

## Appendix 3

### Sustainability comparison of levels of housing growth

## Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering lower levels of homes could result in a lack of affordable housing. However, the extent of this problem may depend on the distribution of growth around the district. To support any economic growth planned for the area there will be a need to ensure housing supply meets more than the natural increase in demand for housing created by population growth and reduced household size.</li> <li>• Potential for a changing community character in less affordable areas as local families move away, new people move into the area.</li> <li>• A low level of development may not be able to support the provision of associated services that would come from planning contributions and obligations associated with new development, for example schools, open space and transport improvements. This may impact the accessibility of services and facilities for new and existing residents. Problems could be exacerbated by wide distribution of development, which will not help reach critical levels needed.</li> <li>• Lower growth rates can help preserve some of the character of existing settlements, helping to protect existing levels of services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is evident that the provision of homes at a medium growth rate would be less able to provide the number of homes to meet needs as high growth would, but more than a low growth option.</li> <li>• Suitable distribution of this number of new homes around the district will be key to enabling better access to facilities by linking to existing town centres and employment areas.</li> <li>• This approach may not be able to support substantial additional provision of new services, shops and facilities as high growth options, as contributions to development may not be sufficient. Therefore there may be greater pressure on existing services.</li> <li>• This approach may help to protect the status quo in terms of access to services and community character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach may deliver a large amount of new homes, thereby helping ensure there is housing to meet all needs.</li> <li>• If the level of homes under a high growth approach is achieved then there may be changes to the community character of the district as more people move into the area to live.</li> <li>• With a higher level of growth it may be possible to support the provision of a range of new facilities, shops and services throughout district, helping to ensure a better access for new and existing residents. In addition large scale 'urban extensions' can be planned to contain a mix of uses, including housing, employment and education that will improve access for future residents.</li> <li>• This level of housing may mean that housing is better distributed around the district, helping to support more homes near jobs and reducing people's need for longer distance commuting.</li> <li>• Providing a greater number of homes than jobs in the area may have adverse impacts on the character and services available in the district, as it runs the risk of turning parts of the area into 'commuter towns' supporting employment elsewhere in the greater Leicestershire area. Such areas can often lack character and any community identity as all residents look outside the area to meet their day-to-day needs including for work, shop and cultural participation.</li> </ul>

Effective protection of the environment		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The low land take under a low growth option is more likely to see a protection of green field land that may have benefits for biodiversity and landscape protection. Although it will be important to respect biodiversity wherever it is found, even on previously developed land.</li> <li>Parts of the district already suffer from an over supply of jobs to resident workforce, this creates unsustainable travel patterns. Low levels of housing growth will not be able to accommodate a new workforce population without pushing up house prices for people with in the district. This policy may exacerbate current transport impacts of development, including declining air quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on the location of new allocations this approach has the potential to adversely impact on biodiversity and landscape where new greenfield sites are allocated. However this will be less than for a high growth option and it may be possible to identify locations where these impacts can be avoided or mitigated against.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The large land take required by this option may mean that a larger green field land requirement is needed. This is very likely to have impact on biodiversity and landscape quality.</li> <li>Building a large number of new homes in and around the towns of the district will need to be carefully planned in order to protect and enhance the built character, large new developments have a substantial opportunity to make built environment contributions.</li> <li>There is a need to balance job availability with housing availability, especially in northern parts of the district. A greater housing growth option would allow for new homes to be built in these areas to meet these needs, as well as new homes built to support other parts of the district.</li> </ul>

Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is unlikely that this lower level of growth will be compatible with supporting the existing economy of the area, encouraging more in-commuting especially if there is economic growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This level of growth is likely to be able to support the economy of the district, and may help promote more self-containment in the area for living and working.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher rates of housing growth are likely to be better able to support high levels of economic growth, this is particularly the case as this option will have advantages in increasing the proportion of people in the working age demographic with benefits for the economy.</li> </ul>

## Prudent use of natural resources

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach is likely to help previously developed sites allocated for housing to be developed in preference to greenfield land, due to limited choice of sites. However, this may be depend on chosen distribution options.</li> <li>• This approach may not lead to development in locations where it is needed, as much land is already allocated for development, leaving little residual to have an impact on the distribution of growth in the district.</li> <li>• Fewer houses may mean that more people have to live outside the area and commute into the district for work, which is likely to lead to increased car use and the environmental impacts associated with this. This includes air pollution with climate change related and health related effects as well as the consumption of non-renewable fuel resources.</li> <li>• A low growth rate offers low flexibility in the choice of most appropriate sites for new housing so that they are linked to existing and planned employment. This disjointed approach is unlikely to lead to the most sustainable pattern of development in terms of living and working locations, with the potential for the inefficient use of land and increasing the distances travelled for work commuting.</li> <li>• The lower level of development is likely to have a lesser demand for energy and other resources, although this may only be local in scale as housing demand to meet needs may be built elsewhere outside the district resulting in the same level of residential development.</li> <li>• This level of development may be better able to avoid adverse impacts on the River Mease SAC through avoiding significant increase in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach may be most suitable in finding a balance between economic growth and housing provision, and help the better self-containment of parts of the district in terms of jobs/homes. This should have the advantage of reducing car commuting and associated environmental and natural resource impacts.</li> <li>• This level of growth is unlikely to be able to support larger new urban extensions to existing towns, and therefore it will not be possible to create self-contained new 'sustainable communities' a mix of different uses in easy proximity to one another as they will be too small to contain a sufficient. This therefore may encourage more car travel, with associated local and global impacts.</li> <li>• A level of growth above that already allocated for (as in the low growth approach) will also allow a greater choice of sites which may help promote mixed use development associated with the development of new employment land.</li> <li>• The distribution of this level of development may be better able to avoid adverse impacts on the River Mease SAC through avoiding significant increase in phosphate levels in the river, and not exceeding capacity at the Packington Waste Water Treatment works.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the level of economic growth in the area this level of housing growth could have adverse impacts on reducing car use. This will particularly be the case if people who continue to work in other parts of the region move to the area due to lower house prices and must commute daily to work elsewhere. This is not compatible with objectives of reducing resource use.</li> <li>• However a higher growth rate may make it possible to build carefully planned new extensions to towns in the area that can support a mix of uses, including housing, employment and services, that could help reduce the need to travel and therefore the use of natural resources.</li> <li>• This level of new housing will require a large amount of land including greenfield sites. If allocations are not phased this could lead to a green field sites being developed in preference to previously developed land, which would mean land is being used inefficiently. However given the quantity required it is likely that all allocations will be taken up in the long-term by the end of the plan period, including previously developed land.</li> <li>• This level of housing development will use a large amount of natural resources in construction and energy and water during their operation.</li> <li>• If housing is not provided at levels it is needed it may happened anyway – but outside the district.</li> <li>• A level of growth above that already allocated for (as in the low growth approach) will also allow a greater choice of sites which may help promote mixed use development associated with the development of new employment land.</li> </ul>

phosphate levels in the river, and not exceeding capacity at the Packington Waste Water Treatment works.		
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It should be noted that this assessment of the alternative growth options do not take into account the distribution of development around the district. In practice, many of the sustainability implications of growth will be dependent on this distribution and the sites that are allocated for development. Therefore, more information on potential effects, such as comparison of housing growth figure set out in the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy with the preferred growth level, can be seen in the appraisal of distribution options in Appendix 4 of the Sustainability Appraisal.