with very limited growth at existing settlements. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth towards Large Strategic Sites (which are generally located around the south and east of Leicester) would help to meet this need in locations relatively close proximity to where the it arises. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of homes, the strong focus on Large Strategic Sites and low growth in existing settlements would make it challenging to deliver a mix of sites across the district to meet the needs of existing communities.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – Large Strategic Sites can offer good opportunities for delivering new infrastructure, services and facilities, including health, education, open spaces and sustainable transport as part of the development. This can help ease the pressure of the new development on existing services. The scale of growth in these locations has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. It therefore has</p>	<p>Partially taken forward. This option strongly focusses development towards Large Strategic Sites (>1,500 homes) with limited growth in existing settlements. This option is considered to perform the best overall. The SA identified this option has the most positive and least negative effects against the SA objectives. It also performs well in terms of meeting the emerging Local Plan Objectives and compliance with the NPPF which recognises the role Strategic Sites can have in meeting need in a sustainable way. Notwithstanding the potential sustainable benefits, an over reliance on large strategic sites can present risks to delivery and limit the ability to provide a mix of sites across different locations to meet local needs. This option was therefore only partially taken forward to mitigate potential challenges that could arise from a strategy that over reliant large strategic sites.</p>

Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements) where car dependency is likely to be high, is also very limited under this option. This option therefore has the greatest potential to help tackle climate change compared to other Initial Options.

Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character - This option would also deliver very limited growth in existing settlements, including the Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements. This would help retain the rural and historic character of existing settlements. This option is therefore most likely to achieve this objective compared to the other Initial Options.

Enabling supporting infrastructure – Large Strategic Sites can offer good opportunities for delivering new infrastructure, services and facilities, including health, education, open spaces and sustainable transport as part of the development. This can help ease the pressure of the new development on existing services. This option therefore performs particularly well against this objective. However, the limited amount of rural development (medium villages, small villages and other settlements) under this option would mean opportunities for supporting the viability of services within these villages and settlements are more limited.

significant potential to strongly align growth and infrastructure. The limited amount of development at existing settlements, including areas development (Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements) under this option would mean opportunities for supporting infrastructure services and facilities in these locations would be challenging, including supporting the vitality of rural communities.

Improve the environment – Whilst large strategic sites may have an impact on the natural environment, they may also offer better opportunities to incorporate mitigation through habitat creation and biodiversity enhancements. There is generally a lower concentration of historical assets where the strategic sites are likely to be and this option would also deliver very limited growth in existing settlements, including more rural areas such as the Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements. This option could therefore help preserve the historic character of existing Towns and Villages and Settlements.

Mitigate and adapt to climate change - Development of strategic sites would generate the provision of on-site infrastructure, services and facilities, and are likely to be of scale that would support sustainable transport improvements. This option therefore has the potential to reduce reliance on private vehicles, by giving residents greater choice of sustainable modes of transport and access to jobs, services and facilities within closer proximity. Development in rural areas (e.g. Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements) where car dependency is likely to be high, is also very limited under this option. This option therefore has the greatest potential to help mitigate and adapt to

					climate change compared to the other Initial Options.	
Option 5: Market Town Focus	Across all 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option performed well compared to other options although it had less positive and more negative effects than Option 4: Large Strategic Sites. It performed similar overall to Option 3: Urban Area Focus but had slightly more negative effects.	This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024)	Although there is significant development potential at the Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough), this option would concentrate significant amounts of development towards these settlements leading to a substantial concentration of housing development in small geographic areas which already have substantial commitments with planning permission. Whilst some of the sites at these settlements are of a scale that could be delivered in a reasonable timeframe, the concentration of sites could lead to deliverability challenges in terms of market capacity, particularly at medium and large scales of growth.	<p>Delivering Homes - This option has a very strong focus of development towards the Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough), with very limited growth at all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes in the Market Towns which are sustainable locations for growth, there would be limited development at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy including towards the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option would likely result in this need being met in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. Limited growth at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy would restrict the ability to meet the needs of those communities, including in the Large, Medium and Small Villages, which are more rural. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the Council's ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The Market Towns contain the District's Town Centres and are a significant focus of economic activity. This option would therefore help support this objective to a degree, by focussing housing towards Market Towns which could support vibrant town centres and economic growth. Growth in Lutterworth would also be in relatively close proximity to Magna Park which is a strategically important warehousing and logistics park employing significant numbers of residents from the District and the wider area. However, this option would do little to support the local economies of all other settlements given the limited growth in these locations. This option performs fairly well against this objective.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. Whilst this option could have an impact on the natural environment close to the Market Towns, it is of a scale that could provide enhancement to biodiversity and green infrastructure through mitigation. There is also limited growth across all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy which could prevent negative impacts on the environment in other parts of the District. The focus of growth towards the Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help tackle climate change. Although the concentration of growth in these locations may also lead to congestion in the towns and greenhouse gas emissions. This option also sees very limited growth in the Large Medium</p>	<p>Meeting development needs – This option has a very strong focus of development towards the Market Towns (Lutterworth and Market Harborough), with very limited growth at all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes in the Market Towns which are sustainable locations for growth, there would be limited development at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy including towards the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option would likely result in this need being met in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. Limited growth at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy would restrict the ability to meet the needs of those communities, including in the Large, Medium and Small Villages, which are more rural. This option alone therefore carries a degree of risk to the ability to meet the needs of all communities.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option strongly focusses growth towards Market Towns which are well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport compared to most other settlements. The scale of growth also has potential to deliver infrastructure improvements in these locations which means this option could aligns growth and infrastructure to a degree. However, limited growth is directed towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a good access to services and facilities. All other tiers of the hierarchy also have limited growth which prevent infrastructure provision in these locations. Whilst this option aligns a fairly well this objective, limited growth towards the Leicester Urban Area means the growth is not aligned</p>	Partially taken forward. There are clear potential sustainable benefits of focussing growth towards the Market Towns and this option is considered to perform third best overall (after Option 4: Strategic Sites and Option 3: Urban Area Focus). Against the SA Objectives this option performed well compared to other options although it had less positive and more negative effects than Option 4: Large Strategic Sites and it performed similar overall to Option 3: Urban Area Focus but had slightly more negative effects. There was also a good degree of compliance with the emerging Local Plan Objectives and the NPPF. However, the strong focus towards the Market Towns could lead to deliverability challenges and limit the ability to meet the needs at other tiers of the settlement Hierarchy including at the Leicester Urban Area and in more rural communities. This option was therefore partially taken forward to mitigate these potential risks.

				<p>and Small Villages which would reduce the need to travel from these less sustainable locations leading to fewer and shorter journeys by car. This option is therefore less likely to be reliant on the use of the private car compared to some of the other Initial Options, and performs well against this objective.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. This option sees very limited growth in rural settlements (i.e. the Medium, Small and Other Settlements) which would help to protect the rural character of the District. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in the Market Towns. Of the 6 Initial Options, this option focuses the highest level of growth towards these locations, and therefore a degree of risk towards meeting part of this objective.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure – This option has a strong focus of growth towards the Market Towns with very limited growth towards all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. The Market Towns have a good level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to most other settlements. The scale of growth proposed could enable an expansion of infrastructure in these areas. Market Harborough also has the only railway station in the district, providing links to Leicester and London. However, the focus of growth to these locations would limit the ability to deliver supporting infrastructure at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. Overall this option performs well against this objective.</p>	<p>with infrastructure as well as some other options.</p> <p>Improve the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the environment including rural/landscape character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in the Market Towns. This option focuses the highest level of growth towards these locations and therefore carries a degree of risk in terms compliance with the NPPF and mitigation is therefore likely to be required.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - The strong focus of growth towards the Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities, along with limited growth in the Villages could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help mitigate impacts climate change. However, this option also sees low level of Growth at the top of the Settlement Hierarchy (The Leicester Urban Area). This option is therefore performs relatively well compared other options in this respect.</p>	
Option 6: Large Village Focus	Across the 3 scales of housing growth (Low, Medium and High) this option is had the least positive effects (slightly less than option 2: Proportionate Growth) and relatively high negative effects.	This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options, through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024)	There is significant development potential at the Large Villages (Broughton Astley, Fleckney, Great Glen & Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt)). Although this option would spread development across 4 settlements, there would still be a significant concentration of development in these areas which could make it difficult to deliver the amount of development required	Delivering Homes - This option has a very strong focus of development towards the Large Villages (Broughton Astley, Fleckney, Great Glen and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt)) with very limited growth at all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes in the Large Villages, there would be limited development at in the most sustainable locations (i.e. towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns). Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option would likely result in this need being met in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. Limited growth at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy would restrict the ability to meet the needs of those communities, including in the Market Towns, and more the more rural locations in the Medium and Small Villages. This	Meeting development needs – This option has a very strong focus of development towards the Large Villages (Broughton Astley, Fleckney, Great Glen and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt)) with very limited growth at all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. Whilst this option could deliver a mix of sites, including a mix of different types of homes in the Large Villages, there would be limited development at in the most sustainable locations (i.e. towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns). Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing	Partially taken forward. This option has a strong focus of growth towards Large Villages with limited growth in all other settlements. This Option is considered to perform fifth best overall, demonstrating that a strategy reliant on high concentrations of growth in the Large Villages would not be sustainable. Against the SA objectives this option had the least positive effects (slightly less than option 2: Proportionate Growth) and relatively high negative effects.

			<p>(particularly at the medium and large scale of growth), even though there is a mix of sites at different scales in these locations.</p>	<p>option therefore carries a good degree of risk to the ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The focus of development to the Large Villages result in limited access to employment opportunities compared to the other options, with limited opportunity to provide significant employment land and create jobs. The focus of growth would support the District and Local Centres in these locations, however, the location of growth under this option would lead to more limited support for Town Centres which are located at the Market Towns.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment –</p> <p>All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. Whilst this option could have an impact on the natural environment close to the Large Villages, it is of a scale that could provide enhancement to biodiversity and green infrastructure through mitigation. There is also limited growth across all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy which could prevent negative impacts on the environment in other parts of the District. The strong focus of growth towards the Large Villages which have a more limited level of jobs, services and facilities would lead to a greater reliance on car travel compared to other options. This option also sees very limited growth towards the more sustainable locations (Leicester Urban Area, Market Towns), but also in Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements which would reduce the need to travel from these less sustainable locations. Overall, this option is likely to be reliant on the use of the private car compared to the other Initial Options, and does not perform well against this objective.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character - All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. This option would impact the character of the Large Villages. However, this option sees very limited growth in rural settlements (i.e. the Medium, Small and Other Settlements) which would help to protect the rural character of the District in these locations, but it could be challenging to support the vitality of rural communities. There is a concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt) which could be impacted.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure - This option has a strong focus of growth towards the Large Villages with very limited growth towards all other tiers of the settlement hierarchy. The</p>	<p>need from Leicester, this option would likely result in this need being met in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. Limited growth at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy would restrict the ability to meet the needs of those communities, including in the Market Towns, and more the more rural locations in the Medium and Small Villages. This option therefore carries a good degree of risk to the ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option proposes very limited growth towards the most sustainable locations at the top of the settlement hierarchy. Even though the scale of growth could deliver a degree of infrastructure, this option is not considered to align growth and infrastructure.</p> <p>Improve the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. There is a concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt) which could be impacted.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - The strong focus of growth towards the Large Villages which have a more limited level of jobs, services and facilities would lead to a greater reliance on car travel compared to other options. This option also sees very limited growth towards the more sustainable locations (Leicester Urban Area, Market Towns), but also in Medium Villages, Small Villages and Other Settlements which would reduce the need to travel from these less</p>	<p>Deliverability could be challenging although there is a spread of growth across the 4 Large Villages. It doesn't perform well against the emerging Local Plan Objectives or NPPF compliance, particularly in terms of climate change and aligning growth and infrastructure. A strategy with an over reliance on large scale growth in the Large villages would therefore not be considered sustainable. However, this option is partially taken forward on the basis that some development at the Large Villages, proportionate to their tier in the Settlement Hierarchy would provide some sustainable benefits in terms of meeting housing need. This option was therefore partially taken forward.</p>
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				<p>Large Villages have a reasonable level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel, but this is more limited than Market Towns and the Leicester Urban Area. The scale of growth proposed could enable an expansion of infrastructure in these areas, but given the more limited provision of infrastructure at present opportunities would likely be more limited compared to more sustainable settlements. This option would also limit the ability to deliver supporting infrastructure at other tiers of the settlement hierarchy where there is limited growth. Overall this option does not perform well against this objective.</p>	<p>sustainable locations. Overall, this option is likely increase reliance on the use of the private car compared to the other Initial Options.</p>	
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Appendix F – Refined Housing Options Assessment

An initial range of 6 reasonable alternatives were identified. Each option was appraised consistently to allow for a fair comparison and inform the development of 3 refined housing options below. This will ultimately feed into the process about what the preferred approach should be. Each option sets out a level of housing to be distributed to different spatial options based on the settlement hierarchy. The 3 Refined Spatial Options are:

- Refined Option 1: Market Towns Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth). This option focusses high levels of growth towards the two Market Towns, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes at Lutterworth. Most of the remaining growth then cascades down to the next tier of the settlement hierarchy (Large Villages) which also receive a high-level of growth under this option. The Urban Area has a low level of growth under this option.
- Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Oadby). This option has high levels of growth towards the Urban Area, including a new strategic site over 1,500 homes adjoining Oadby. This option gives low levels of growth at the two Market Towns and Large Villages.
- Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site at Oadby). This option is a combination of Refined Options 1 and 2 above. It focusses medium levels of growth towards the Urban Area (including a new strategic site at Oadby over 1,500 homes), Market Towns and Large Villages compared to the options above. In the Market Towns this option sees a higher level of growth at Market Harborough and a lower level of growth Lutterworth reflecting the difference in size between the two settlements.

The Refined Options were considered against the following factors:

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

The table below contains the assessment of each option against the above factors, followed by a conclusion. These are relatively self-explanatory.

For the assessment of the Refined Options against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), each option was considered in a proportionate and consistent way.

The NPPF explains the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner (para. 7).

Achieving sustainable development means the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (para. 8).

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental

These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. Planning policies should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so

should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (para.9)

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11). For plan-making this means all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.

The presumption therefore sets out a number of key factors that should be considered to ensure a sustainable pattern of development is promoted through plan-making. These considerations are set out in the bullet points below. Whilst each of the options were assessed against the NPPF as a whole, the considerations in the presumption in favour of sustainable development are used to help guide/structure the assessment of the refined options against the NPPF:

- Meeting development needs - including unmet need
- Aligning growth and infrastructure – including access to services, facilities (e.g. health and education) and sustainable transport.
- Improve the environment - including natural and historic environment.
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Local plans are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are ‘sound’ if they are:

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

	Sustainability Appraisal	Deliverability	Emerging Local Plan Objectives	Conformity with NPPF	Summary/Conclusion
Refined Option 1 (RO1): Market Towns Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Lutterworth)	This option has the least positive impacts and the most negative impacts when assessed against the SA objectives. It has the lowest levels of growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy and higher levels of growth at settlements lower down (i.e. the large villages)	High levels of growth are focused towards both Market Towns under this option, including a potential new large strategic site south of Lutterworth. There is already a significant amount of commitments in both Market Towns, however, in Lutterworth they are substantially higher and include a large strategic site of 2,750 homes with permission at Lutterworth East. There would be significant overlap between the delivery of new sites allocated in this plan and already committed sites given the amount and type of commitments. Deliverability of this option is therefore likely to be challenging. The overall scale of growth and the size of the settlement, would mean sites are competing in the same market at the same time which could reduce delivery rates on each site.	<p>Objective 1: Delivering Homes – This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. However, this option allocates a limited amount of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option could involve meeting some of those needs in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. The scale of growth at Lutterworth could also be challenging to deliver. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the Council’s ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Objective 2: Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The Market Towns contain the District’s Town Centres and are a significant focus of economic activity. This option would therefore help support this objective to a degree, by focussing housing towards both Market Towns which could support vibrant town centres and economic growth. This option also sees the highest level of growth in Lutterworth (including a large strategic site) compared to the other refined options. This growth would be in close proximity to Magna Park which is a strategically important warehousing and logistics park employing significant numbers of residents from the District and the wider area. However, this option sees a high level of growth in the large villages which do not have town centres and have less employment opportunities.</p> <p>Objective 3: Tackling Climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. The focus of growth towards the Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help tackle climate change. However, this option also sees the highest growth of the 3 refined options in large villages and low growth at the Leicester Urban Area. This option is therefore likely to be more reliant on the use of the private car than other options which could make meeting this objective more challenging.</p> <p>Objective 4: Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt). Of the 3 refined options, refined option 1 focuses the highest level of growth towards these locations, and therefore carries the greatest degree of risk to meeting this objective.</p> <p>Objective 5: Enabling Supporting Infrastructure - Refined option 1 focuses growth towards both Market Towns, which have a good level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and</p>	<p>Meeting development needs – This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. However, this option allocates a limited amount of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option could involve meeting some of those needs in less sustainable locations further away from where the need arises. The scale of growth at Lutterworth could also be challenging to deliver. Whilst this option meets the requirements of the NPPF in this respect, there is a greater risk of the plan not meeting development needs in less sustainable locations, with deliverability challenges in certain locations (a key part of soundness).</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option focusses significant levels of growth towards both Market Towns which are well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport compared to most other settlements. However, limited growth is directed towards the Leicester Urban Area which has access to services and facilities, with high growth in the large villages where sustainable transport, services and facilities are more limited. This option therefore does not align growth and infrastructure as closely as the other two refined options.</p> <p>Improving the environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural/landscape character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt). Of the 3 refined options, this refined option 1 focuses the highest level of growth towards these locations and therefore carries the greatest degree of risk in terms compliance with the NPPF in terms of impact on the historic environment.</p>	Not taken forward. This Option focusses higher levels of growth towards the two Market Towns (including a new Large Strategic Site south of Lutterworth) and the Large Villages. It therefore has less growth towards the Leicester Urban Area at the top of the settlement hierarchy than the other refined options. This option has the least positive and most negative impacts against the SA objectives. It is considered the most challenging from a deliverability perspective, taking into account the high level and nature of existing housing commitments at Lutterworth in particular, and performs least well against the emerging Local Plan objectives, including Delivering Homes, Tackling Climate Change, and Enabling Supporting Infrastructure. Compliance with the NPPF would also be challenging given the limited growth at the top of the settlement hierarchy and the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester. This option was therefore ranked third and not taken forward.

			<p>opportunities for sustainable travel compared to most other settlements. The scale of growth proposed could enable an expansion of infrastructure in these areas. Market Harborough also has the only railway station in the district, providing links to Leicester and London. However infrastructure, services and facilities are more limited in the Large Villages and this option focusses the highest level of growth in these locations. Lutterworth is also significantly smaller than Market Harborough with less sustainable infrastructure, such as a railway station. The delivery of supporting infrastructure is therefore likely to be more challenging compared to refined option 2 and 3.</p>	<p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - The focus of growth towards both Market Towns which have a good level of jobs, services and facilities could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car which may help tackle climate change. However, this option also sees the highest growth of the 3 refined options in large villages and low growth at the Leicester Urban Area. This option is therefore likely to be more reliant on the use of the private car which makes mitigating the impacts of climate change more challenging compared to the other refined options.</p>	
<p>Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including new Strategic Site adjoining Oadby)</p>	<p>Option 2 performs better than refined Option 1, with more positive impacts against the SA objectives. Overall, it performs similar to Refined Option 3 when considered against the majority of SA objectives, largely due to the comparable scale of overall growth and similar environmental sensitivities at the proposed development locations. However, this option does not perform as well as refined option 3 against SA Objective 9: Housing. This is because refined option 3 spreads development more evenly across the highest tiers of the settlement hierarchy, whereas this option has a strong focus towards the Leicester Urban area with limited growth in the Market Towns.</p>	<p>This option sees growth focussed towards the Urban Area, including a new large strategic site on and South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm which adjoins Oadby. Low levels of growth are allocated to both Market Towns and the large villages. Although this option would see a reasonable mix of sites spread across settlements of all sizes, this option also has a substantial amount of growth at Scraptoft, Thurnby & Bushby (approximately 2,550 over the plan period). Delivering this scale of growth by 2041 in such a small area is likely to be challenging.</p>	<p>Objective 1: Delivering Homes – This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth towards the Leicester Urban Area under this option would help to meet this requirement in sustainable locations close to where the need arises. However, the scale of growth adjoining the Leicester Urban Area at Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby could be challenging to deliver within the plan period. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the Council’s ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Objective 2: Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The Leicester Urban Area is at the heart of the Functional Economic Market Area and a significant focus of jobs and employment development. Focussing homes towards this area would therefore support jobs and the economy in this area. However, there could be limited support for the more local economies and jobs in the Market Towns (including Town Centres) and Large Villages given the lower scales of growth in these locations under this option.</p> <p>Objective 3: Tackling Climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. The focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a significant amount and diversity of jobs, services and facilities; along with low growth in the Large Villages could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car. The scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area also offers the potential for improved sustainable transport links which may help reduce reliance on private cars and tackle climate change.</p> <p>Objective 4: Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. The impact on this objective will largely be determined by the selection of specific sites. There is a relatively high concentration</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, focussing significant growth in this location would help to meet this requirement in sustainable locations close to where the need arises. However, the scale of growth adjoining the Leicester Urban Area at Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby could be challenging to deliver within the plan period. This option therefore complies with the NPPF in this respect but poses a degree of risk in meeting its requirements.</p> <p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – This option focusses significant levels of growth towards Leicester Urban Area which is well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport compared to most other settlements. However, low growth is directed towards the Market Towns under this option which have good access to services and facilities and sustainable transport. Whilst this option makes the most of infrastructure towards the Leicester Urban Area, the limited amount of growth in both Market Towns does not reflect the level of services and facilities in those locations. This option therefore does not align growth and infrastructure as closely as refined option 3.</p> <p>Improve the environment - All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. The impact on the natural and historic</p>	<p>Not taken forward. This Option performs better than Refined Option 1 but slightly worse than Refined Option 3 and is therefore ranked second overall. Against the SA objectives it performs better than refined option 1 with more positive impacts, and similar to refined option 3 but slightly worse against one objective. Although it contains high levels of growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy, it proposes substantial growth at Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby. Delivering this amount of growth by 2041 in a small area is likely to be challenging. Whilst it broadly meets the emerging Local Plan objectives, the limited growth in the Market Towns in particular carries a degree to risk to some objectives. This option is broadly compliant with the NPPF, however, deliverability challenges for the scale of growth at the Leicester Urban Area and alignment of growth and infrastructure due to the limited development at the Market Towns could make compliance challenging. This option is therefore ranked</p>

			<p>of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt). Refined option 2 sees the lowest levels of growth across these settlements. However, this option directs the most development towards the Leicester Urban Area. There are concentrations of historic assets within Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby, including two Conservation Areas and a number of listed buildings. This refined option also proposes strategic scale development on Land South of Gartree Road & Land at Streeton Hall Farm, which contains a scheduled monument and other assets towards the eastern part of the site. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to meeting this objective, and mitigation would be required.</p> <p>Objective 5: Enabling Supporting Infrastructure - Refined option 2 focuses growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a high level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements. The scale of growth in this location has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure in the area to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. However, given the limited scale of growth in the Market Towns and Large Villages, opportunities to enable supporting infrastructure in these locations would be more limited.</p>	<p>environment will largely be determined by the selection of specific sites and proposed mitigation. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Kibworth (Beauchamp & Harcourt). Refined option 2 sees the lowest levels of growth across these settlements. However, this option directs most development towards the Leicester Urban Area. There are concentrations of historic assets within Scraftoft, Thurnby and Bushby, including two Conservation Areas and a number of listed buildings. This refined option also proposes strategic scale development on Land South of Gartree Road & Land at Streeton Hall Farm, which contains a scheduled monument and other assets towards the eastern part of the site. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to meeting this part of the NPPF, and mitigation would be required.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - The focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which has a significant amount and diversity of jobs, services and facilities; along with low growth in the Large Villages could lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car. The scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area also offers the potential for improved sustainable transport links which may help reduce reliance on private cars and tackle climate change.</p>	<p>second overall and not taken forward.</p>
<p>Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Towns Focus (including Strategic Site at Oadby)</p>	<p>Option 3 performs similarly to Refined Option 2 when considered against the majority of SA objectives, largely due to the equal scale of overall growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy with similar environmental sensitivities at the proposed development locations. However, Refined Option 3 is considered to perform</p>	<p>This option is considered to be the most deliverable of the three Refined Options, as it achieves a more even spread of development across the higher tiers of the Settlement Hierarchy (i.e. the Urban Area and Market Towns) which is more likely to enable a mix of sites to be delivered across the plan period in a range of sustainable locations.</p>	<p>Objective 1: Delivering Homes – This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option focusses significant growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which would help to meet this requirement in sustainable locations close to where the need arises, whilst also achieving a more even spread across higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, making it this option more deliverable. This option is therefore most likely to ensure the Council meets this objective.</p> <p>Objective 2: Creating jobs and diversifying the economy – The Leicester Urban Area is at the heart of the Functional Economic Market Area and a significant focus of jobs and employment. Focussing homes towards this area would therefore support jobs and the economy in this area. This option also focuses significant growth towards the Market Towns, with a particular focus on Market Harborough. These locations contain a significant amount and diversity of jobs. Although there is</p>	<p>Meeting development needs - This option would deliver a mix of sites across the district, including a mix of different types of homes to meet needs. Given the potential role of the District in meeting unmet housing need from Leicester, this option focusses significant growth towards the Leicester Urban Area which would help to meet this requirement in sustainable locations close to where the need arises, whilst also achieving a more even spread of growth across higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, making it this option more deliverable than refined option 2. This option is therefore most likely to meet the development need for homes and maintain a sufficient supply of home across the plan period.</p>	<p>Taken Forward as Preferred Option. This option combines elements of refined options 1 and 2 and performs best overall. The SA indicates this option performs similarly to refined option 2 when considered against the majority of SA objectives, largely due to the comparable scale of overall growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy with similar environmental sensitivities at the proposed development locations. However, Refined Option 3 is</p>

	<p>better against SA Objective 9: Housing by spreading development more evenly across the highest tiers of the settlement hierarchy.</p>		<p>limited additional growth at Lutterworth under this option, there are a substantial number of commitments, including a large strategic site which will support the economy in that area. Medium levels of growth are also proposed in the Large Villages which will help support businesses locally.</p> <p>Objective 3: Tackling Climate change and enhancing the natural environment – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. This option incorporates elements of refined option 1 and 2, with a significant focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area (including a large strategic site) and significant growth in the Market Towns at Market Harborough, with more limited growth at Lutterworth reflecting the difference in size and level of existing commitments. This option results in a more even geographical spread of growth across the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy compared to the other options, enabling the delivery of homes across the most sustainable settlements which contain a higher amount and diversity of jobs, services and facilities; along with medium growth in the Large Villages. This option could therefore lead to fewer and shorter journeys by car. The scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough (which has the only railway station in the District) also offers the potential for improved sustainable transport links which may help reduce reliance on private cars and tackle climate change.</p> <p>Objective 4: Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. The impact on this objective will largely be determined by the selection of specific sites. Refined Option 3 sees a significant allocation of development towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough in particular. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough. However, this option also directs significant development towards the Leicester Urban Area. There are concentrations of historic assets within Scaptoft, Thurnby and Bushby, and a scheduled monument and other assets towards the eastern part of Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm identified as a Large Strategic Site under this option. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to meeting this objective, and mitigation would be required.</p> <p>Objective 5: Enabling Supporting Infrastructure - Refined option 3 focuses growth towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough which have a high level of services, facilities (including Health & Education Infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements. The scale of growth in these locations has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure in the area to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. Medium levels of growth in the Large Villages would also</p>	<p>Aligning growth and infrastructure – Refined option 3 focuses growth towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough which have a high level of services, facilities (including Health & Education infrastructure) and opportunities for sustainable travel compared to other settlements. The scale of growth in these locations has the potential to deliver and expand infrastructure in the area to support growth, including health, education and sustainable transport. Medium levels of growth in the Large Villages would also help to enable appropriate supporting infrastructure in those settlements.</p> <p>Improve the environment - All options are likely to have a degree of impact on the natural environment due the lack brownfield land in the District. The impact on the natural environment is uncertain to a degree and will largely depend on the selection of specific sites and associated mitigation rather than the overall development strategy. Refined Option 3 sees a significant allocation of development towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough in particular. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets, particularly listed buildings in Market Harborough and in Scaptoft, Thurnby and Bushby. There is also a scheduled monument and other assets towards the eastern part of Land South of Gartree Road and Land at Stretton Hall Farm which is identified as a Large Strategic Site under this option. In this respect, this option would require a degree of mitigation.</p> <p>Mitigate and adapt to climate change - This option incorporates elements of refined option 1 and 2, with a significant focus of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area, (including a large strategic site and significant growth in the Market Towns at Market Harborough, with more limited growth at Lutterworth reflecting the difference in size and level of existing commitments. This option results in a more even geographical spread of growth across the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy compared to the other options, enabling the</p>	<p>considered to perform better against SA Objective 9: Housing by spreading development more evenly across the highest tiers of the settlement hierarchy. The spread of growth also makes this option the most deliverable option by avoiding overconcentration of development at Lutterworth and Scaptoft/Thurnby/Bushby which could cause deliverability challenges in the other options. This option also performs well against the emerging Local Plan objectives including objective 1: Delivering Homes, Objective 3: Tackling Climate Change, and Objective 5: Enabling Supporting Infrastructure. This option is also considered to comply with NPPF by focussing development towards the most sustainable locations at a scale that is deliverable and capable of providing a mix of sites and types of homes to meet needs, taking into account the potential role of district in meeting unmet need from the Leicester. The approach would help best align growth and infrastructure, and help mitigate the impacts of climate change. This option is therefore considered to be an appropriate strategy to inform new Local Plan and was therefore taken forward as the preferred Development Strategy.</p>
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			help to enable proportionate supporting infrastructure in the settlements.	delivery of homes across the most sustainable settlements which have a significant amount and diversity of jobs, services and facilities; along with medium growth in the Large Villages. This option could therefore support fewer and shorter journeys by car. The scale of growth towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough (which has the only railway station in the District) also offers the potential for improved sustainable transport links which may help reduce reliance on private cars and tackle climate change.	
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Appendix G – Assessment of Employment Spatial Options:

The Employment Options were considered against the following factors:

- Sustainability Appraisal.
- Deliverability.
- Conformity with the emerging Local Plan Objectives.
- Conformity with the NPPF.

The table below contains the assessment of each option against the above factors, followed by a conclusion. These are relatively self-explanatory.

For the assessment of the Employment Options against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), each option was considered in a proportionate and consistent way. The NPPF explains the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner (para. 7).

Achieving sustainable development means the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (para. 8).

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental

These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. Planning policies should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area (para.9)

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11). For plan-making this means all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects.

The presumption therefore sets out several key factors that should be considered to ensure a sustainable pattern of development is promoted through plan-making. These factors are set out in the bullet points below. Regard has also been had to building a strong, competitive economy (para. 86, 87 and 88), however these other considerations are less spatial and are addressed via plan policy rather than the development strategy. Whilst each of the options were assessed against the NPPF as a whole, the following considerations are used to help guide/structure the assessment of the employment options against the NPPF:

- Meeting development needs
- Aligning growth and infrastructure – including access to services, facilities (e.g. health and education) and sustainable transport.
- Improve the environment - including natural and historic environment.
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- Support a prosperous rural economy

Local plans are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are ‘sound’ if they are:

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

	Sustainability Appraisal	Consultation Responses (Reg 18)	Deliverability	Emerging Local Plan Objectives	Conformity with NPPF	Summary/Conclusion
<p>Option 1: Intensifying the density of employment uses in existing employment areas.</p>	<p>This option has the least negative effects (and equal or fewer positive impacts) when assessed against the SA objectives as it supports intensifying the density of existing employment uses. This will minimise the take up of new land, which could include greenfield land, and the impact on biodiversity and landscape. Option 1 offers the opportunity to take advantage of existing sustainable transport options by locating development within the most sustainable locations.</p>	<p>This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024).</p> <p>Most respondents, particularly the public and Parish Council / Meetings / NF, support Option 1. All options generated objections, for Option 1 these focussed on its feasibility, and alignment with demand & plan objectives.</p>	<p>This option potentially spreads growth across more tiers of the settlement hierarchy, with a substantial focus on Market Harborough & Lutterworth. However, recent employment evidence has identified a slightly higher need for employment land than the HENA 2022 with limited opportunities for intensification.</p> <p>Individually, this option is therefore most challenging to deliver and least likely to deliver sufficient land to meet need. Option 1 may also limit choice to the market, in terms of scale, use and location.</p>	<p>Delivering homes: Option 1 is not directly associated with the delivery of homes. However, focusing land / job provision in existing employment areas in sustainable locations supports balanced communities.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy: a focus on intensifying existing employment areas will contribute to job creation and may enable local businesses to expand. Land and jobs would be focussed on locations attractive to the market, that are in the main sustainable and accessible. Option 1 is unlikely to widen choice within the portfolio and potentially therefore offers least scope to support economic growth and diversify the economy. Alone, it is the least likely option to provide sufficient land and jobs to meet need and support economic growth. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to the ability to meet this objective.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment: Option 1 focuses provision within existing employment areas that are in more sustainable locations and likely to have existing transport links. However, increased car use for commuting may result. By nature, provision under option 1, may be more fragmented than under other options, and therefore may have least potential to implement climate adaption strategies, enhance biodiversity or create green infrastructure.</p> <p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character: as provision would be accommodated within existing employment areas, Option 1 is likely to have negligible impact on heritage or rural character.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure: Option 1 is least likely to enable the delivery of supporting infrastructure.</p>	<p>Meeting development needs: This option would deliver a limited mix of sites, including a mix of different uses but is considered least likely to support economic growth. Option 1 is unlikely to deliver the amount of land needed to meet employment land requirements to 2041.</p> <p>Aligning growth & infrastructure: This option focusses growth towards existing employment areas which are mostly well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport. However, it does not align growth and infrastructure as closely as the other options.</p> <p>Improve the environment: All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural / landscape character, given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. In terms of NPPF compliance and impact on the environment and heritage assets Option 1, compared to other options, carries least risk but also offers least opportunity for improvements.</p> <p>Mitigate & adapt to climate change: focussing growth in existing employment areas could lead to fewer and shorter journeys which may help climate change. However, this option may see some growth at lower tier settlements, likely to be more reliant on the private car, which makes mitigation more challenging compared to other options.</p>	<p>Not taken forward. The Sustainability Appraisal indicates this option has the least negative effects as it supports intensifying the density of existing employment uses. This will minimise the take up of new land for development, including greenfield land and offers the opportunity to take advantage of existing sustainable transport options by locating development in the most sustainable locations. However, the Local Housing Employment evidence has identified a slightly higher need than the HENA (2022) with limited opportunities for intensification. This option is therefore unlikely to meet employment needs which would conflict with the requirements of the NPPF, the emerging Local Plan objective of creating jobs and diversifying the economy. This option was therefore not taken forward.</p>

					Support a prosperous rural economy: under this option some growth could occur in existing employment areas in lower tier settlements. Although in less sustainable locations, overall, this could benefit the rural economy more, compared to other options.	
Option 2: Continue with the current approach of focussing new employment land in the District's main economic centres and larger sustainable settlements.	Overall, this option has the highest number of negative effects, although only slightly more than Option 3. However, this option focuses employment development to the main economic centres which includes Market Harbourough/Lutterworth and larger sustainable settlements. These locations are the most sustainable and therefore could offer opportunities to take advantage of sustainable transport options.	This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024). Support for Option 2 was equal to Option 3, but lower than Option 1, and drawn from a wider range of respondent types. All options generated objections, for Option 2 these focussed on the potential for coalescence, uncharacteristic settlement patterns and misalignment with growth locations.	Market Harbourough and Lutterworth, and to a lesser extent large villages, have a critical mass of existing employment / business activity, population and infrastructure and remain attractive to the market. Focussing development at these locations would provide a varied portfolio in a range of geographical locations that are attractive to the market. Employment evidence identifies committed land and extant allocations that make a valuable contribution to supply across these settlements, although, limited opportunities to bring forward new / additional employment land in attractive and deliverable locations. This option is capable of meeting need, is deliverable and considered most likely to deliver land consistently throughout the plan period.	Delivering homes: Option 2 is not directly related to the delivery of homes. However, focusing land / job provision in Market Harbourough, Lutterworth and larger sustainable settlements supports the maintenance of balanced communities. Creating jobs and diversifying the economy: continuing to focus new employment land provision in Market Harbourough, Lutterworth and larger settlements will add to the existing critical mass of employment provision in these locations and support economic growth. Jobs will be created in the most sustainable and accessible locations, providing opportunities for business expansion. Option 2 has the potential to widen choice in the portfolio and diversify the economy, in the most commercially attractive and deliverable locations in the district. Concentrating land in these settlements also benefits the districts centres (town, district and local) by focusing jobs on locations close to services and facilities to help support their vibrancy and viability. Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment: Enabling supporting infrastructure: Option 2 focuses provision within the district's main economic centres and larger settlements, where there should be good access to sustainable transport links. However, increased car use for commuting may result, particularly if development is on the outskirts or poorly connected. Employment land delivered under this option has some potential to implement climate adaption strategies, enhance biodiversity and link into or create green infrastructure. Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character: option 2 is likely to have a degree of impact on heritage and rural character, given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on green field sites. Provision would be accommodated in and around Market Harbourough and Lutterworth, which have relatively high concentrations of heritage assets, and larger settlements. The impact on this objective will largely be determined by the selection of specific sites. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to meeting this objective, and mitigation would be required. Enabling supporting infrastructure: Option 2 has limited potential to enable the delivery of supporting infrastructure.	Meeting development needs: This option would deliver provision in a good range locations, including a mix of different uses and overall would support economic growth. Option 2 could deliver the amount of land needed to meet employment land requirements to 2041. However, some provision may be at sites on the outskirts of these settlements, in less commercially attractive or sustainable locations. Aligning growth & infrastructure: This option focusses growth in the main economic centres and larger settlements which are well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport. It aligns growth and infrastructure to some degree. However, alone it would not align homes and jobs in the Leicester Urban fringe area. Improve the environment: All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural / landscape character, given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. There is a relatively high concentration of historical assets in Market Harbourough and Lutterworth. Compared to other options, Option 2 carries a degree of risk	Taken forward. The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that overall, this option has the highest number of negative effects, although only slightly more than Option 3. However, this option focuses employment development to the main economic centres which includes Market Harbourough/Lutterworth and larger sustainable settlements. These locations are the most sustainable and therefore could offer opportunities to take advantage of sustainable transport options. Focussing development towards these locations would give potential to provide a varied portfolio of employment provision in a range of geographical locations which are attractive and offer a choice to the market, as well as, aligning the provision of jobs with the largest concentrations of existing and future residential development in the district. This option is therefore considered to be compliant with NPPF, emerging Local Plan objectives and be deliverable by providing a range locations for employment land in locations that are attractive to market. This option was therefore taken forward, along with Option 3 below.

					<p>but also offers some scope for improvement, in terms of NPPF compliance and impact on the environment and heritage assets</p> <p>Mitigate & adapt to climate change: focused growth in the main economic centres could lead to fewer and shorter journeys which may help tackle climate change.</p> <p>Support a prosperous rural economy: under this option planned growth would not be directed to lower tier settlements or rural areas. Focusing significant amounts of growth to rural areas is not considered sustainable, but the principle of supporting the rural economy will be supported by policy.</p>	
<p>Option 3: Align new employment land provision with areas of significant housing growth.</p>	<p>The Sustainability Appraisal indicates this option supports the development of land for employment use which could result in the loss of greenfield land and negative effects are therefore expected against several SA objectives. Aligning employment development with areas of significant housing growth could help to minimise commuting distances and offer opportunities for residents take up active travel opportunities to commute to work.</p>	<p>This option was supported either individually or in combination with other options through the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan to Feb 2024).</p> <p>Support for Option 3 was equal to Option 2, but lower than Option 1, and drawn from a wider range of respondent types. All options generated objections, for Option 3 this focussed on the potential to cause smaller settlements to stagnate.</p>	<p>Option 3 aligns to a development strategy which includes a Large Strategic Site (>1,500 homes). It achieves a more even spread of development, across the highest tiers of the settlement hierarchy, which is more likely to provide a varied portfolio to be delivered across the plan period in a range of sustainable locations.</p> <p>This option, alone or in combination is capable of meeting need, and is considered deliverable.</p>	<p>Delivering homes: Option 3 aligns provision to areas of significant housing growth and therefore supports the creation of sustainable new places.</p> <p>Creating jobs and diversifying the economy: aligning employment land provision with areas of significant housing growth has potential to widen choice in the portfolio creating new opportunities in location/s with strong labour market access. Therefore, this option offers most scope to support economic growth and diversify the economy. Option 3 also has capacity to support the delivery of sustainable places and address a geographical gap in land / job provision around the Leicester urban fringe. Alone, this option would provide some support to centre vibrancy in larger town centres by focusing jobs on locations close to services and facilities.</p> <p>Tackling climate change and enhancing the natural environment: employment land provision under this option has most potential to implement climate adaption strategies, enhance biodiversity and support the creation of green infrastructure, through the delivery of mixed-use development and the creation of sustainable places. Option 3 also has the potential to support a reduction in carbon emissions by reducing journey times and reliance on the car for commuting and may present opportunities for active and sustainable transport enhancements. This option has a degree of benefit towards meeting this objective.</p>	<p>Meeting development needs: This option would focus delivery at Market Harborough and the Leicester urban fringe and overall would support economic growth. Compared to other options, Option 3 takes greatest account of wider development opportunity around the Leicester Urban fringe / A6 corridor, in-line with the NPPF.</p> <p>Aligning growth & infrastructure: This option focusses provision in Market Harborough and the Leicester urban fringe, both well served with infrastructure, services, facilities and sustainable transport. Option 3 most closely aligns growth with infrastructure compared to other options.</p> <p>Improve the environment: All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural /</p>	<p>Taken Forward. The Sustainability Appraisal indicates this option supports the development of land for employment use which could result in the loss of greenfield land and negative effects are therefore expected against a number of SA objectives. Aligning employment development with areas of significant housing growth could help to minimise commuting distances and offer opportunities for residents take up active travel opportunities to commute to work. The Local Housing & Employment Study (2025) recommends limited additional provision to help address the issue of flexibility to ensure delivery against need across all employment uses, and to address a geographical gap in employment provision around the Leicester urban fringe area as part of any strategic development area (to</p>

				<p>Retaining and celebrating our heritage and rural character: – All options are likely to have a degree of impact on rural character given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. The impact on this objective will largely be determined by the selection of specific sites. Option 3 sees employment provision focussed towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Harborough, which has a high concentration of historic assets. This option therefore carries a degree of risk to meeting this objective, and mitigation would be required.</p> <p>Enabling supporting infrastructure: Option 3 has most potential to enable the delivery of supporting infrastructure through the delivery of mixed-use development and the creation of sustainable places.</p>	<p>landscape character, given the lack of brownfield land in the district and the reliance on greenfield sites. Option 3 carries a degree of risk but also offers most scope for improvement in terms of NPPF compliance and impact on the environment and heritage assets</p> <p>Mitigate & adapt to climate change: focused growth at Market Harborough and the Leicester urban fringe could lead to fewer and shorter journeys which may help climate change. The potential for enhancements to active and sustainable travel, and climate mitigation / adaption at scale compared to other options, may provide further benefits.</p> <p>Support a prosperous rural economy: under this option planned growth would not be directed to lower tier settlements or rural areas. Focusing significant amounts of growth to rural areas is not considered sustainable, but the principle of supporting the rural economy will be supported by policy</p>	<p>help support a balance of homes and jobs and the delivery of sustainable places). There is a degree of overlap with Option 2 which focuses employment development towards main economic centres aligning with areas of significant housing growth. However, a key part of the Development Strategy for housing includes a Large Strategic Site on Land South of Gartree Road adjoining the Leicester Urban Area where there is limited existing employment provision despite strong access to labour. This option is therefore taken forward (in combination with Option 2) to support the co-location of jobs and homes, including on a key strategic site for delivering the housing strategy. This approach ensures the employment strategy supports a sustainable new community with access to employment opportunities within the development itself in-line with the NPPF; meets a geographic gap in employment provision; provides flexibility and choice to the employment land supply in an area attractive to the market.</p>
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