

Transport Topic Paper (Part 1)

14th August 2026



Submission Harborough District Local Plan

2020-2041

1. Purpose and Background

1.1 Topic Papers are an important source of information helping to outline and explain how policies in the Proposed Submission version of the Harborough District Local Plan 2020-2041 (Local Plan) have been prepared.

1.2 For each topic the papers tell the 'end to end' story of how the policies have evolved, setting out the important milestones along the way. The intention is to signpost rather than to duplicate the detailed technical evidence which is already available in the evidence base and not to repeat the explanation given under each policy in the Local Plan itself.

1.3 The main aim is to assist the Inspectors carrying out the examination into the Local Plan, as well as others taking part in the Examination Hearing. It is assumed that these parties are familiar with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

1.4 The Transport Topic Paper is prepared in two parts:

- **Part 1** (this document) - is written by Harborough District Council and sets out the transport context (which will also inform Part 2), including:
 - How transport matters have been considered from the early stages of plan-making;
 - How transport considerations have informed the plan to ensure development is focussed on locations that are or can be made sustainable from a transport perspective;
 - The opportunities the development strategy creates to make use of existing transport infrastructure and support sustainable transport, and;
 - The impact of the Local Plan on the transport network.
- **Part 2** sets out an overall coordinated strategy for delivering the necessary transport infrastructure to address the impacts of the Local Plan, including:
 - Transport mitigation, prioritisation and cost;
 - How the policies in the draft plan (including the proposed modifications [S-NLP15](#)) respond to the evidence to ensure transport measures are delivered in a coordinated way;
 - How transport infrastructure will be funded.

1.5 It is anticipated that Part 2 of the Transport Topic will be published in September 2026 with appropriate input from the LTA. This is because at the time of writing (14th August 2026) the following workstreams are ongoing and nearing completion:

- Preliminary Scheme Design (Local Highway) and associated evidence updates (see from para 7.14 below).
- Joint SoCG on Strategic Warehousing and the A5 with Warwickshire CC and Leicestershire CC (and potentially including National Highways).

1.6 Depending on the outcome of this work, further proposed modifications may be considered. Alongside the Examination, the Council continues to progress work on introducing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

1.7 At the time of writing (14th August 2026) HDC and Leicestershire County Council (LCC) as the Local Transport Authority (LTA) have agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) setting out progress towards addressing their soundness concerns raised at regulation 19 [SCG-NLP27]. Whilst not all of the LTA's concerns have been addressed at present, the SoCG includes the following:

“LCC agrees that HDC has workstreams in hand... that, once completed, have the potential to fully resolve all concerns raised by the LTA in LCC's regulation 19 consultation response.”

1.8 Whilst the LTAs current position remains as set out in this SoCG, any future updates on the LTA's position will be reported to the Examination as appropriate, including in Part 2 of the Transport Topic which will be completed with LTA input as appropriate.

2. The Topic and Policies

2.1 This Topic Paper addresses transport and covers the formulation and justification for the following policies from a transport perspective:

- Policy DS01: Development Strategy
- Policy DS02: Creating Jobs and Diversifying the Economy
- Policy DS05: Infrastructure
- Policy SA01: Site Allocations
- Policy SA02: Land South of Gartree Road
- Policy SA03: Market Harborough North
- Policy SA04: Scraptoft East
- Policy DM06: Transport and Accessibility

3. Evidence

3.1 A summary of all transport related evidence submitted in support of the Harborough Local Plan is listed in Table 1 below, including references and links to the on-line evidence library.

REFERENCE	DOCUMENT TITLE	DATE
SCG-NLP 2	South Leicestershire Local Plan Making Statement of Comment Ground	Nov-21
SCG-NLP 3	Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground	Jun-22
SCG-NLP 12	Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground with National Highways	Mar-25
SCG-NLP 24	Leicester City Council and Harborough District Council SoCG relating to Reg 19 reps	Apr-26
SCG-NLP 25	National Highways and Harborough District Council: Harborough Local Plan Statement of Common Ground	Apr-26

SCG-NLP27	Statement of Common Ground with Leicestershire County Council on Highway and Transport Matters	Aug-26
TRP-NLP 1	A Local Transport Plan for Leicestershire: Core Document (2025 - 2040)	Nov-24
TRP-NLP 2	Harborough Local Plan Strategic Transport Impact Assessment (STIA)	Jan-25
TRP-NLP 3	South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence: Stage 1	Jan-25
TRP-NLP 4	South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence: Costing Mitigation Updated Draft Report	Apr-26
TRP-NLP 5	South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence: Stage 2	Sep-25

Table 1: Summary of Transport Evidence

4. Context

4.1 The United Kingdom's population has grown and will continue to grow. Figures from the Office for National Statistics estimated a 6.9% - 4.3 million increase between 2010 and 2020 and forecast further growth of 2.1 million to the mid-2030s (giving a projected population total of 69.2 million).

4.2 New developments are often considered the cause of additional traffic and clearly the location of development influences the distribution of traffic at a local level. However, the creation of new homes and jobs is a response to an increasing population, and it is the increasing population that generates additional demands for travel. If the UK's population continues to increase, so will travel demand (not just by individuals, but also, for example, through increased travel by businesses to meet the goods and services needs of a growing population).

4.3 Considering the growth requirements of Harborough and the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) as a whole, as well as related evidence including the Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 4 (2024) (LTP4), points to one fundamental conclusion - unless significant changes occur in societal behaviours and expectations, there are significant limitations as to the extent to which the impacts of growth on the County's transportation system can be mitigated in future.

4.4 Leicester and Leicestershire is not unique in this regard, given transport congestion is already more acute in other parts of the country, especially in the south-east. Significant changes in people's behaviour will be required if the impacts of growth on the transport system (and on carbon levels) are to be lessened significantly. In the meantime, the best opportunity to achieve a level of mitigation is via a Local Plan led approach; Plans that are supported by robust evidence bases to help to minimise impacts on the transport network and maximise funding towards the delivery of highways and transport mitigation.

5. National Policy

5.1 The Local Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination under the December 2023 NPPF (NPPF23). However, some of the transport evidence references the December 2024 NPPF (NPPF24) because this represents the current national policy position. The transport provisions of the two versions of the NPPF are materially consistent, with the principal changes relating to the introduction of a more explicit vision-led approach to transport planning and a stronger emphasis on prioritising sustainable transport modes. These changes do not fundamentally alter the policy tests against which development is assessed, nor do they affect the overall conclusions of the transport evidence in relation to infrastructure requirements, deliverability or viability. The transport evidence and policy seek to prioritise sustainable transport, which is consistent with both the NPPF23 and NPPF24.

5.2 The NPPF23 contains the policy context for how transport matters should be considered for the preparation of the Local Plan. Paragraph 108 requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making so that:

- potential impacts on transport networks can be addressed;
- opportunities from existing/proposed transport infrastructure are realised;
- opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport are pursued;
- environmental impacts of traffic/transport infrastructure are taken into account;
- patterns of movement, streets and other transport considerations are integral to design.

5.3 NPPF23 paragraph 109 requires the planning system to actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account.

5.4 Harborough District is a predominantly rural area and opportunities for sustainable transport solutions vary significantly. It can be challenging for some residents to access services and facilities by means other than by private vehicle. Many jobs and higher order services and facilities are served beyond the district boundaries in the Leicester Urban Area. Travel choice including sustainable travel (and the associated health, environmental; and economic benefits) is often limited compared to more urban authorities.

5.5 Focusing growth on locations which are or can be made sustainable (limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes) has therefore been an important consideration from the earliest stages of plan preparation, to ensure patterns of growth are managed and the transport objectives in the NPPF23 are met.

6. Focussing growth on locations that are or can be made sustainable

6.1 Transport considerations, including access to jobs, services and facilities, have informed the plan from the earliest stages of plan preparation to ensure patterns of growth are actively managed to achieve the transport objectives in the NPPF23. This section explains how transport considerations have informed the location of

development in the draft submission plan, focussing on the development strategy and site selection process.

Development Strategy

6.2 The Development Strategy Paper (Feb 2025) [PRE-NLP4] sets out the approach used to identify the overall development strategy for the Submission Draft Local Plan. The approach is evidence based and forms part of a wider process of ensuring the plan meets the objectives of sustainable development, including transport considerations.

6.3 Setting the strategy for the distribution of development involved examining different patterns of growth to understand the implications of meeting development needs in a range of different (but reasonable) ways. The spatial strategy draws together conclusions from different elements of the plan-making process relating to housing and employment, including transport considerations.

6.4 The need for general employment land is relatively modest in Harborough District and the general approach is summarised in the Employment and Retail Topic Paper [TPC-NLP5]. Strategic Warehousing has specific locational needs which is different to other sectors and the approach is summarised in the Strategic Warehousing Topic Paper [TCP-NLP6]. The Spatial Strategy and options development process involved three key stages:

- An Initial set of reasonable options/alternatives - developed to inform the Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) (January 2024).
- A refined set of options/alternatives - developed mid 2024
- Selection of a preferred option - developed for the Submission Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) (March 2025).

Initial set of reasonable options/alternatives

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping

6.5 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) [S-NLP3] has been developed through an iterative process and has informed decision making at every stage of developing the spatial strategy, including the earliest stages of plan preparation. This included testing different spatial options (i.e. different patterns of growth) across the District.

6.6 Key sustainability issues were originally identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (August 2023) taking into account consultation responses, baseline data and a review of other relevant plans/strategies that have an influence on sustainability. The scoping report identified the key sustainability issues to be addressed, including transport related matters. SA paragraph 3.64 [S-NLP3] says:

“The potential for reducing the need to travel, limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan should also encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport by providing safe and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as recognise the multiple benefits they bring in terms of physical and mental health, reducing carbon emissions and reducing air pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for

access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes and specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities which is likely to reduce the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.”

6.7 The SA also recognised [S-NLP3] rural accessibility remains an issue in the District which includes access to services, green spaces and sustainable transport modes. In addition, there is a high dependency of private vehicles with a high level of commuting to and from Harborough via car or van. The Local Plan provides an opportunity to tailor policies that would address private vehicle use within the District and encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport while enhancing these services, including active travel. The Local Plan also offers the opportunity to focus development within accessible locations or those that can be made accessible and where there is good access to sustainable and active travel or where there are opportunities to improve transport modes. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, rural accessibility is less likely to improve and reliance on private cars will likely remain higher, resulting in higher levels of transport related emissions and poor air quality (although it is noted that levels of electric vehicle use are likely to increase as a result of national policy).

6.8 The SA responded to this context by including SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change, improving air quality, public health and wellbeing, and the provision of sustainable transport. The full list of the SA objectives are contained in the SA report from page 64 [S-NLP3].

6.9 These objectives form part of the SA framework against which the sustainability of the Local Plan was appraised, including different patterns of growth (spatial options), potential development sites and policies. Objective 13 relates directly to transport and poses questions to help inform the assessment:

6.10 SA Objective 13: Promote sustainable transport use and active travel

- Will it reduce reliance on private vehicles?
- Will it promote the use of and improve sustainable modes of transport?
- Will it encourage walking and cycling for short journeys?

6.11 The settlement hierarchy was used to develop different patterns of growth (spatial options) for appraisal against these objectives.

Settlement Hierarchy Assessment [PPL-NLP1]

6.12 The Development Strategy Paper (Feb 2025) [PRE-NLP4] explains the settlement hierarchy was an important starting point for developing spatial options for the distribution of housing. The Council published a Settlement Hierarchy Assessment alongside the Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation (January 2024) [PRE-NLP2] to understand which of the District's settlements are the most sustainable.

6.13 As a large rural district, Harborough has approximately 100 settlements ranging from those adjoining the urban area of Leicester and market towns to very small villages and hamlets. The classification of towns, villages and rural settlements is therefore an important part of understanding whether growth is focussed on locations that are or can be made sustainable, in line with NPPF23 paragraph 108 and 109.

6.14 From a transport perspective, the most sustainable locations will generally be where there is greatest opportunity for sustainable transport. Focussing significant development towards higher tiers of the hierarchy is likely to be more sustainable than settlements in lower tiers as residents have better access to a wider range of jobs, services and facilities resulting in:

- fewer and shorter journeys by private car;
- better use of existing transport infrastructure; and
- shorter journeys which have greater potential to be undertaken by sustainable modes (walking, cycling, public transport) offering greater travel choice.

6.15 In this respect, focussing growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy should help minimise impacts on the transport network by making use of existing infrastructure and encouraging sustainable travel with the associated health and environmental benefits, making transport impacts more easily and appropriately addressed.

6.16 The Settlement Hierarchy was prepared at the early stages of plan preparation and was consulted on in the Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) (January 2024) [PRE-NLP2]. A summary of the responses to the Settlement Hierarchy and Council Response can be found at para 3.8.1 – 3.8.4 of Regulation 22 Consultation Statement [S-NLP10]. The Settlement Hierarchy Assessment [PPL-NLP1] was updated following the Issues and Options Consultation. No significant changes were made to the hierarchy itself which is reproduced below for convenience:

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

Table 2: Settlement Hierarchy

6.17 The settlement hierarchy was used to develop and appraise different patterns of growth across the District enabling the impacts (positive and negative) of different spatial options to be considered, including transport considerations.

Six Initial Spatial Options for Housing

6.18 Taking into account the settlement hierarchy, six initial spatial options for delivering three different scales of growth (Low, Medium, High) were identified in the Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) (January 2024) [PRE-NLP2]. These options were presented according to the amount of growth allocated to different tiers

in the Settlement Hierarchy. 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. Further details of the initial options can be found in the Development Strategy Paper [[PRE-NLP4](#)]. The 6 initial options were as follows:

- Option 1: Local Plan Strategy
- Option 2: Proportional Growth
- Option 3: Urban Area Focus
- Option 4: Strategic Sites Focus
- Option 5: Market Town Focus
- Option 6: Large Village Focus

6.19 These options were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal published alongside the Issues and Options Consultation (Jan 2024).

6.20 In terms of Objective 13: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel, the sustainability appraisal found that focussing growth towards large strategic sites (Option 4) had the most positive and least negative effects, followed by focussing growth towards the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns (Option 3 and 5). Options with higher levels of growth towards the bottom of the hierarchy performed less well in transport terms. In this respect, focussing significant growth in large strategic sites and towards the top of the settlement hierarchy (e.g. Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns) would help to ensure significant development is focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes in accordance with NPPF23 paragraph 109; and support the transport objectives in paragraph 108.

A Refined Set of Options/Alternatives

6.21 The Development Strategy Paper [[PRE-NLP4](#)] explains the six initial options were appraised taking into account the SA appraisal and other factors, including the NPPF (see from page 11 of [PRE-NLP4](#)). The appraisal (which included transport considerations set out above) was used to combine the initial 6 options into 3 more location specific refined options for further consideration. All of these refined options focussed significant (but different) levels of growth in large strategic sites and towards the top of the settlement hierarchy in the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns (i.e. on locations which are or can be made sustainable from a transport perspective in accordance with the NPPF). The 3 Refined Options were:

- Refined Option 1: Market Town Focus (including Strategic Site at Lutterworth)
- Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby)
- Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Town Focus (including Strategic Site adjoining Oadby)

6.22 These refined options were assessed against a range of factors, including the SA objectives and the NPPF23, and the assessment used to inform the preferred option (see Development Strategy Paper Feb 2025 from page 24 [PRE-NLP4](#)).

Sustainability Appraisal of Refined Options

6.23 In terms of Objective 13: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel, the sustainability appraisal found that Refined Option 2: Urban Area Focus and Refined Option 3: Urban Area and Market Town Focus had the most positive and least negative effects. Refined Option 1: Market Town focus had less positive effects as it had the highest level of growth in lower tiers of the settlement hierarchy (Large Villages) and low growth at the top (adjoining the Leicester Urban Area).

6.24 In this respect, focussing growth in a large strategic site and towards the top of the settlement hierarchy would help to ensure significant development is focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes in accordance NPPF 2023 paragraph 109; and support the objectives in paragraph 108.

Joint Transport Evidence: Stage 1 [\[TRP-NLP3\]](#)

6.25 Alongside the spatial options appraisal which included transport considerations, the 3 Refined Options were also assessed in the Joint Transport Evidence: Stage 1 [\[TRP-NLP-3\]](#) (JTE1). This evidence was jointly prepared across South Leicestershire to support the emerging Local Plans of Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, and Oadby & Wigston. The work focused on testing three spatial options for housing and employment which aligned with the three refined spatial options above, along with potential growth options from the neighbouring South Leicestershire authorities.

6.26 The method for JTE1 combined forecast modelling of a Core scenario with no additional South Leicestershire Local Plan growth, and the three cumulative growth options using Leicestershire County Council's Pan Regional Transport Model (PRTM 2019 base v1.2); the use of PRTM is supported by both Leicestershire County Council and National Highways.

6.27 The process also included agreement of modelling inputs with Leicestershire County Council and partner authorities and stakeholder engagement through two workshops to review impacts and discuss mitigation.

6.28 The analysis then reviewed the model outputs using three main metrics: volume over capacity (VoC), delay, and flow difference, comparing each growth option against the Core scenario. The results showed that many of the most significant transport issues are already present in the existing and core network, and that growth largely worsens these existing pressure points rather than creating entirely new ones. Across all three options, there was evidence of widespread rerouting of traffic away from congested strategic routes and junctions onto lower-order local roads. The differences between the three options were present but limited, with Option 2 tending to show somewhat greater impacts in some areas, especially around southeast Leicester and the A5, while Option 3 showed slightly fewer VoC impacts overall.

6.29 From the modelling outputs, the study defined ten Key Impact Areas (see Table 4-1 from page 37 [TRP-NLP-3](#)) and associated corridors where cumulative effects were more pronounced. The report then developed an initial high-level view of potential mitigation measures. These measures included active travel packages, bus network redesign, possible rail enhancements, new multi-modal hubs, local junction

upgrades, and in some cases major strategic highway interventions such as new SRN access points, orbital road links, and capacity enhancements to parts of the M1, M69 and A5 corridors. The report emphasises that these are not fixed packages, but an early indication of the type, scale and geography of mitigation likely to be required, and that a more refined package would follow in later stages of the Joint Transport Evidence which considers the potential preferred growth strategy.

6.30 The overall conclusions from JTE1 were that there are no substantial cumulative transport differences between the three spatial growth options. All generate similar broad patterns of congestion, rerouting, and cross-boundary impact, particularly into Leicester. As a result, the report concludes the main distinction between options is not which has the least transport impact, but which is best placed to support the funding and delivery of mitigation. On that basis, the report suggests that Option 3 (which aligns with HDC's Refined Option 3 above) may offer relatively more favourable characteristics due to its more clustered pattern of larger sites, which could better support critical mass, sustainable transport provision, and developer funding for infrastructure. The report therefore supports Refined Option 3 as a potential preferred option.

Selection of a Preferred Development Strategy

6.31 The Development Strategy Paper [[PRE-NLP4](#)] explains the Refined Options were considered against the following factors:

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

6.32 Some options were considered to be more sustainable than others and were ranked accordingly (see from page 24 [PRE-NLP4](#)) recognising potential strengths and weaknesses of the different spatial options.

6.33 Both the JTE1 modelling, the SA Assessment and this wider assessment in the Development Strategy Paper supported Refined Option 3 which was selected as the preferred option for the Submission Draft Harborough Local Plan (March 2025).

6.34 A summary of the development strategy for housing (Local Plan Policy DS01) is included in Table 2 of the Draft Local Plan ([S-NLP1](#) p.24) along with housing supply by settlement. An updated version of this table (taking into account the latest housing monitoring data from 31st March 2025) is contained on page 10 of the Schedule of Proposed Modifications (April 2026) [[S-NLP15](#)]. This table is produced below for convenience:

Hierarchy Tier	Settlement	Completions 2020-2025	Commitments at 01.04.25	New Local Plan Growth (Policy DS01)	Settlement Total (2020- 2041)	Hierarchy Tier Total (2020-41)
Adjoining Leicester Urban Area	Land South of Gartree Road	-	-	1,200	1,200	2,924
	Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby	422	52	1,250	1,724	
Market Towns	Lutterworth	332	1,661	320	2,313	6,837
	Market Harborough	1,592	1,582	1,350	4,524	
Large Villages	Broughton Astley	197	80	475	752	2,936
	Fleckney	458	217	150	825	
	Great Glen	181	47	400	628	
	Kibworth	228	28	475	731	
Medium Villages	Billesdon	16	115	63	194	860
	Great Bowden	77	6	100	183	
	Houghton on the Hill	47	35	104	186	
	Husbands Bosworth	45	9	105	159	
	Ullesthorpe	58	0	80	138	
Small Villages	Arnesby	12	4	11	27	1,092
	Bitteswell	9	7	29	45	
	Church Langton	16	25	2	43	
	Claybrooke Magna	18	4	31	53	
	Dunton Bassett	4	15	49	68	
	Foxton	21	7	22	50	
	Gilmorton	166	11	7	184	
	Great Easton	8	22	31	61	
	Hallaton	21	10	15	46	
	Leire	2	16	23	41	
	Lubenham	3	55	28	86	
	Medbourne	13	29	7	49	
	North Kilworth	76	20	8	104	
	South Kilworth	23	12	14	49	
	Swinford	41	20	8	69	
	Tilton	8	4	27	39	
	Tugby	11	20	14	45	
	Walcote	3	6	24	33	
Other	Other	106	119	-	225	225
	Windfalls	-	450	-	450	450
District Total		4,214	4,688	6,422	15,324	15,324

Table 3: Land Supply by Settlement (1st April 2025)

6.35 The table shows the preferred Development Strategy focusses significant development towards the top of the settlement hierarchy, including a large strategic site adjoining the Leicester Urban Area at Oadby (Land South of Gartree Road). As a result of the Development Strategy, approximately two thirds (64%) of the total supply of homes 2020-41 will be at the top 2 tiers of the settlement hierarchy (i.e. the Urban Area and Market Towns). If tier 3 settlements are taken into account (Large Villages) this rises to 83% of total housing supply accommodated at settlements in the top half of the settlement hierarchy (i.e. the Urban Area, Market Towns and Large Villages).

6.36 This pattern of growth is broadly matched by the general employment allocations. Local Plan Policy DS02 focusses 81% of general employment allocations to locations adjoining the Leicester Urban Area and Market Towns, with the remaining amount in Large Villages.

6.37 The policies in the Draft Local Plan seek to actively manage patterns of growth to achieve this distribution of growth. The evidence above demonstrates the Draft Local Plan focusses significant development towards locations that are or can be made sustainable, giving residents better opportunity to access a wider range of jobs, services and facilities. This pattern of growth therefore supports:

- fewer and shorter journeys by private car;
- better use of existing transport infrastructure; and
- shorter journeys with greater potential for sustainable travel (walking, cycling, public transport) offering genuine travel choice.

6.38 Focussing growth towards the top of the settlement hierarchy in line with the Development Strategy should help minimise impacts on the transport network by making use of existing infrastructure and encouraging sustainable travel with the associated health and environmental benefits, making transport impacts more easily and appropriately addressed (see from paragraph 6.52 below).

6.39 To ensure the pattern of growth across the district is actively managed in accordance NPPF23 para 109 to achieve the transport objectives in para 108, the Preferred Development Strategy was used to inform scale of growth through the site selection process.

Site Selection

6.40 The Site Selection Methodology Paper (January 2025) sets out the methodology used to assess sites for inclusion within the new Local Plan for housing and employment uses [\[PRE-NLP 5\]](#). The methodology includes 5 stages and is guided by the development strategy to ensure the scale of development is focussed on locations that are or can be made sustainable. The site selection methodology includes consideration of the SA and transport considerations within its stages. The main stages are outlined below.

Stage 1: Site Identification

6.41 The starting point for the identification of sites was the Strategic Housing and Economic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2024 [\[HSG-NLP 4\]](#). As part of the suitability evaluation of sites proposed access arrangements were considered including its relationship /proximity to existing services and facilities. This involved targeted consultation with the Local Transport Authority regarding specific site concerns/issues, the potential for cumulative impacts on the local highway network and mitigation which could impact on the viability of the site (all sites over 500 homes were also included in this process). This ensured that transport and accessibility issues, including the prospect of mitigation, formed part determining whether a site was deliverable (0-5 years) or developable (6+ years) from the outset.

6.42 Not all SHELAA sites were taken forward to Stage 2 of the site selection methodology. Reflecting the objective to locate development in sustainable locations with access, or potential access, to an appropriate level of services, facilities, and public transport, sites excluded at this stage included:

- those considered isolated or not related to a settlement;
- those within or next to small villages or below in the settlement hierarchy; and
- those categorised as developable in 16+ years due to site constraints, including accessibility and transport issues.

Stage 2: Sustainability Appraisal [\[S-NLP 3\]](#) Regulation 18

6.43 At Regulation 18 stage, all SHELAA developable sites were assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) framework. SA Objective 13 (Promoting sustainable

transport use and active travel) ensured that sites were assessed for their potential to encourage walking/cycling and the use of public transport as an alternative to private car usage. This was assessed in the SA by using the following distance-based criteria. The outcomes for SA Objective 13: Sustainable Transport are set out at paragraph 6.43 of the SA [\[S-NLP3\]](#).

6.44 The SA outcomes were used to help inform the site selection methodology (forming part of the Stage 4 Technical Assessments).

6.45 All but one of the sites selected for allocation had positive effects under SA Objective 13: Sustainable Transport. The exception being allocation S2: Land at Beeby Road, Scraptoft.

Stage 3: Assessment of sites against the development strategy and key policies

6.46 Stage 3 of the assessment process included the initial assessment of sites to screen out those with a key policy constraint, or which were not located in accordance with the emerging spatial strategy, helping to ensure that patterns of growth were actively managed to achieve NPPF23 transport objectives.

Stage 4: Settlement Level Assessment of sites and identification of preferred allocations

6.47 Stage 4 comprised an assessment of remaining sites to identify sufficient land in the most appropriate locations to meet the Development Strategy growth requirement for each settlement. The Stage 4 analysis was undertaken through a detailed technical assessment of each site alongside consideration of the characteristics of the relevant settlement/s.

6.48 In terms of transport, any site specific comments made by the Local Transport Authority through the SHELAA process and subsequently (e.g. informal consultation on emerging policies) fed into an assessment of whether site access was likely to be achievable (subject to the advice of the Highway Authority). Potential access or highway capacity constraints were considered along with any potential mitigation which would be required. Site access and highway capacity constraints could contribute to a site not being identified as a site allocation.

6.49 In addition, the technical site assessments utilised the SA Distance Accessibility Data at the settlement level. This provided data on distances to the nearest services and facilities (i.e. primary school, secondary school, town or local centre, cycle route, walking path, health facility, bus stop, train station) enabling the accessibility of sites to be factored into the assessment process.

6.50 In summary, ensuring transport issues and existing, as well as the potential for, encouraging the use of active travel modes and public transport was an important factor in the selection of site allocations. By prioritising sites in the most sustainable locations with access to existing services and facilities, or where these can be provided or improved, the aim is to minimise the need for private car use and support healthier communities through active and sustainable travel.

6.51 The above demonstrates that transport considerations have informed the development strategy and site selection process from the outset, including JTE1 which assessed the impact of the 3 Refined Growth Options and informed the

selection of the Development Strategy in the Proposed Draft Submission Local Plan. This strategy was used to inform the scale of growth in the site selection process which also included transport considerations.

6.5 The development strategy and site allocations were assessed in more detail through the Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 2) (JTE2).

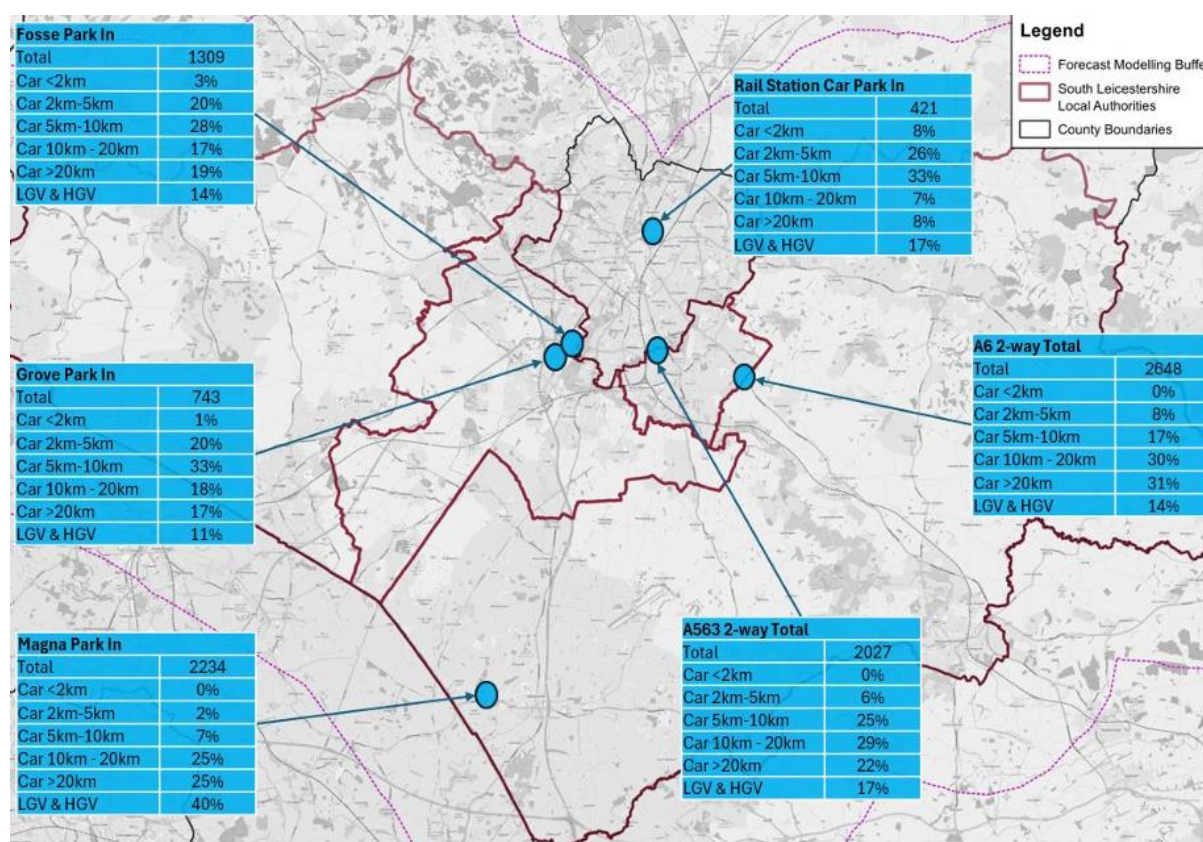
Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 2) (JTE2) [TRP-NLP5]

6.52 The Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 2) (JTE2) provides some useful insight on sustainable locations for growth in the District. From a transport perspective, the most sustainable locations will generally be where there is greatest opportunity for sustainable transport. Appendix B of JTE2 [TRP-NLP5] provides evidence on where these locations are in the District. JTE2 analysed trip distances to understand the likelihood of modal shift, focussing on specific locations and the geography of short distance trips.

6.53 In terms of specific locations, these included the A6, A563, Magna Park and Leicester Railway Station (see Map 1 below). Trips in these locations were categorised into distance bands to assess the potential for modal shift:

- Trips under 20km: Higher propensity for public transport modal shift; and
- Trips under 10km: Higher propensity for active travel modes, with potential increasing for shorter distances.

6.54 The map below shows the outputs of this analysis:



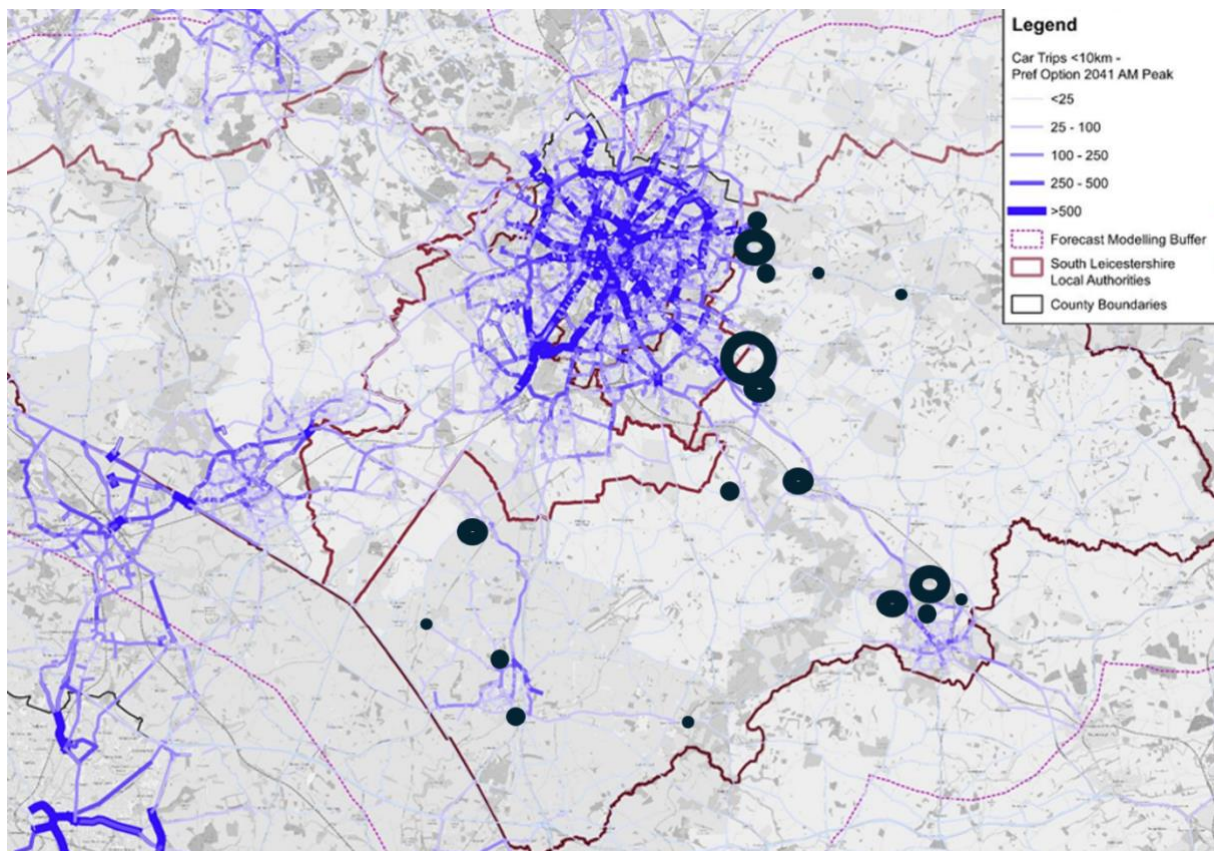
Map1: Source JTE2 Appendix B [TRP-NLP5] - Figure B-1: Select Link Analysis – Trips by Distance Band by Selected Location.

6.55 This shows that:

- Magna Park: Only 9% of trips are under 10km, reflecting the isolated, industrial nature of this location. The high proportion of LGV/HGV trips (40%) further reduces the potential for modal shift. More rural areas, such as Magna Park, have a greater reliance on car usage and as such a lower propensity to modal shift.
- Leicester Rail Station: Almost two-thirds of trips fall within 2km–10km, highlighting the importance of active travel and public transport links between the City of Leicester to accommodate short-distance trips and the potential benefits of locating growth close to the Leicester Urban Area (as set out in the Draft Local Plan).
- Both the A6 and A563 have more longer trips, with about a third of car trips over 20km. This reflects the role of the A6 as a strategic route for longer distance trips, as well as playing a key role in shorter local trips. The longer trips are less likely to shift to active modes.

6.56 JTE2 Appendix B [\[TRP-NLP5\]](#) also shows the geography of short trips (less than 10km) which have the greatest propensity for modal shift to active modes.

6.57 The map below is an extract from JTE2 Appendix B [\[TRP-NLP5\]](#) showing the location of short distance car trips (<10km). These trips generally have a greater potential for modal shift than longer trips. The location of Local Plan allocations have been added for the District (see circles/dots):



Map 2: Source JTE2 [\[TRP-NLP5\]](#) - Figure B-2: Car Trips under 10km, Preferred Option 2041 AM Peak

6.58 The largest flows of car trips shorter than 10km are made in the City of Leicester, and the immediate surrounding area (i.e. the Leicester Urban Area). There

are also concentrations of short trips in other larger settlements, Market Harborough and Lutterworth. There are some inter-urban flows, but these are predominantly to the City of Leicester from Market Harborough and Lutterworth.

6.59 This shows there are high proportions of short distance trips in areas close to the city (i.e. the Leicester Urban Area) and Market Towns which have the greatest potential for modal shift.

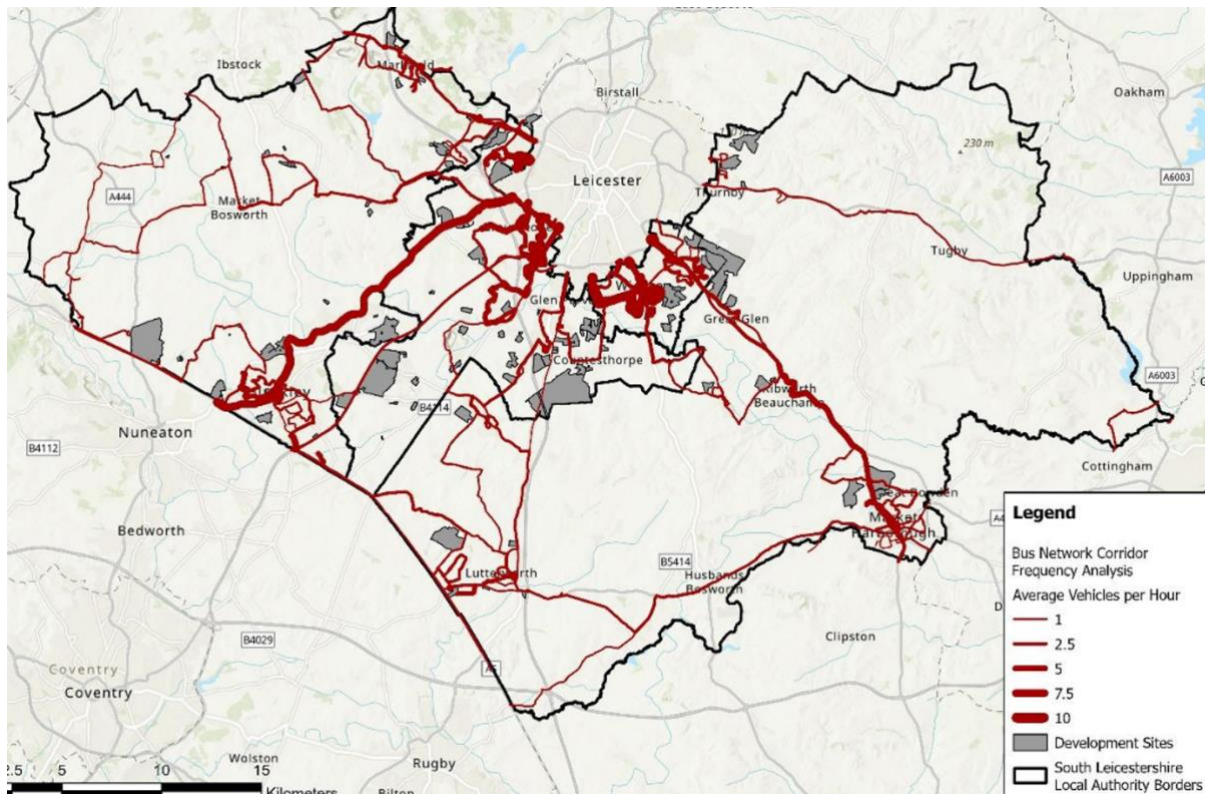
6.60 The Draft Local Plan focusses approximately two thirds of housing (64%) and nearly all general employment allocations in these locations (i.e. towards the top of the settlement hierarchy), including a large strategic site adjoining the Leicester Urban Area at Oadby. The pattern of growth in the Local Plan therefore creates significant opportunities for sustainable travel in these locations where active travel and public transport improvements should be prioritised to achieve the transport objectives in NPPF23, including paragraph 108 (see Part 2 of the Transport Topic Paper for how the Draft Local Plan Policies (including Proposed Modifications) seek to achieve this).

Joint Transport Evidence (JTE) Costing Mitigation [\[TRP-NLP4\]](#)

6.61 The JTE Costing Mitigation developed the potential for sustainable travel further by considering active travel and public transport opportunities.

6.62 The report analysed existing public transport infrastructure, service frequencies and the evidence base from the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

6.63 Key bus corridors were identified and assessed for service frequencies to understand where public transport mitigation measures would have the greatest impact. The map below shows the existing bus service network and frequency across south Leicestershire:

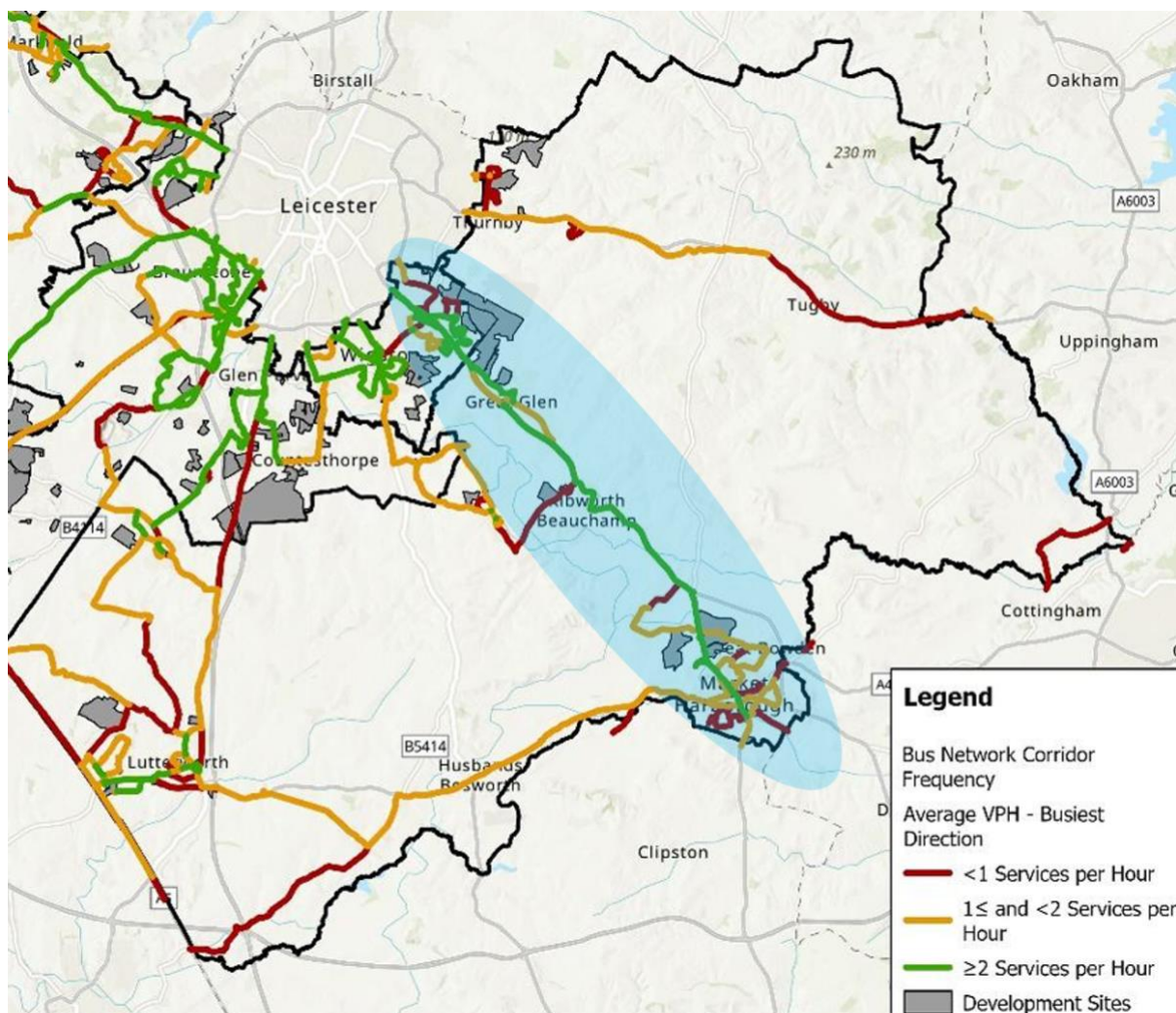


Map 3: Source JTE Costing Mitigation [TRP-NLP4] - Figure 2-5 of JTE: Service Frequency Data for Bus Routes in South Leicestershire.

6.64 The existing network is structured in a 'hub and spoke' model, with the majority of routes originating or ending in the City of Leicester, branching outwards along the key radial links through the local authority areas. Some routes serve the shorter local trips around Market Harborough, Lutterworth, and other urban areas.

6.65 Service frequency data show that the A6 in Harborough District and A47 (West of Leicester in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough) radial corridors carry the highest frequency of inter-urban bus services. In addition, there are notable bus movements on lower-classified roads around the edge of Leicester. The evidence therefore shows the A6 corridor is the best public transport corridor in Harborough District and the second best in South Leicestershire.

6.66 The map below shows the proximity of site allocations to high frequency bus services (with the A6 corridor highlighted in blue):



Map 4: Source JTE Costing Mitigation [TRP-NLP4] - Extract of Figure 2-7: Bus Service frequency classification and development sites (with A6 highlight).

6.67 Although minor service alterations and re-routing may be required, the spatial distribution of bus services is unlikely to markedly shift following the delivery of development. The development strategy and site allocations are therefore making best use of existing public transport infrastructure as required by the NPPF23 whilst creating opportunities for additional/improved services which could have wider benefits in supporting modal shift.

6.68 The A6 corridor contains a number of the most sustainable settlements in the District, including the parts of Leicester Urban Area, Market Harborough, and two of the Large Villages (Kibworth and Great Glen). The allocations at these settlements make up over half (53%) of the housing development identified in Policy DS01 of the Draft Plan and 80% of the general employment development in Policy DS02. All of these sites are located directly on (or very close to) the best public transport service in the District, with strategic development areas at the Leicester Urban Area (Land South of Gartree Road) and North of Market Harborough. This existing bus service provides for both inter urban routes and shorter distance trips within urban areas, making the best use of public transport infrastructure, and creating opportunities to provide new and/or improved services along the A6 corridor. Market Harborough also contains the only railway station in the District.

6.69 The evidence above demonstrates that transport considerations have informed the draft plan from the early stages of plan preparation.

6.70 The policies in the Draft Local Plan seek to actively manage patterns of growth to achieve a distribution of growth which focusses significant development towards locations that are or can be made sustainable, giving residents better access to a wider range of jobs, services and facilities in accordance with NPPF23 para 108 and 109. This pattern of growth supports:

- fewer and shorter journeys by private car;
- better use of existing transport infrastructure; and
- shorter journeys with greater potential for sustainable travel (walking, cycling, public transport) offering genuine travel choice.

6.71 Focussing growth in line with the Development Strategy should help minimise impacts on the transport network by making use of existing infrastructure and encouraging sustainable travel with the associated health and environmental benefits, making transport impacts more easily and appropriately addressed.

6.72 The section below summarises the evidence which has assessed the impact and mitigation required for the Draft Local Plan.

7. Transport Evidence (Impact and Mitigation)

7.1 HDC's transport evidence is primarily based on the Joint Transport Evidence (JTE) which was initiated in December 2021, following the signing of the South Leicestershire Local Plan Making Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) [[SCG-NLP 2](#)]. This SoCG sets out an agreement between Leicestershire County Council (LCC), Harborough District Council (HDC), Oadby and Wigston District Council (OWDC), Blaby District Council (BDC) and Hinckley and Bosworth District Council (HBDC) to develop "... a consistent and joint transport evidence".

Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 1) (JTE1) [[TRP-NLP3](#)]

7.2 JTE1 sets out the Stage 1 South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence prepared to support the emerging Local Plans of Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, and Oadby & Wigston. The work undertaken focused on testing three alternative spatial growth options for housing and employment across South Leicestershire and assessing their strategic transport implications.

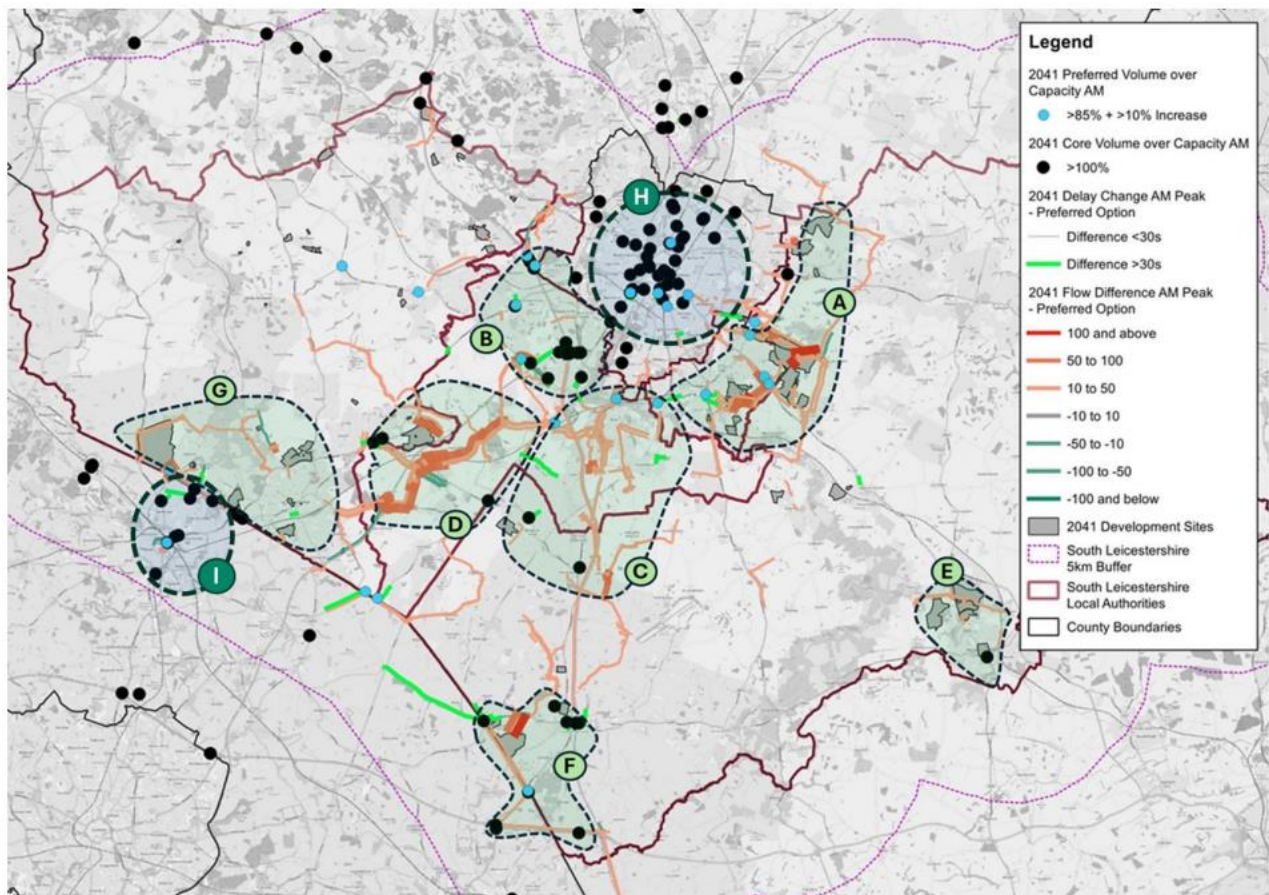
7.3 The method for JTE1 combined forecast modelling of a core scenario with no additional South Leicestershire Local Plan growth, and three cumulative growth options using Leicestershire County Council's Pan Regional Transport Model (PRTM 2019 base v1.2); AECOM has previously confirmed that the use of PRTM is fully supported by both LCC and National Highways (Paragraph 6.25 – 6.30 above provide further detail on JTE1).

Joint Transport Evidence (Stage 2) (JTE 2) [[TRP-NLP5](#)]

7.4 JTE2 built directly on the work undertaken at Stage 1 by taking the Preferred Spatial Growth Option that had been selected following Stage 1's assessment of three alternative growth options and testing it in much greater depth. The cumulative impacts of the agreed preferred growth pattern were assessed, including cross-

boundary effects, and a strategic evidence base to support Local Plan submissions and longer-term planning beyond 2041 was developed. JTE2 also used LCC's PRTM to test growth in 2036, 2041 and 2051.

7.5 JTE2 found that transport impacts intensify significantly over time. In 2036, capacity issues are relatively limited and concentrated mainly south and east of Leicester, but by 2041 they spread more widely across orbital and radial corridors and the A5 corridor. By 2051, problems become much more widespread, with a sharp increase in over-capacity junctions, worsening delay, and extensive rerouting onto lower-order roads due to pressure on the motorway and A-road network. As replicated below, the JTE2 identified seven key impact areas within South Leicestershire.



Map 5: Source JTE2 [TRP-NLP5] – Figure 3-4 Key Impact Areas.

7.6 To address this, JTE2 developed and tested four mitigation packages:

- 2036a with active travel and public transport only;
- 2036b adding selective local road improvements;
- 2041 adding broader local road network measures; and
- 2051 adding both local and strategic road network improvements.

7.7 These packages were designed in line with a sustainable transport hierarchy, prioritising walking, cycling, bus and interchange improvements before road capacity measures. The modelling showed that all packages delivered some benefit, particularly by reducing travel time, lowering distance travelled and improving speeds compared with the unmitigated preferred option. Sustainable transport measures

alone were found to be most effective in and around urban areas, especially where short-distance trips are concentrated, while local road improvements helped resolve specific junction issues.

7.8 The key conclusion from JTE2 is that growth can be partially mitigated through a phased, multi-modal strategy, but not fully eliminated. The report concludes that the mitigation packages generally address between a quarter and a half of the impacts of the preferred growth option, with residual impacts remaining in every forecast year. It also stresses that many of the most serious issues are pre-existing or driven by background growth rather than by Local Plan growth alone. As a result, JTE2 concludes that South Leicestershire will need long-term, coordinated transport investment that combines sustainable travel measures with selective highway interventions, and that further refinement, detailed design, and site-specific mitigation work will be needed through Local Plans, Infrastructure Delivery Plans and future Local Transport Plan implementation.

Joint Transport Evidence (JTE) Costing Mitigation Report [[TRP-NLP 4](#)]

7.9 JTE Mitigation Costing Report identifies the proposed Local Plan site allocations to 2036, 2041 and 2051, and translates the JTE2 mitigation measures into a form suitable for high-level scheme definition and cost estimation. The report therefore provides a strategic framework for understanding the transport interventions likely to be needed to support planned growth, while recognising that the measures remain proportionate, indicative and subject to further development through later infrastructure planning and scheme design stages.

7.10 The report groups mitigation into several principal categories:

- active modes
- public transport
- mobility hubs/multi-modal interchanges
- local road network measures

7.11 For active travel, the report identifies routes that best connect proposed allocations to key trip attractors such as schools, stations, healthcare and retail. For public transport, it reviews the existing bus network and service frequencies, identifies key corridors and junctions where bus priority or operational improvements would be most effective, and develops a shortlist of interventions. The report also sets out local road network interventions alongside a single strategic road scheme: a proposed new M1 Junction 20a, noted as a longer-term intervention beyond the scope of the Harborough Local Plan (i.e. post-2041 package). Excluding the new M1 Junction 20a scheme, the JTE2 Costing Report estimates that the mitigation required within the plan period will cost a total of £83,725,055.

Strategic Transport Impact Assessment (STIA) [[TRP-NLP 2](#)]

7.12 In addition to the JTE work, AECOM prepared a Strategic Transport Impact Assessment (STIA) for Harborough District. The STIA uses the modelling outputs from the JTE2 and is consistent with the JTE work. However, the STIA uses a different analysis approach from the JTE reports.

7.13 The STIA concludes that the Local Plan allocations can generally be accommodated, but with a significant package of transport facilitation and mitigation measures. The STIA identifies that the district's existing transport network already

has constraints, especially on parts of the A6 corridor, around Market Harborough, Lutterworth, Scraptoft and key junctions linked to Leicester, and that Local Plan growth is forecasted to worsen conditions at a number of primary and secondary impact junctions. The STIA estimates an indicative total transport cost of approximately £91.2 million for the Harborough sites, excluding some wider strategic interventions and with additional on-site infrastructure costs for the largest sites. Key requirements include new and upgraded walking/cycling links, bus service improvements, travel planning measures, and highway junction mitigation, with the largest costs concentrated in major growth areas such as Land South of Gartree Road SDA, North Market Harborough, and Scraptoft / Thurnby / Bushby. The report notes that these figures are for Local Plan viability purposes only and will need refinement through later site-specific work.

Preliminary Scheme Design (Local Highway)

7.14 The JTE and STIA identified the sustainable transport and highway mitigation required to deliver the Draft Local Plan and suggests subsequent more detailed refinement of the package may be required.

7.15 At the time of writing, the scope of the Preliminary Scheme Design (Local Highway) evidence has been agreed with the LTA and uses the JTE modelling data to check (and if appropriate refine) the highway mitigation package to ensure it is deliverable. This work will be completed in September 2026 and will be used to agree a refined list of deliverable transport mitigation and costs between HDC and the LTA. Associated updates to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and/or Viability evidence will also be made as necessary.