



**North West Leicestershire District Council**

**Local Plan Partial Review:**

**Sustainability Appraisal Report (incorporating  
Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact  
Assessment)**








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## Table of Contents

1	Introduction .....	1
1.1	Background .....	1
1.2	The Sustainability Appraisal .....	3
1.3	Purpose and Requirements for the Impact Assessments .....	4
1.4	How to comment on this document .....	5
2	Approach to the SA .....	7
2.1	SA Process .....	7
2.2	Methodology.....	9
2.2.1	Stage A Scoping .....	9
2.3	Stage B Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects .....	19
	Task B1 Develop options including reasonable alternatives .....	19
	Task B2 Evaluate the likely effects of the plan and alternatives .....	19
	Task B3 Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects .....	23
	Task B4 Propose Measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan .....	23
2.4	Stage C Prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Report .....	24
2.5	How the requirements of the SEA Regulations are being met .....	24
3	The scope and content of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review .....	28
3.1	Introduction .....	28
4	Review of Policies, Plans and Programmes.....	30
4.1	Introduction .....	30
4.2	Summary of Key Messages .....	31
5	Summary of Baseline Data .....	37
5.1	Introduction .....	37
5.2	Population & Communities.....	37
5.2.1	Key Sustainability Issues .....	37
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	38
	Data Gaps.....	38
5.3	Housing .....	38
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	38
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	39
	Data Gaps.....	39

5.4	Employment & Economy .....	39
	Sustainability Issues .....	39
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	40
	Data Gaps .....	40
5.5	Transport & Access .....	40
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	40
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	41
	Data Gaps .....	41
5.6	Air, Noise & Light Pollution .....	41
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	41
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	42
	Data Gaps .....	42
5.7	Climate Change .....	42
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	42
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	43
	Data Gaps .....	44
5.8	Biodiversity & Geodiversity.....	44
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	44
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	44
	Data Gaps .....	45
5.9	Landscape, Townscape & Land .....	45
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	45
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	45
	Data Gaps .....	46
5.10	Cultural Heritage .....	46
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	46
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	46
	Data Gaps .....	46
5.11	Water .....	47
	Key Sustainability Issues .....	47
	Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	47
	Data Gaps .....	47
5.12	Waste & Minerals .....	47



Key Sustainability Issues .....	47
Future Evolution of the Baseline.....	48
Data Gaps.....	48
6 Alternative Options.....	49
6.1 Policy Alternatives.....	51
7 Findings of the Assessment of Policy S1 and its alternative options .....	56
7.1 Introduction .....	56
7.2 Sustainability Effects of Alternatives .....	56
Alternative Options 2, 3 and 4 .....	56
Option 5 (Preferred Option) .....	58
7.3 Potential Cumulative Effects.....	58
7.4 Mitigation / Enhancement Measures Proposed .....	59
7.5 Residual Effects of Preferred Policy S1 .....	60
8 Proposed Monitoring Framework.....	61
8.1 Introduction .....	61
9 Next Steps .....	62

#### Separate Appendices

Appendix A: Review of Relevant, Plans, Policies and Programmes

Appendix B: Baseline Data

Appendix C: Assessment Tables

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in November 2017 and covers the period 2011-2031. The adopted Local Plan sets out a strategy for delivering the homes, jobs and infrastructure needed in the District during the Plan period. The Council committed to start a review of the plan within three months of the date of adoption.

There are two main reasons why an immediate review was required:

1. A shortage of employment land up to 2031 compared to what is needed (as identified in the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment<sup>1</sup> (HEDNA)); and
2. The possible need to accommodate additional housing arising from unmet needs in Leicester city.

The District Council is committed to meeting the future development needs of the district and to do this through a review of the Local Plan. However, the circumstances have changed since the Local Plan Inspector made his recommendations to the district council and since the Local Plan was adopted.

- **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The revised NPPF was published in July 2018 (and there were subsequent further changes in February 2019). This introduced a number of new plan-making requirements which would need to be addressed as part of a review, including:
  - Clear distinction between strategic and local policies with strategic policies looking ahead “over a minimum 15 year period from adoption”;
  - Guidance on the provision of ‘entry level homes’;
  - Specific reference to storage and distribution uses;
  - Specific reference to lorry parking; and
  - Viability
- **Uncertain housing requirements:** Leicester City Council has still not formally declared the extent of its housing need that it cannot meet within its own boundaries. A further issue

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<sup>1</sup> Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment Main Report, Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, January 2017 accessible here: [https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/housing\\_and\\_economic\\_development\\_need\\_assessment\\_hedna](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/housing_and_economic_development_need_assessment_hedna)

is the uncertainty regarding the future housing requirements which should be planned for in relation to the Government's 'standard method' for calculating housing requirements. Changes to the method are anticipated to be published in autumn 2020. It is reasonable to assume (based on the fact that the 2016-projections resulted in a housing figure of 529 dwellings) that the housing requirement (irrespective of any unmet need from Leicester City) will be higher than those derived from the 2014-household projections, but it is not clear as to what this is likely to be. In the meantime, the adopted local plan's requirement figure appears sufficient to North West Leicestershire District Council to meet need arising in North West Leicestershire and a significant contribution to need that arises elsewhere in the Housing Market Area (HMA).

- **Uncertain employment requirements:** As with housing there is significant uncertainty regarding the exact amount of employment land which would need to be identified as part of the review. The HEDNA identifies the amount of employment land required to 2031 and 2036, except for strategic B8 uses (i.e. warehouses those of over 9,000sqm in size) which are identified in a separate study. Whilst the needs identified in the HEDNA have been nearly addressed since the Local Plan was adopted, there are concerns about its reliability from an evidence base point of view. Additional evidence has been commissioned in relation to the amount and type of employment land which is needed.
- **Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (SGP):** The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities have jointly prepared and agreed a SGP covering the period 2011-50. This is a non-statutory plan, but its intended purpose was to provide a framework for future Local Plans. The SGP was formally agreed in late 2018. The SGP is seeking a step change in the way that growth is delivered; focussing more development in strategic locations and reducing the amount of new development that takes place in existing towns, villages and rural areas. One of these strategic locations lies partly within North West Leicestershire and is known as the 'Leicestershire International Gateway' (The Gateway) which covers the northern part of North West Leicestershire and Charnwood. Whilst the Local Plan review will not go up to 2050, the scale of development is such that it will need to be planned for well in advance and so will need to be addressed as part of the review. It is likely that some large scale developments will be required, possibly new settlements. Such developments are inherently complex and require time to compile the necessary supporting evidence.

As a result, North West Leicestershire District Council are now proposing to:

- 1) Amend Policy S1 and some of the supporting text of the adopted Local Plan. This is referred to as the '**Partial Review**'.
- 2) Continue to work on a more **Substantive Review** to address the longer term development needs of the district.

Work on a more Substantive Review will extend the plan period beyond 2031, at least to 2036 but possibly longer to ensure that any strategic policies look ahead at least 15 years from adoption as required by the NPPF. This work will continue in parallel to the Partial Review.

With regards to the Partial Review, the District Council has identified four alternative policy options for Policy S1 (Future Housing and Economic Development Needs) of the adopted Local Plan as well as 'do nothing' (i.e. the existing Policy S1) and these have been considered by the Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

## 1.2 The Sustainability Appraisal

ClearLead Consulting Ltd have been commissioned to undertake the SA (incorporating Equality Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment) of the Local Plan Partial Review.

The assessment incorporates the following types of assessments which can either be undertaken separately or, due to their similarities with regards to process and interconnected topics, can be undertaken as an integrated assessment:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA);
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA); and
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

The requirements of each of these assessments are set out below. North West Leicestershire District Council have decided to fulfil their duties in respect of the above assessments in one SA.

This report presents the findings of the assessment of the Local Plan Partial Review, which focuses on Policy S1 Future housing and economic development needs. Five alternatives to Policy S1 have been considered, four of which have been assessed through the SA as the do nothing alternative was not considered to be a reasonable alternative (see section 6.1). and the findings are also presented in this document.

The remaining sections of this document are structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the approach to the SA;
- Section 3 presents the scope and content of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review;
- Section 4 presents the findings from the Review of Policies, Plans and Programmes;
- Section 5 presents the Summary of Baseline Data;
- Section 6 provides details of the alternatives developed for the Local Plan Partial Review;
- Section 7 presents the findings of the Assessment of Policy S1 and Alternatives;
- Section 8 provides details of the Proposed Monitoring Framework; and
- Section 9 presents the Next Steps.



## 1.3 Purpose and Requirements for the Impact Assessments

### Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

SA of Local Plans is required under Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) also requires SA of Local Plans. The SA must incorporate the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations<sup>2</sup>). The SEA Regulations transpose the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) into English law and applies to a range of plans and programmes, including Local Plans. The purpose of the SEA Directive is to ensure a high level of environmental protection, and to integrate the consideration of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans, with a view to promoting sustainable development.

Within the context of local planning in England, it is accepted practice to integrate the requirements of SA and SEA into a single assessment process as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance<sup>3</sup> (updated 2014). The purpose of SA is to appraise the environmental, social and economic effects of plans and programmes. The SA 'testing' of the Local Plan policies and their reasonable alternatives will help to develop the most sustainable policies and proposals as an integral part of the plan's development.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a way of measuring the potential impact (positive, negative or neutral) that a policy, function or service may have on different groups protected by equalities legislation, notably the Equalities Act 2010. This Act places a general duty on the Council as a public body to pay due regard to advancing equality, fostering good relations and eliminating discrimination for people sharing certain protected characteristics. The equality duty came into force in April 2011 and covers the following Personal Protected Characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender (male/female);
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership<sup>4</sup>;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;

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<sup>2</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 SI 1644:  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

<sup>4</sup> Age, Marriage and civil partnership - not all aspects of the duty apply.

- Religion or belief; and
- Sexual orientation.

EqIA is therefore an essential tool for demonstrating that the Council has complied with the law by shaping the way decisions are taken and thereby improving outcomes. It enables a good understanding of different needs and the differential impacts that the policies may have on different groups.

### Health Impact Assessment

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a means of assessing the potential impacts on health of policies, plans and projects. The HIA process is designed to help decision-makers ensure that health and wellbeing is being properly considered in planning policies and proposals.

HIA is not a statutory requirement of the Local Plan preparation process. However, Planning Practice Guidance<sup>5</sup> states that 'Local planning authorities should ensure that health & wellbeing and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making'. It also states that 'a health impact assessment may be a useful tool to use where there are expected to be significant impacts'.

HIAs can be done at any stage in the development process but are best done at the earliest stage possible.

## 1.4 How to comment on this document

This report is being consulted on with the statutory consultees<sup>6</sup> to confirm that it provides sufficient information to ensure that a robust and legally compliant SA is carried out. Other interested parties are also being notified and the document will be also available on the Council's website.

The consultation period will be [six] weeks from 7 October until 18 November 2019. We would welcome your views on this SA Report. A series of questions are set out below in order to guide responses.

#### Questions to guide responses:

1. Do you agree that all of the reasonable alternatives for Policy S1 have been identified?
2. Do you agree that the potential significant effects identified in the assessment of preferred Policy S1 (Option 5) and the alternative options are correct?
3. Do you agree with the proposed mitigation?

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<sup>5</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

<sup>6</sup> Environment Agency, Heritage England and Natural England.

4. Do you agree with the proposed monitoring schedule?

**How to comment:**

Please provide responses **by the end of Monday 18 November** to:

[Planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk) or

Planning Policy Team

North West Leicestershire District Council

Council Offices

Whitwick Road

Coalville

Leicestershire

LE67 3FJ

## **2 Approach to the SA**

### **2.1 SA Process**

The SA process is shown in Figure 2.1. Stage A, Scoping, has been completed and culminated in the production of a SA framework of objectives and sub-objectives against which to assess the Local Plan Partial Review, was completed in August 2018.

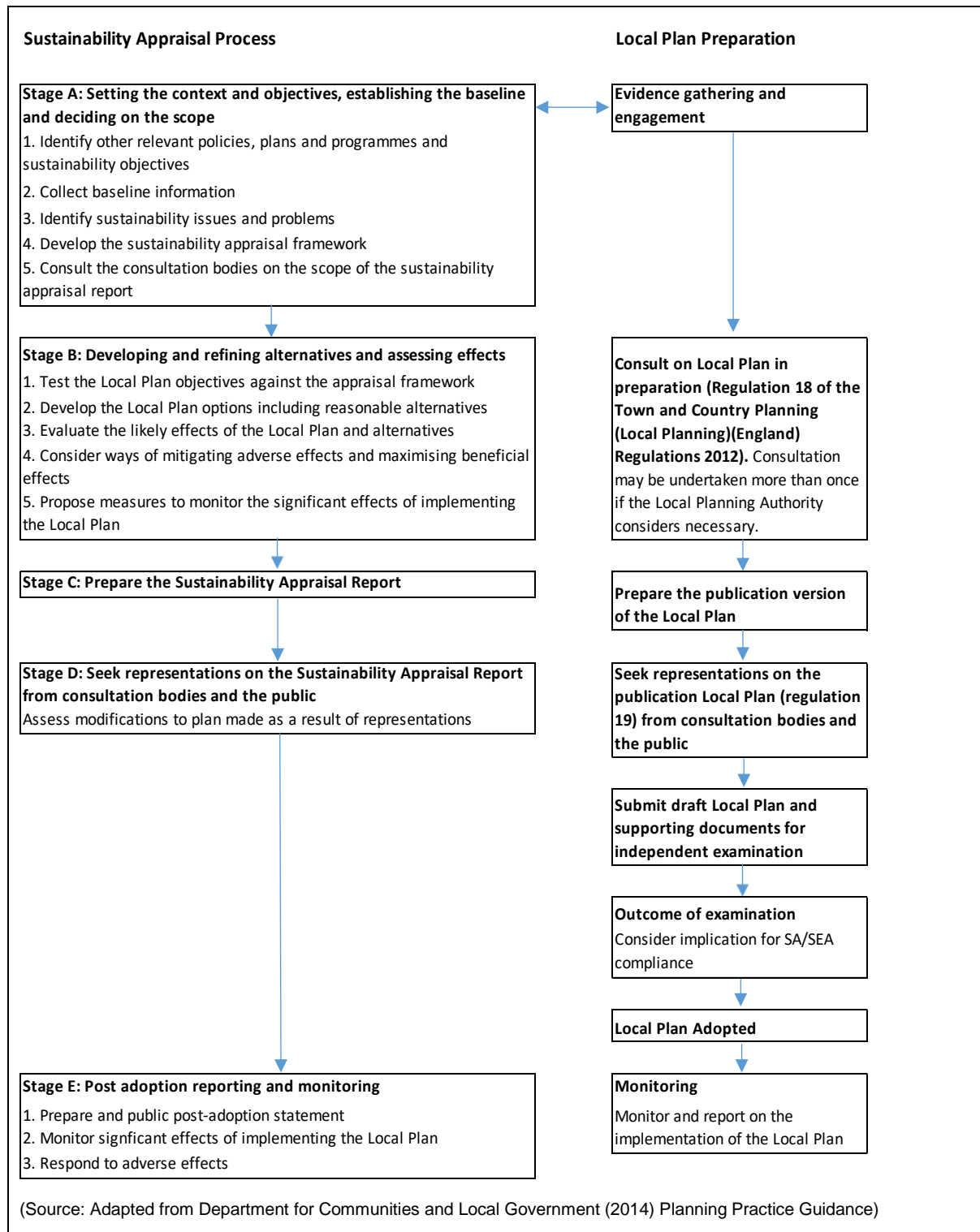
This SA Report encompasses Stages B and C of the SA process (evaluation of the proposed Local Plan Partial Review against the SA framework and SA report preparation) and fulfils the requirements to:

- Evaluate the potential effects of the Local Partial Review Plan implementation;
- Identify and propose mitigation of significant adverse effects; and
- Propose appropriate monitoring of significant effects<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Requirements of the SEA Regulations. See Table 2.5 for further details.

**Figure 2.1: The SA process**



## 2.2 Methodology

The following text sets out the approach taken to complete the SA stages outlined in Figure 2.1.

### 2.2.1 Stage A Scoping

The purpose of the scoping stage is to set out proposals for conducting the SA, so that the SA tests the sustainability of the Local Partial Review Plan using up to date information about the social, environmental and economic issues in the District.

#### **Task A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives**

The legislative context in which the Local Plan is being prepared can best be understood through a review of related policies, plans, and programmes (PPP). The SEA Regulations require information on:

- *“an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”* (Schedule 2, Paragraph 1); and
- *“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”* (Schedule 2, Paragraph 5).

The review process ensures that the Local Plan Partial Review complies with existing PPP at international, national and regional levels of governance and also reinforces and supports local plans and strategies. The process entails identifying and reviewing those PPP and environmental protection objectives that are directly relevant to both the Local Plan and the SA. Carrying out this review at an early stage of plan development allows for any inconsistencies or constraints within the Local Plan Partial Review to be addressed. It also provides the context for the SA and informs the development of the SA assessment framework (see Table 2.3).

For practical reasons, the scoping task of identifying related plans and programmes cannot yield an exhaustive or definitive list of legislative/non-legislative documents. The review has been focused to ensure that only policies that are current and have direct relevance to the Local Plan are reviewed. An outline of the policy documents and their objectives are provided in Appendix A and a summary of the key messages / objectives is provided in Table 4.1 in Section 4 of this report.

In some cases, where lower level plans include the objectives set out at a national or international level, then the national and international plans have not been included.

## Task A2: Collecting baseline information

The SEA Regulations require a description of the following to be presented:

- “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme” (Schedule 2, Paragraph 2);
- “the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected” (Schedule 2, Paragraph 3);” and
- “the likely significant effects on the environment... on issues such as (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g) water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape (Schedule 2, Paragraph 6).”

Baseline data enables a characterisation of the plan area to be developed, including the sensitivity of the environment. Gaining an understanding of this information allows the impacts of the plan to be assessed and its performance to be monitored after adoption. Baseline information can put the plan area into context in relation to a national or regional situation or in relation to adjacent areas.

It is, therefore, necessary to collect sufficient information about the current baseline state of North West Leicestershire District and to predict the future environmental and socio-economic trends to allow effects to be adequately predicted and monitored. The detailed baseline information has been compiled in a series of topics in line with published guidance<sup>8</sup> and includes comparators, targets and trends where possible. The topics set out within the SEA Regulations have been expanded into a number of sustainability topics as presented within Table 2.1 to include socio-economic topics as well as environmental. Interrelationships between topics are considered (where appropriate) within the individual SA topic chapters within Appendix B.

<b>Table 2.1: North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review SA topics compared with SEA Topics</b>	
<b>SA Topics adopted for this assessment</b>	<b>SEA Regulations topics required to be considered</b>
Population & Communities	Population Human Health

<sup>8</sup> A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2005 ODPM ISBN 1851127887

<b>Table 2.1: North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review SA topics compared with SEA Topics</b>	
<b>SA Topics adopted for this assessment</b>	<b>SEA Regulations topics required to be considered</b>
Housing	Material Assets
Employment & Economy	Not required by SEA regulations
Transport & Access	Material Assets
Air, Noise & Light Pollution	Air
Climate Change	Climatic Factors
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Biodiversity, flora and fauna
Landscape, Townscape & Land	Landscape Soils
Cultural Heritage	Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage Material assets
Water	Water
Waste & Minerals	Not required by SEA regulations

The SA incorporates HIA as well as EqIA. Relevant baseline information is provided in relation to health and equalities within the Population and Communities SA topic (see Appendix B sections 2.2 and 2.3).

The preparation of the Scoping Report to support the Partial Review of the Local Plan was informed by a review of the SA Scoping Report prepared for the North West Leicestershire Gypsy



and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (2017)<sup>9</sup> and also the SA Scoping Report for the Local Plan (2014)<sup>10</sup>.

Through consideration of the baseline data, the evolution of the baseline without the plan and key sustainability issues were then identified for each topic.

### **Task A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems**

Key sustainability issues have been identified at the end of each of the topic chapters within Appendix B of this report. These are derived from the baseline data collated.

### **Task A4: Developing the SA assessment framework**

The preparation of the Scoping Report culminated in the presentation of a framework of SA Objectives against which the Local Plan Partial Review and its reasonable alternatives will be tested. For consistency purposes the SA Framework proposed to test the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review is based on the SA framework established to assess the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (adopted November 2017). However, it has been updated and amended to reflect up to date sustainability issues identified in this Scoping Report.

In updating the SA framework, this scoping exercise has reviewed the previous SA Objectives with relation to:

- Their relevance to the scope and objectives of the Local Plan Partial Review;
- The practicalities of assessing against these objectives;
- Any additional sustainability objectives which should be potentially included or scoped out identified through the review and update of the plans, policies, and programmes;
- Any additional sustainability objectives which should be potentially included or scoped out identified through the key sustainability issues and problems identified in the baseline review and update; and
- The adequacy of the sustainability objectives to address HIA and EqIA.

The SA framework is presented in Table 2.2.

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<sup>9</sup> Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document SA Report: Appendix A SA/SEA Scoping Note for the North West Leicestershire Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document

<sup>10</sup>North West Leicestershire Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014



#### **Task A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA**

The Scoping Report was consulted on with the statutory consultees for a period of 6 weeks between 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018. In addition, the document was circulated to the Councils Local Plan consultation database and the document was also uploaded to the Council's website.

Comments reviewed on the Scoping Report have been recorded in a 'recommendations tracker' and used to update the Scoping Report, the scoping information presented in Sections 4 and 5 of this report and inform the next stages of the SA.

**Table 2.2: SA Framework**

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
<b>Population &amp; Communities</b>	<b>SA1 Improve the health and wellbeing of the District's population.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable people to make healthy choices through the use of urban design and provision of open space and walking / cycling routes.</li> <li>• Ensure everyone has access to open space and recreation facilities.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA2 Reduce inequalities and ensure fair and equal access and opportunities for all residents.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all residents have equitable access to health services, taking into account the needs of an aging population.</li> <li>• Ensure all residents have equitable access to education, employment, community services and facilities.</li> <li>• Help ensure all children have access to a local school.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA3 Help create the conditions for communities to thrive.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure an integrated approach to delivery of housing and community facilities.</li> <li>• Protect existing community facilities and ensure new facilities are built to support the needs of new housing development.</li> <li>• Help improve provision of local services, such as shops, GPs, public transport, and community service provision in the villages of northern North West Leicestershire.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for residents to mix and meet.</li> <li>• Help design out crime from new development.</li> <li>• Plan for the district in the context of the wider region, including nearby areas of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>SA4 Provide good quality homes that meet local needs in terms of number, type and tenure in locations where it can deliver the greatest benefits and sustainable access to services and jobs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a sufficient number of dwellings are provided to meet the needs of existing residents changing household size; to reduce commuting, improve access to services and jobs and to match employment growth.</li> <li>• Provide affordable homes of the tenure and size to meet the needs of each part of the District.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2: SA Framework**

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide market homes to meet needs and to match the economic growth aspirations of the wider area.</li> <li>• Provide homes that meet the lifetime needs of residents.</li> </ul>
Employment & Economy	<b>SA5 Support economic growth throughout the District</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for employment developments which support existing well performing employment sectors, such as storage and distribution and growth sectors including high tech manufacturing.</li> <li>• Support initiatives to improve the tourism and leisure sector, in particular in the National Forest and Charnwood Regional Forest Park.</li> <li>• Protect key existing employment sites from change of use, especially where they support local employment needs.</li> <li>• Support and help protect the rural economy.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA6 Enhance the vitality and viability of existing town centres and village centres.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance footfall within town centres and village centres.</li> <li>• Support existing and new services and facilities (e.g. retail, restaurants etc.) within town centres and village centres.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA7 Provision of a diverse range of employment opportunities that match the skills and needs of local residents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support new employment growth in all areas, including rural locations, where it will help meet a local employment need.</li> <li>• Maintain a diverse employment base, including growing the high skill job sector as well as lower skilled jobs to match the diverse job needs of the workforce.</li> </ul>
Transport & Access	<b>SA8 Reduce the need to travel and increase numbers of people walking, cycling or using the bus for their day-to-day travel needs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure new development has sustainable transport access to facilities, services and jobs;</li> <li>• Give priority to walkers and cyclists over car users.</li> <li>• Increase cycle use for commuting and access to services, creating direct cycle routes.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2: SA Framework**

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce congestion in locations where it impacts on road safety, local amenity, causes severance, or adversely impacts on the economy.</li> <li>• Use development to help secure better public transport for the District, in particular links to nearby rail stations and East Midlands Airport and evening and weekend services.</li> </ul>
<b>Air, Noise &amp; Light Pollution</b>	<b>SA9 Reduce air, light and noise pollution to avoid damage to natural systems and protect human health.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure new and existing communities are not adversely affected by poor quality air and noise pollution, either through their location or through causing a further deterioration as a result of new development.</li> <li>• Avoid exacerbating light pollution by keeping external lighting to the minimum required for safety and security.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>SA10 Reduce carbon emissions throughout the District.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support proposals for decentralised (i.e. small and micro renewables) and low carbon energy generation.</li> <li>• Support large scale low carbon grid schemes where appropriately located.</li> <li>• All new development should be built to high energy efficiency standards.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA11 Ensure the District is resilient to the impacts of climate change.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the sequential test in Planning Practice Guidance in the allocation of sites in flood risk areas.</li> <li>• Ensure new development does not exacerbate the risk of flood off-site, for instance through use of sustainable drainage.</li> <li>• Ensure new development is designed and located to be resilient to the impacts of climate change e.g. hotter summers, wetter winters and more extreme weather events.</li> <li>• Ensure new development contributes to Green Infrastructure within the District, where possible.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2: SA Framework**

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
<b>Biodiversity &amp; Geodiversity</b>	<b>SA12 Protect and enhance the District's biodiversity and protect areas identified for their nature conservation and geological importance.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that development results in a net gain in biodiversity and contribute to the achievement of BAP targets.</li> <li>• Protect sites designated for their nature conservation importance from adverse impacts of development, including the river Mease SAC.</li> <li>• Enhance access to the natural environment, including integrating greater biodiversity into urban areas.</li> <li>• Reduce habitat fragmentation and extend ecological corridors</li> <li>• Protect geological designations from adverse impacts of development.</li> <li>• Ensure that all water courses are achieving at least 'Good' ecological status</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape, Townscape &amp; Land</b>	<b>SA13 Conserve and enhance the quality of the District's landscape and townscape character.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the character and distinctiveness of the District's landscape.</li> <li>• Help implement objectives for the National Forest and the Charnwood Forest Regional Park.</li> <li>• Enhance townscape character, particularly in Coalville Town Centre.</li> <li>• Enhance the transition for urban to rural at the edge of towns and villages.</li> <li>• Enhance the relationship between new and existing communities</li> <li>• Built design should help in creating vibrant places, making those approaching on foot a priority.</li> <li>• Help deliver built environment improvements through high quality design.</li> </ul>
	<b>SA14 Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage development on previously developed land.</li> <li>• Whenever possible protect the best quality agricultural land.</li> <li>• Encourage development at densities which are appropriate to the location and the local environment.</li> <li>• Where land has the potential to be contaminated or is known to be contaminated ensure that suitable investigation and remediation is carried out to bring it back into use.</li> <li>• Protect soil quality and avoid soil pollution.</li> <li>• Avoid the loss of and enhance the natural capital assets of the District.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.2: SA Framework**

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<b>SA15 Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the District's built and historic heritage.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and conserve buildings and structures of recognised historic or architectural interest, and their settings.</li> <li>• Maintain and increase access to cultural heritage assets.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the local historic environment and ensure new development respects the character of the historic environment.</li> <li>• Respect archaeological remains and protect or record according to guidance.</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<b>SA16 Protect water resources and ensure they are used efficiently.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure developments are designed to a high level of water efficiency.</li> <li>• Ensure surface and groundwater water resources are protected from pollution.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste &amp; Minerals</b>	<b>SA17 Ensure the efficient use of natural resources, including reducing waste generation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure new development incorporates space for waste sorting and storage to aid recycling.</li> <li>• Encourage sustainable construction making use of recycled and recyclable building materials.</li> <li>• Ensure the re-use of demolition waste.</li> <li>• Ensure minerals deposits and sites allocated for waste management are not sterilised through inappropriately located development.</li> </ul>

## **2.3 Stage B Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects**

This stage involves identifying the significant environmental effects of the Local Plan Partial Review including short, medium and long term; permanent and temporary; positive and negative effects

### **Task B1 Develop options including reasonable alternatives**

The SEA Regulations require the identification, description and evaluation of the likely significant effects on the environment of “reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme” (Reg 12 (1(b))).

North West Leicestershire District Council has reviewed Policy S1 and defined five alternative options for amending the policy wording as shown in Table 6.1. The full wording of these alternative policy options is provided in Section 6.

All of the alternative options have been assessed against the updated SA Framework established in SA Stage A and has made reference to up to date baseline data (see Table 2.3 for SA Framework and Section 5 for summarised baseline data supported by Appendix B).

The starting point for the assessment of the options has been the SA of the adopted Local Plan<sup>11</sup> to ensure consistency with the assessment of the adopted Policy S1 and the remainder of the adopted Local Plan as far as possible. The assessment tables in Appendix C of this report are presented in a similar manner to those presented within the SA Report of the adopted Local Plan but as mentioned above, the SA Framework used in this assessment of the Local Plan Partial Review has been updated.

### **Task B2 Evaluate the likely effects of the plan and alternatives**

Each S1 policy option has been assessed using the following criteria in Table 2.3, which have expanded upon those used in SA of the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan completed by AECOM<sup>11</sup>. Each policy option was assessed against all criteria, which informed the overall significance score of the potential effects identified (Table 2.4).

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<sup>11</sup> Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (Submission Version) SA Report Update December 2016 available here: [https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local\\_plan](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local_plan)



**Table 2.3: Definition of Assessment Criteria**

Criterion	Description
<b>Significance</b>	An assessment of the significance of the potential effects identified. This could be a positive effect, negative effect, neutral effect, significant positive effect or significant negative effect. The definitions for these effects are detailed in Table 2.4.
<b>Permanent/temporary</b>	An assessment of whether the predicted effects would be permanent (P), or temporary (T).
<b>Reversible/irreversible</b>	An assessment of whether or not the identified effect can be reversed (R) e.g. the loss of greenfield land to development would be irreversible (I).
<b>Spatial extent</b>	How far the effect is predicted to be spread geographically. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low (L) = A specific area within NWLDC boundary</li> <li>• Medium (M) = Across the entire NWLDC boundary, possibly reaching to neighbouring boroughs</li> <li>• High (H) = Beyond the NWLDC Local Plan Boundary, with national or international ramifications</li> </ul>
<b>Magnitude</b>	An assessment of the proportion of the receptor affected by the identified effect. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low (L) =20-40% of receptor or capacity affected</li> <li>• Medium (M) = 40-80% of receptor affected</li> <li>• High (H) =80+% of the receptor affected</li> </ul>
<b>Duration</b>	An assessment of the time period the predicted effects are likely to last. This could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short (S)= 0-5 years</li> <li>• Medium (M) = 5-10 years</li> <li>• Long (L)= 10 years or more, up to the end of the Local Plan period (2031)</li> </ul>
<b>Direct/Indirect</b>	An assessment of whether the predicted effect will be directly (D) as a result of option implementation, or indirectly (I) caused by the policy option.
<b>Likelihood</b>	An assessment of how likely it is that the implementation of the policy option will lead to the predicted effect. This could be low (L), moderate (M) or high (H).
<b>Cumulative effect</b>	An assessment of whether or not there is potential for a cumulative effect to occur on the SA objective as a result of the policy option working in

**Table 2.3: Definition of Assessment Criteria**

Criterion	Description
	combination with other circumstances, policies or factors. Y= potential cumulative effect. No potential cumulative effect identified.

**Table 2.4: Definitions of Significance Scores**

Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives	Assumptions on the nature of effects
++	<b>Significant Positive Effect:</b> the policy option supports the achievement of this objective; it addresses all relevant sub-objectives and could result in a potentially significant beneficial effect e.g. improved access by walking and cycling modes to a local or town centre	Permanent Continual Magnitude: High 80%+ receptor or environmental capacity affected; or Medium 40-80% of receptor or environmental capacity of affected The effect could be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale;</li> <li>enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner;</li> <li>repair or restore receptors badly damaged or degraded through previous uses; and/or</li> <li>improve one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific regional or national designation.</li> </ul>
+	<b>Minor Positive Effect:</b> the policy option supports the achievement of this objective; it addresses some relevant sub-objectives, although it may have only a minor beneficial effect	Reversible Infrequent or intermittent Magnitude: Low 20-40% of receptor or capacity affected. The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the neighbourhood scale;</li> <li>fit into or with the existing location and existing receptor qualities; and/or</li> <li>enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.4: Definitions of Significance Scores**

Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives	Assumptions on the nature of effects
0	<b>Neutral Effect:</b> the policy option has no impact or effect and is neutral insofar as the benefits and drawbacks appear equal and neither is considered significant	N/A
?	<b>Uncertain Effect:</b> Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine the assessment this stage	N/A
-	<b>Minor Negative Effect:</b> the policy option appears to conflict with the achievement of this objective; it does not address relevant sub-objectives and may result in minor adverse effects	Reversible Infrequent or intermittent Magnitude: Low 20-40% of receptor or capacity affected. The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be out of scale with the location; or</li> <li>• leave an adverse impact on a receptor of recognised quality such as a specific district or county designation.</li> </ul>
--	<b>Significant Negative Effect:</b> the policy option works against the achievement of this objective; it could exacerbate relevant sub-objectives and may result in a potentially significant adverse effect e.g. loss of all or part of a designated ecological site of national importance.	Permanent Irreversible Continual Magnitude: High 80%+ receptor or environmental capacity affected; or Medium 40-80% of receptor or environmental capacity of affected The effect could be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of the receptor;</li> <li>• cause a very high quality receptor to be permanently changed and its quality diminished;</li> <li>• cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a severe adverse effect;</li> <li>• be at a considerable variance to the location, degrading the integrity of the receptor; and/or</li> </ul>

**Table 2.4: Definitions of Significance Scores**

Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives	Assumptions on the nature of effects
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will be substantially damaging to a high quality receptor such as a specific regional or national designation.</li> </ul>

The SEA Regulations require the SA Report to include a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.

Policy S1 is a strategic policy. The assessment has therefore assumed that a replacement Policy S1 will be implemented alongside the existing policies within the adopted Local Plan and that all mitigation afforded by these policies for potential sustainability effects of the alternative options for Policy S1 remains in place.

No other technical difficulties have been identified in undertaking the assessments.

### **Task B3 Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects**

Consideration has been given to appropriate mitigation measures that could be adopted within the Local Plan Partial Review for any uncertain and potential negative effects identified within the assessment of the alternatives for Policy S1. Consideration has also been given to measures which could enhance the sustainability performance of the alternative options. Mitigation and enhancement measures are presented in Section 6.

### **Task B4 Propose Measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan**

A proposed monitoring framework has been put forward in Section 8 to monitor the residual significant effects of the preferred option for Policy S1 (Option 5). The proposed monitoring framework has been based on that established in the SA of the Adopted Local Plan<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (Submission Version) SA Report December 2016 available here:

[https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/sa\\_report\\_december\\_2016/SA%20REPORT%20DEC%202016%20%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/sa_report_december_2016/SA%20REPORT%20DEC%202016%20%20FINAL.pdf)

## 2.4 Stage C Prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Report

This stage involves documenting the SA process and presenting the findings within a formal SA Report (this report). The ways in which this report meets the legal requirements of the SEA Regulations are demonstrated in Table 2.5.

## 2.5 How the requirements of the SEA Regulations are being met

Table 2.5 outlines where elements of the SEA regulations<sup>13</sup> are addressed within the report.

<b>Table 2.5: Fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Regulations</b>	
<b>What the regulations say<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>How this is addressed</b>
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme.	Set out in Section 3 of this document.
An outline of the relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	Set out in Section 4 of this document.
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	Set out in Section 5 of this document.
The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Section 7 and Appendix C outline the potential environmental effects on areas likely to be significantly affected. The characteristics of the District and potential interactions have been informed by information contained within the SA baseline data (Section 5).
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated	Section 5 of this document outlines key issues (including problems) related to each SA topic. This includes sites designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.

<sup>13</sup> Please see Schedule 2 of the SEA regulations: *Information for Environmental Reports*.

**Table 2.5: Fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Regulations**

What the regulations say <sup>13</sup>	How this is addressed
pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	
The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 4 and Appendix A outline relevant environmental protection objectives. The way that those environmental objectives have been taken into account has been through integrating them into the SA framework.
The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. The identification of the above effects should consider secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.	<p>Section 7 sets out the potential significant effects of the proposed new Policy S1 of the Local Plan Partial Review and its reasonable alternatives.</p> <p>Details of the nature of effects are provided within Appendix C. This includes indirect (secondary), cumulative (cumulative and synergistic), duration (short/medium/long term), permanent or temporary and negative or positive effects. Definitions are provided within Section 2.3.</p>
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Section 7 sets out mitigation measures for significant negative effects and uncertain effects and relevant enhancement measures.
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with.	Section 6 outlines the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with.
A description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how)	Section 2 outlines the methodology for all stages of the SA and Section 2.3 specifically describes any technical difficulties that were encountered.

<b>Table 2.5: Fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Regulations</b>	
<b>What the regulations say<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>How this is addressed</b>
encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 5 outlines data gaps.
A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	Set out in Section 8 of this document.
A Non-Technical Summary of the information provided under the above headings.	See separate Non-Technical Summary.
The report must include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment.	The whole SA Report addresses this.
<p>Consultation:</p> <p>Authorities with environmental responsibility, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report (Art. 5.4).</p>	<p>The Scoping Report was consulted on with the statutory consultees for a period of 6 weeks between 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018.</p> <p>Comments have been reviewed and used to update the Revised Scoping Report (August 2019).</p>
Authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme.	This SA Report will be consulted on with the public between 7 October and 18 November 2019 alongside the Local Plan Partial Review and will specifically be sent to the SEA statutory consultees for their comment.

**Table 2.5: Fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Regulations**

What the regulations say <sup>13</sup>	How this is addressed
<p>EU Member States, where the implementation of the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment of that country.</p>	<p>No potential effects have been identified in the assessment of the preferred Policy S1 (see Section 7) on other EU Member States. There is therefore no requirement to consult with other EU Member States on this SA Report.</p>
<p>Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Art. 8).</p> <p>Provision of information on the decision:</p> <p>When the plan or programme is adopted, the public and any countries consulted under Art.7 must be informed and the following made available to those so informed:</p> <p>The plan or programme as adopted.</p> <p>A statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report of Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of consultations entered into pursuant to Art. 7 have been taken into account in accordance with Art. 8, and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with.</p> <p>The measures decided concerning monitoring.</p>	<p>This will be set out in the SA Adoption Statement.</p>
<p>Monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the plan's or programme's implementation.</p>	<p>This will be set out in the SA Adoption Statement.</p>



## **3 The scope and content of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in November 2017. It sets out a strategy for delivering the homes, jobs and infrastructure needed in the district between 2011 and 2031. The Council committed to start a review of the plan within three months of the date of adoption.

There are two main reasons why an immediate review was required:

1. A shortage of employment land up to 2031 compared to what is needed (as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment, or HEDNA)
2. The possible need to accommodate additional housing arising from unmet needs in Leicester city.

The review commenced in February 2018. It was the district council's intention that the review would be a 'partial review' to address those issues above. It was also the intention, as required by Policy S1 of the adopted Local Plan, to submit the review for Examination within two years of commencing it.

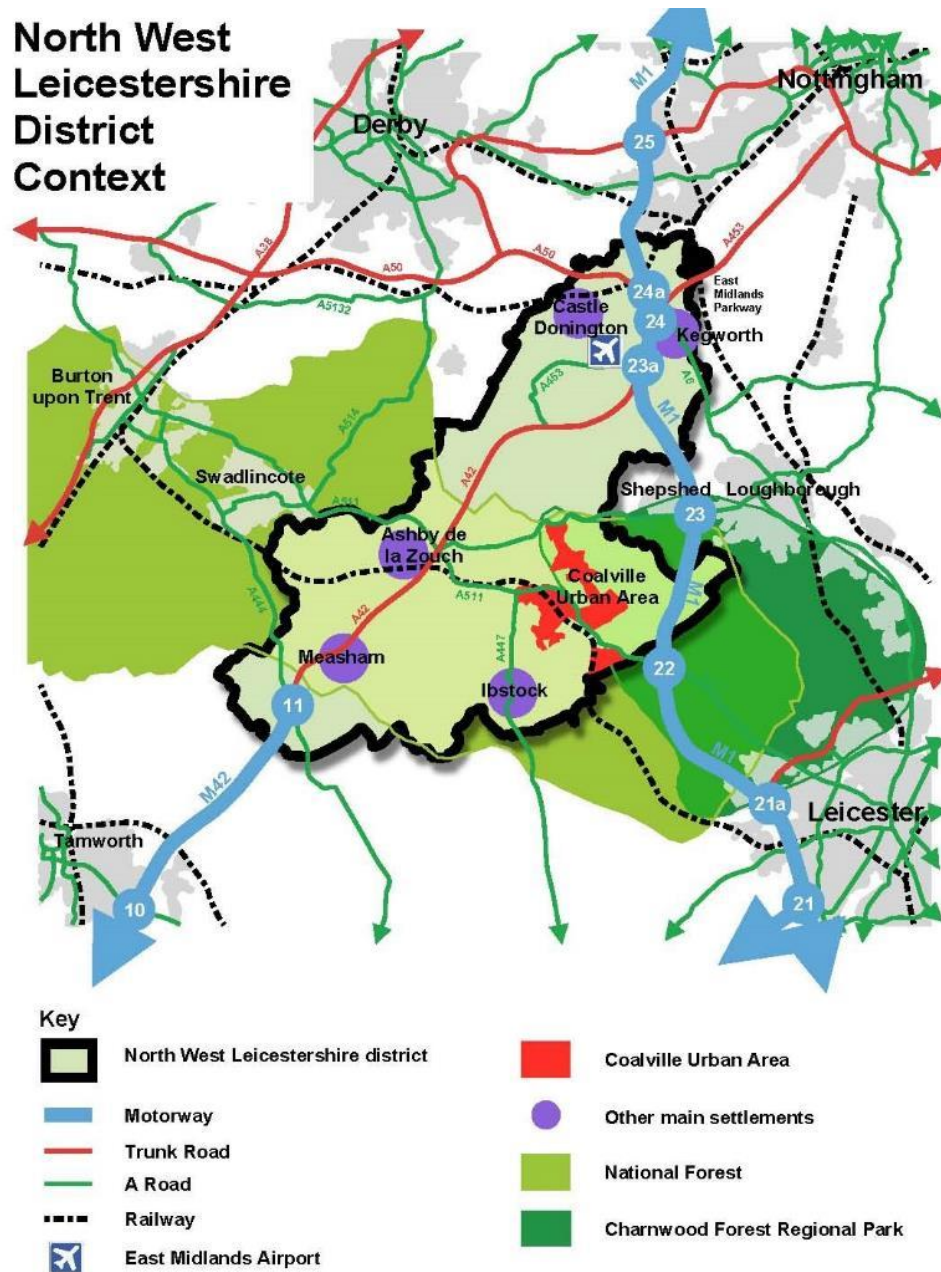
Through the granting of a number of planning permissions, the district council is making good progress towards addressing the shortage of employment land. However, there remains a lack of sufficient clarity regarding the issue of unmet housing need in Leicester City and how such need would be redistributed amongst the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities. In addition, there have been significant changes in circumstances since the Local Plan was adopted, including a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and a new approach to identifying housing requirements coupled with uncertainty regarding nationally produced household projections.

The breadth of issues raised by these changes, together with the lack of certainty in respect of the issue of unmet housing need arising from Leicester City means that submission within two years is no longer feasible.

North West Leicestershire District Council is now proposing that the Partial Review will be limited to a review of Policy S1 only, but that a Substantive Review will also be undertaken to address not only the issues outlined above, but also to address other matters arising from changes in national policies.

The Local Plan Partial Review applies to the entire North West Leicestershire District, which is shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 North West Leicestershire District Context



## 4 Review of Policies, Plans and Programmes

### 4.1 Introduction

The policy context in which the North West Leicestershire Local Partial Plan Review is being prepared can best be understood through a review of related Policies, Plans and Programmes (PPP). The SEA Regulations require information on:

- *“An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.”* (Schedule 2, Paragraph 1); and
- *“The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.”* (Schedule 2, Paragraph 5)

The review process ensures that the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review complies with existing PPP at international, national and regional levels of governance and also reinforces and supports local plans and strategies. The process entails identifying and reviewing those PPP and environmental protection objectives that are directly relevant to both the Local Plan and the SA, which will include the equalities and health objectives of relevance to the EqIA and HIA.

For practical reasons the scoping task of identifying related plans and programmes cannot yield an exhaustive or definitive list of legislative/non-legislative documents. The review has been focussed to ensure that only policies that are current and of direct relevance to the Local Plan Partial Review are included. A detailed outline of the policy documents, the objectives and the targets reviewed is set out in Appendix A. Table 4.1 outlines the key messages of the PPP.

The completed review of PPP provides the context for the SA and helps to inform the SA Framework of objectives and sub-objectives which will guide the subsequent appraisal process (see Table 2.3).

## 4.2 Summary of Key Messages

Table 4.1 sets out the key messages drawn from the review of PPP. In Appendix A, some topics have been combined because the PPP related to them overlap or are very similar and therefore the SA Topics listed in Table 2.2 are not entirely the same as those in Table 4.1.

The messages presented in Table 4.1 are reflected within the detailed SA Framework (Table 2.3).

Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review	
SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
Population & Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to plan for an aging population with complex needs which will require inputs from all parts of the health and social care system.</li> <li>• Ensure that there are appropriate facilities for the disabled and elderly.</li> <li>• Deliver high quality, person-centred, integrated care pathways.</li> <li>• Promote healthier lifestyles.</li> <li>• Increase physical activity levels.</li> <li>• There is a need to reduce crime and the fear of crime.</li> <li>• There is a need to tackle violent crimes and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Encourage the reporting of crime.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for members of the community to mix and meet.</li> <li>• Ensure integrated approach to housing and community facilities and services.</li> <li>• Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.</li> <li>• Improve public health by strengthening local public health activities which connect people with nature.</li> <li>• To help create the safest, highest quality health and care service.</li> <li>• To ensure fair and equal access to services and support irrespective of race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership or pregnancy/maternity.</li> <li>• Increase healthy life expectancy and reduce differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review**

SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through better commissioning, improve local and national health outcomes, and reduce health inequalities.</li> <li>• Reduce inequalities in care (both physical and mental) across and within communities.</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable housing growth and deliver a mix of high quality housing of varying size and tenure in order to meet local needs.</li> <li>• Deliver high quality, adequately sized and thermally efficient housing; at a location that allows access to community facilities.</li> <li>• The NPPF requires the Local Authorities to use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for housing in the housing market area.</li> <li>• Within this context, the NPPF also states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).</li> <li>• Ensure that housing growth requirements are accommodated in the most sustainable way.</li> <li>• There is a need to plan for an aging population with complex needs which will require inputs from all parts of the health and social care system.</li> </ul>
Economy & Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the sustainable growth and expansion of business particularly within the transport and logistics sectors.</li> <li>• Create jobs and prosperity.</li> <li>• Ensure that there is an adequate supply of employment land, including a choice and range of sites, to meet identified needs and to contribute to meeting wider strategic needs and attract inward investment</li> <li>• Continue to attract inward investment and encourage new business start-ups.</li> <li>• Support opportunities for the improvement of the skills and educational attainment levels of the District's labour supply.</li> <li>• Facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit.</li> <li>• The NPPF States that planning policies should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review**

SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
Transport & Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.</li> <li>• Places should be designed primarily for people, not cars.</li> <li>• The layout and design of places and their wider connectivity should seek to ensure that local facilities and services are located within a five minute walking radius of people's homes.</li> <li>• Enhance accessibility to key community facilities, services and jobs for all.</li> <li>• Encourage sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel.</li> <li>• Provide an efficient, resilient and sustainable transport system.</li> <li>• Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.</li> </ul>
Air, Noise & Light Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that air quality is maintained or enhanced and that emissions of air pollutants are kept to a minimum and meet agreed air quality targets and objectives.</li> <li>• Promotion of walking and cycling as a healthy and more preferable options to car for local journeys.</li> <li>• Minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.</li> <li>• Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity and nature conservation.</li> </ul>
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote low carbon economies.</li> <li>• Minimise the effects of climate change.</li> <li>• Improve the long-term resilience of our homes, businesses and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Encourage the implementation of sustainable land management techniques to reduce the impact of extreme weather events.</li> <li>• Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that may cause climate change.</li> <li>• Improve energy efficiency in homes as well as helping businesses improve their energy productivity.</li> <li>• Shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and improving resilience.</li> <li>• Deliver sustainable new development including infrastructure that minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to the impacts of climate change</li> <li>• Encourage the provision of renewable energy.</li> <li>• Increase energy efficiency and move towards a low carbon economy.</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review**

SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance biodiversity, including statutory and non-statutory designated sites, priority species, habitats and ecological networks.</li> <li>• Need to recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services.</li> <li>• Minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible.</li> <li>• Support is needed to achieve local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets.</li> <li>• Increase people's participation in wildlife conservation.</li> <li>• Provide better access to greenspace.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for green infrastructure provision, recognising the multiple functions that green infrastructure provides to the area and linking into regional and national green infrastructure networks.</li> <li>• There is a need to protect, connect and enhance the wildlife and habitats;</li> <li>• To enable people to experience nature in a sustainable way;</li> <li>• To conserve and manage geodiversity through appropriate recognition at international, national and local levels.</li> <li>• Aim to prevent harm to geological conservation interests.</li> <li>• To maintain and enhance geodiversity through the management of sites, areas and wider landscapes.</li> <li>• To increase recognition of our geodiversity in international, national, regional and local environmental and planning development policies and legislation.</li> </ul>
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance nationally and locally designated cultural and historical assets as well as those which are undesignated.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance access to cultural heritage assets.</li> <li>• Preserve and enhance Conservation Areas.</li> <li>• Ensure development in or adjacent to Conservation Areas or Listed buildings (and their settings) respects their character and context and enhances the quality of the built environment.</li> </ul>
Landscape, Townscape and Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of natural landscapes in ways that allow them to continue to evolve and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.</li> <li>• A balance will need to be struck between safeguarding the existing identity of communities, the need to connect places to one another and encourage wider community cohesion.</li> <li>• Development should seek to enhance the quality of life within existing communities, in addition to enhancing their townscape and landscape setting.</li> </ul>



**Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review**

SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relationship between new and existing communities will require careful consideration with the interrelationship between boundaries a critical factor in the future success of a community.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of previously developed (brownfield) land.</li> <li>• There are major economic benefits to be gained from natural capital and their value should be incorporated into decision-making.</li> <li>• Remediate land contamination.</li> <li>• Protect soil quality and avoid soil pollution.</li> <li>• There is a need to consider natural capital in decision making, such as in relation to land use.</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance surface and groundwater quality.</li> <li>• Improve water efficiency.</li> <li>• Ensure that water quality is improved or maintained where possible.</li> <li>• Promote sustainable and water efficient development.</li> <li>• Address any shortfalls in water supply by reducing leakage and reducing consumer consumption wherever possible.</li> <li>• Avoid development in areas of flood risk.</li> <li>• Improve flood awareness and emergency planning.</li> <li>• Ensure that all residents are informed of the potential risk of flooding and their appropriate flood evacuation route.</li> </ul>
Waste & Minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide protection to the local environment and residents, whilst ensuring a steady supply of minerals and the provision of waste management facilities in accordance with Government policy and society's needs.</li> <li>• Waste should be managed in line with the waste hierarchy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Prevent or reduce waste;</li> <li>– Reuse;</li> <li>– Recycle;</li> <li>– Other recovery methods; and</li> <li>– Dispose.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



**Table 4.1: Key Messages from the PPP review**

SA Topic	Key Messages from Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the provision of well-designed and efficient facilities, that drive waste management practices up the waste hierarchy and are located to ensure no harm to human health and the environment, and which reduce waste volumes to be disposed in landfill.</li> </ul>

## **5 Summary of Baseline Data**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This section presents the key sustainability issues currently affecting North West Leicestershire and the predicted future evolution of the baseline without the partial review of the Local Plan. This section is arranged by SA topic as presented in Table 2.2 and is supported by Appendix B which presents the full review of baseline data for the district.

### **5.2 Population & Communities**

#### **5.2.1 Key Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability issues have been identified:

- As the population continues to increase so does the demand for housing, infrastructure, facilities and employment;
- The population is ageing and adequate support and facilities will be needed to support older residents;
- There is a need to provide homes to support the growing number of households in the District. This will need to be matched by new services to support communities;
- There is a low proportion of young adults and this could have an impact on local economic growth. Measures will need to be taken to retain and attract young adults to the District;
- There are pockets of deprivation within the District, such as in parts of Castle Donington, Coalville, Greenhill, Moira, Ibstock and Heather. There is a need to address inequalities in the District, particularly with regards to health and crime;
- A high proportion of the District's residents are classified as being overweight or obese;
- There is a need to deliver new accessible open space to meet the needs of existing and new residents. This could also contribute to the delivery of a network of Green Infrastructure within the District;
- There is a high number of reported violent crimes;
- There is a need to provide safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life; and
- Much of the population live in rural or semi-rural populations and the needs of these groups must be met by increasing access to services.

## Future Evolution of the Baseline

The population of North West Leicestershire is set to continue to rise over the next 20 years. Current trends indicate that the population is likely to become older, putting additional strain on the District's resources. The continued growth in population is likely to cause an increase in demand for housing, services and infrastructure. There will also be an ongoing need to provide inclusive services in order to meet the needs of all residents.

As the population in North West Leicestershire ages, the demand for health and social care needs will increase. In some of the most deprived areas, life expectancy is 7.3 years lower for men and women than in the least deprived areas. The rural nature of the District could pose a significant challenge in providing good services for all residents. A high proportion of North West Leicestershire is considered to be either overweight or obese, which could continue to rise without further encouragement of physical activities and promotion of healthier lifestyles.

Without further intervention, it is likely that crime rates in North West Leicestershire will continue to rise. This increasing trend mirrors what is being seen across Leicestershire and the UK.

## Data Gaps

The following data gaps have been identified:

- Some of the data used has been taken from the 2011 Census which may not adequately reflect the current situation; and
- The ONS are only able to publish sexual identity estimates for 98 out of the total 380 local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland (Great Britain), of which North West Leicestershire is not included. This is because these authorities did not have estimates that were based on sample sizes considered robust enough for publication.

## 5.3 Housing

### Key Sustainability Issues

- There is a need for more affordable housing in all parts of the District, with particular need in areas where housing prices are highest, such as the rural area and in Ashby-de-la-Zouch;
- New housing and economic growth need to be spatially linked. Suitable land supply needs to be identified to help implement housing growth in locations where it can deliver greatest benefits and sustainable access to services and jobs;
- There is a need for a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet the requirements of all areas of the community;
- There remains a shortfall between local housing allowances and average rental prices.; Housing for older people and an aging population must take into account their needs,

including building to lifetime home standards and increased provision of retirement homes and assisted living accommodation; and

- An aging population requires smaller homes as these are more likely to be characterised as single person households, as well as maintaining a stock of family homes.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

The area is growing in popularity, which has been reflected in the growing house prices. Strong economic growth and further investment in the area is likely to continue to boost house prices, which could increase the demand for affordable homes. The growing ageing population will require additional housing needs. There will be greater demand for smaller homes to support the ageing population, but there is need for the Council to maintain a stock of family homes.

### **Data Gaps**

Low numbers of sales transactions in some local authorities can lead to volatility in data for annual price change by local authority for England. While efforts have been made to account for this volatility, the change in property price at district levels can be influenced by the type and number of properties sold in any given period.

Housing need evidence is currently being prepared as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Substantive Review.

## **5.4 Employment & Economy**

### **Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability issues have been identified:

- Employment land provision should support existing well performing employment sectors, such as storage and distribution;
- There is a need to support other sectors to maintain a highly skilled workforce;
- There is a need to provide additional higher skilled jobs in the District to reduce the need for out commuting;
- There are large disparities in attainment of qualifications, skills and training at ward level;
- There is a need to support new jobs for those residents who need to access lower skilled employment and maintain a distribution of these jobs around the District, including those areas where residents have fewer qualifications to ensure that people who cannot get to work by car are not adversely disadvantaged;
- North West Leicestershire plays an important role in the sub-region as the focus for employment and growth objectives;
- The needs of rural businesses must be considered, including allowing appropriate growth of business that need a rural location and diversification of the agricultural economy;

- The retail role of main towns and village centres needs to be supported to help reduce vacancy rates and avoid the loss of shop units to other uses, with a particular emphasis on Coalville town centre; and
- The tourism sector is an important part of the local economy, there is a need to protect and enhance the tourism and leisure offer particularly in relation to the National Forest, Charnwood Forest Regional Park and Ashby Canal. The aim should be for a higher per capita visitor spend rather than simply additional visitors, a way this can be achieved is through increasing overnight visitor stays in the District; and
- There is a low proportion of young adults which could have an impact on local economic growth. Measures will need to be taken to retain and attract young adults to the District.
- There is a unique opportunity to utilise the strong infrastructure and assets within North West Leicestershire to expand its economy by capturing the substantial local and regional demand for high quality employment space.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

The North West Leicestershire District is benefiting from high levels of investment, which is helping to raise employment rates well above the national and regional averages. The Coalville Corridor and East Midlands Enterprise Gateway will support the strong logistical and transportation sectors in the area. The District also boasts a highly skilled workforce, with almost half being educated to NVQ 4 or above. With continued investment into the transportation and storage sectors, those more highly skilled could commute elsewhere in search of higher skilled jobs.

### **Data Gaps**

Due to a small sample size, some of the data obtained from Nomis was too small to provide a reliable estimate. This data gap applies to tables 7.1 and 7.2.

## **5.5 Transport & Access**

### **Key Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability issues have been identified:

- Continual growth in car ownership will contribute to further air pollution, and associated impacts on climate, human health and biodiversity;
- Growth at the East Midlands Airport and East Midlands Gateway could increase the number of HGVs and LGVs on the roads;
- Further planned growth at East Midlands Airport needs to ensure that accessibility by public transport is addressed;

- There is a need to provide more sustainable transport modes, including public transport capacity and safeguard land for transport;
- There is a need to encourage more walking and cycling, including making improvements to safe and direct cycling routes across the District, taking into account the high levels of existing traffic;
- Due to the rural character of the District new developments would need to be located where it would help reduce car use and where people are not disadvantaged by not having access to private transport; and
- Some villages have a limited number of services, so there is a need to improve public transport links between the main towns and villages, especially during evenings and weekends.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

There is a high dependency on private cars in the District. Traffic is expected to continue to rise within the area which is likely to place additional pressure on the road network. Greater car ownership will continue to increase road congestion, parking problems, car dependency, and environmental impacts and such as air pollution, noise pollution and carbon emissions. The expansion of East Midlands Airport and freight terminal could increase the amount of HGV and LGV traffic on the road. The creation of more accessible public transport, particularly from HS2, as well as more local cycle routes may help to deter residents from using private cars.

### **Data Gaps**

The following data gaps have been identified:

- HGV and LGV traffic count data is not available by local authority; and
- Due to a small sample size, some of the data obtained from the ONS on work travel, was too small to provide a reliable estimate.

## **5.6 Air, Noise & Light Pollution**

### **Key Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability problems have been identified:

- There is significant reliance on the petrol or diesel-fuelled private car as the main mode of transport within the District;
- Air pollution from the strategic road network is an issue across the District and NO<sup>2</sup> emissions have remained constant;
- There are five designated AQMAs. The need to avoid further deterioration in these areas is an essential consideration for new development, in particular considering cumulative effects;

- The District has the highest fraction of attributable deaths to particulate air pollution in Leicestershire;
- Need to help reduce pollution from road vehicles;
- There is the potential for adverse impacts on wellbeing if inappropriate new development is located near a major source of noise, including the airport and any existing or new major roads;
- There is a need to reduce light pollution and restrict further intensification of light pollution from new developments;
- The development of the East Midlands Gateway, Coalville Corridor and the potential construction of HS2 are likely to increase noise, air and light pollution; and
- Noise, air and light pollution could be generated through construction works in the District, resulting from growth proposed in the Local Plan. This pollution will need to be minimised and controlled through Local Plan policies.

### Future Evolution of the Baseline

It is likely that air quality will continue to be an issue in the District due to its well-connected road network, the strength of the logistics and storage sectors and the reliance on the private car. The demand for housing could also subsequently result in more cars on the road. The East Midlands Gateway and Coalville Corridor projects are likely to result in an increase in airfreight, rail freight and heavy goods vehicles, which will contribute to increases in both air and noise pollution. Further exceedance of the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> annual mean objective within AQMAs may see boundaries revised or even the creation of additional AQMAs within the District.

### Data Gaps

No data gaps have been identified.

## 5.7 Climate Change

### Key Sustainability Issues

- Per capita carbon emissions far exceed both the national and regional averages;
- There is reliance on the petrol or diesel-fuelled private car as the main mode of transport;
- Industry and transport are the largest contributors to carbon emissions and levels far exceed the regional and national averages;
- Need to plan for and implement/facilitate climate change adaptation, in respect of rising temperatures, water scarcity and extreme weather events, particularly heavy rainfall/flooding;
- It is important to become more resilient to the wider effects of climate change through adaptation measures. Green Infrastructure presents opportunities to address multiple issues through multifunctional spaces;

- New development will need to incorporate sustainable drainage systems to sustainability reduce flood risk;
- New developments need to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to climate change; and
- Need to work with communities to help tackle climate change.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

The increase in global temperature is likely to continue unless greenhouse gas emissions are reduced. The impacts of climate change are expected to be warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. An increase in rainfall is expected to lead to more frequent flooding of rivers. Extreme weather events such as storms or heat waves are likely to be more frequent.

These impacts are likely to have a number of indirect effects. These would include changes in the availability and quality of water resources, damage to native habitats and migration or extinction of native plants and animals. Infrastructure and buildings could be damaged more frequently by storms<sup>14</sup>.

Further development could also result in the loss of green spaces to hard standing surfaces. This will reduce water infiltration, increase surface runoff and subsequently increase the risk of flooding, unless sustainable urban drainage solutions are adopted. Taking predicted rainfall patterns into account, it could be assumed that there will be an increase in areas subjected to flooding.

The FRA states that the Local Planning Authority may, in exceptional circumstances, accept that development may increase flood risk if it were outweighed by the benefits of the new or proposed major development<sup>15</sup>. Such exceptions would not be expected to increase local flood risk to “significant” levels as determined by Government criteria.

Given the reliance on the private car as the main mode of transport within the District, the strength of distribution and logistics sectors, increasing private vehicle ownership and the demand for housing, it could be considered likely that greenhouse gas emissions will rise in the future. However, there is the potential for advances in technological solutions and changes in policy to begin to stabilise and reduce emissions over time. Local policy reducing car-based development could affect this as could the increasing use of electric vehicles.

Despite this, the current estimates for temperature increases and changes to rainfall patterns are unlikely to alter significantly in the near future given the timescales associated with climate

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<sup>14</sup> HM Government, UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017

<sup>15</sup> Leicestershire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (2017 revision)



change. This being the case, there will be an increasing need to implement climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in light of changing environmental conditions.

### **Data Gaps**

The following data gap has been identified:

- Data from the BEIS was only available up until 2016. The 2018 release, which includes data up until 2017, does not yet provide data at local authority level.

## **5.8 Biodiversity & Geodiversity**

### **Key Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability issues have been identified:

- The River Mease SAC is at risk from adverse effects from wastewater treatment outflows that have introduced damagingly high level of phosphates into the river;
- There is a need to protect and enhance SSSI, particularly the sites that are in an unfavourable (declining and no change) condition, to prevent further deterioration and to improve their condition;
- There is a need to consider natural capital in decision making, such as in relation to land use;
- There is a need to protect and enhance the wildlife and habitats in the District;
- Protect existing areas designated for geological importance;
- There is a need to protect and enhance a high quality green infrastructure network across the District, linking into the wider regional and national networks of green infrastructure and nature recovery;
- Ensure adequate connectivity along the Trent Valley between North West Leicestershire and Erewash is maintained and enhanced going forward;
- Need to consider and plan for the impacts of climate change on species and habitats; and
- Growing population will increase demand for more development, possibly where there is a potential for loss of habitats and species but there is also an opportunity to increase biodiversity in new developments, such as installing green roofs and providing new green infrastructure.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

Pressure on biodiversity and geodiversity in the District is likely to increase with development required to meet housing and employment targets. Without further intervention, the River Mease SAC and those SSSIs that are in unfavourable (no change or declining) condition are likely to continue to worsen.

Climate change is also likely to exacerbate pressure on habitats and species as habitats become less suitable and species may need to adapt to survive. Without care, development can cause the loss of key habitats or severance of important links in the network of connected habitats, increasing species isolation and reducing the capability of some species to survive environmental change. Facilitating the movement of species across the District and creating a network of natural greenspaces would help improve biodiversity and help species adapt to climate change.

### **Data Gaps**

A biodiversity audit and habitat mapping exercise has not been carried out for the District. There is therefore no comprehensive set of biodiversity and habitat baseline data covering the entire plan area.

## **5.9 Landscape, Townscape & Land**

### **Key Sustainability Issues**

- National Character Areas in the District are at risk of degradation from the pressures of new development. Planning policy needs to guide development to ensure it is contextually responsive development and reinforces local character;
- The National and Regional Forests are major assets in the District and helping deliver their objectives could have considerable potential in enhancing the character of the District, including through supporting tree planting;
- The District has a varied landscape and development should respect its landscape setting and make a positive contribution to the relationship of rural and urban areas; and
- The long history of coal mining within North West Leicestershire has left a legacy of potential land instability and contamination issues. The Coal Authority has defined a 'Development High Risk Area' that covers most of the District, which has potential implications for future developments; and
- Investment is needed in Coalville in order to improve the townscape and viability of the town centre.
- There is a need to protect soil resources.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

The risk of landscape character degradation in parts of the District will continue without planning intervention to guide development to address identified issues and reinforce local character. National and Regional Forests are major assets in the District, but projects and planning policies are needed to capitalise the benefits they can bring to the District and to support the achievement of their objectives. The history of coal mining in the District has led to potential land instability issues, which could have potential implications for future developments. Townscape issues



require specific projects and planning policy to ensure that improvements are made, particularly in Coalville.

### **Data Gaps**

The following data gaps have been identified:

- The latest open space audit was carried out in 2007. Being over ten years old it is now possibly out of date; and
- The new Contaminated Land Framework is currently being produced and a draft version is not yet available.

## **5.10 Cultural Heritage**

### **Key Sustainability Issues**

The following sustainability issues have been identified:

- Ensure that the Conservation Areas, heritage assets and features are preserved or enhanced;
- New developments should respect the historic context and leave a positive architectural legacy;
- Ensure development respects the character and context of Conservation Areas or Listed buildings (and their settings) and enhances the quality of the built environment;
- Heritage assets should be managed to sustain their significance;
- Ensure that everyone is able to participate in understanding and sustaining their local historic environment; and
- There is significant potential for archaeological artefacts and features throughout North West Leicestershire. New development presents the potential for archaeological features to be discovered, but at the same time could have adverse effects if such features were damaged or lost.

### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

Continual growth in the District and the increasing demand for housing, may well mean development could encroach on Conservation Areas and could negatively affect heritage assets. The growth in events such as 'Hello Heritage' will help to boost local knowledge and pride in where they live.

### **Data Gaps**

No data gaps have been identified.

## 5.11 Water

### Key Sustainability Issues

The following sustainability issues were identified:

- Protect the River Mease SAC as well as other waterbodies and groundwater supplies from any further deterioration in water quality;
- There is a need to consider the effect of development on groundwater supplies both now and in the future;
- New development should incorporate measures to ensure that water is used efficiently, to help reduce the water demand of the District;
- As well as flood prevention, the use of SuDs within new developments could help to improve water quality; and
- Increasing population will put additional strain on already stressed water resources.

### Future Evolution of the Baseline

The increases in population will drive further water demand in the District and place increasing strain on water resources. Population growth is likely to put more pressure on wastewater treatment, and without further intervention, the water quality of the River Mease SAC. At present, most rivers in North West Leicestershire are not meeting the Water Framework Directive standards and without a plan in place this may not be achieved by 2027. The slow movement of water through the subsurface could mean that the effects of continued growth and development within the District, on groundwater supplies, may not become apparent until later in the future.

### Data Gaps

No data gaps have been identified.

## 5.12 Waste & Minerals

### Key Sustainability Issues

- The need to ensure waste management accords with the waste hierarchy and reduces the overall quantity of waste going to final disposal.
- Help North West Leicestershire improve recycling rates, with the aim of moving North West Leicestershire in the best performing quartile of local authorities.
- Plan development that recognises the need for the safeguarding mineral resources, including sand and gravel, igneous rock and brickclay.



### **Future Evolution of the Baseline**

With an increasing population within the District it is likely that the amount of waste produced will continue to rise. Offering more versatility with recycling, such as the introduction of food waste bins, could help to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. There is potential for conflicts between new developments and current mineral extraction sites, and a need to safeguard rare deposits such as the quality pottery, pipe and refractory clays.

### **Data Gaps**

No data gaps have been identified.

## 6 Alternative Options

This section provides details of the alternative options developed for the Local Plan Partial Review.

North West Leicestershire District Council has reviewed the existing wording for Policy S1 'Future housing and economic development needs' (see Box 6.1 below) and defined five alternative options for amending it as shown in Table 6.1. The full wording of these alternative policy options is provided in Section 6.1.

### Box 6.1: Existing Policy S1

#### **Policy S1 – Future housing and economic development needs**

Over the plan period to 2031 provision will be made to meet the housing and employment land needs of the district as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017).

This means that:

- provision will be made for the development of a minimum of 9,620 dwellings (481 dwellings per annum) which is the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement for the district;
- provision will be made for 66 hectares of land for employment purposes (B1, B2 and B8 of less than 9,000sq metres)

Provision will also be made for 7,300sq metres for shopping purposes.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to establish the scale and distribution of any additional provision that may be necessary in North West Leicestershire and elsewhere in the HMA as a result of the inability of one or more authority to accommodate its own needs as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.

The District Council will commence a review of this Local Plan (defined as being publication of an invitation to make representations in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) by the end of January 2018 or within 3 months of the adoption of this Local Plan (whichever is the later). The Plan Review will be submitted for examination within two years from the commencement of the review. In the event that the reviewed plan is not

**submitted within two years then this Local Plan will be deemed to be out of date.**

The following five alternatives are summarised in Table 6.1 below and described in detail thereafter.

<b>Table 6.1: Summary of Policy S1 Alternatives</b>	
<b>Alternative Policy Option Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Do nothing
2	Same policy wording as in adopted Local Plan except that the final paragraph of the policy relating to an early review of the plan is omitted.
3	The policy wording is the same as Option 2, in that it omits the paragraph relating to the early plan review. However, the policy then goes on to state: <i>“The submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work”.</i>
4	The policy wording is the same as alternative options 2 and 3, in that it omits the paragraph relating to the early plan review. However, the policy then goes on to state: <i>“This will be done through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work.”</i> .
5	The policy wording is the same as alternative options 2, 3 and 4, in that it omits the paragraph relating to the early plan review. However, the policy then goes on to state: <i>“This will be done through a SOCG and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will take place within 18 months of the date at which the SOCG is agreed by all of the authorities.”</i>

## 6.1 Policy Alternatives

### Alternative Option 1

Under this option the approach is to 'do nothing'. In this instance the North West Leicestershire District Council would not undertake a review of the Local Plan Policy S1 within the given timeframe and the Local Plan will be deemed to be out of date. Therefore, this approach is not considered to be a reasonable alternative by North West Leicestershire District Council and has not been considered further or been subjected to SA.

### Alternative Option 2

The full policy wording for this approach is shown in Box 6.3 below.

#### Box 6.3 Policy wording for Option 2

##### **Policy S1 – Future housing and economic development needs**

**Over the plan period to 2031 provision will be made to meet the housing and employment land needs of the district as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017).**

**This means that:**

- **provision will be made for the development of a minimum of 9,620 dwellings (481 dwellings per annum) which is the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement for the district;**
- **provision will be made for 66 hectares of land for employment purposes (B1, B2 and B8 of less than 9,000sq metres)**

**Provision will also be made for 7,300sq metres for shopping purposes.**

**The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to establish the scale and distribution of any additional provision that may be necessary in North West Leicestershire and elsewhere in the HMA as a result of the inability of one or more authority to accommodate its own needs as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.**

The deletion of wording showing a commitment to review the Local Plan gives a lack of certainty in terms of timeframe of when or if the Plan will be reviewed.



### Alternative Option 3

Under this approach, the policy wording remains the same as currently used in the adopted Local Plan except for the omission of last paragraph as per Option 2. However, the difference between this alternative and Option 2 is the addition of new wording to the end of the policy as follows:

**“The submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work.”**

This suggests there will be an update of the full Local Plan, although no agreed timeframe is given for a review and lack of clarity regarding how any agreement with other HMA authorities will be reached.

The full policy wording for this approach is shown in Box 6.4 below.

#### Box 6.4 Policy wording for Option 3

##### **Policy S1 – Future housing and economic development needs**

Over the plan period to 2031 provision will be made to meet the housing and employment land needs of the district as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017).

This means that:

- provision will be made for the development of a minimum of 9,620 dwellings (481 dwellings per annum) which is the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement for the district;
- provision will be made for 66 hectares of land for employment purposes (B1, B2 and B8 of less than 9,000sq metres)

Provision will also be made for 7,300sq metres for shopping purposes.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to establish the scale and distribution of any additional provision that may be necessary in North West Leicestershire and elsewhere in the HMA as a result of the inability of one or more authority to accommodate its own needs as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.

**The submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work.**



#### **Alternative Option 4**

Under this approach, the policy wording remains the same as currently used in the adopted Local Plan except for the omission of the last paragraph as per options 2 and 3. However, the difference with this alternative compared to the other alternative options is the addition of new wording to the end of the policy as follows:

*“This will be done through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work.”*

The full policy wording for this approach is shown in Box 6.5 below

The additional new wording shows that a review of the policy will take place and a mechanism is in place for how any agreement with other HMA authorities will be reached which considers the needs of other local authorities. Although the timeframe within which this will be done is not specified which results in uncertainty.

**Box 6.5 Policy wording for Option 4**

**Policy S1 – Future housing and economic development needs**

Over the plan period to 2031 provision will be made to meet the housing and employment land needs of the district as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017).

This means that:

- provision will be made for the development of a minimum of 9,620 dwellings (481 dwellings per annum) which is the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement for the district;
- provision will be made for 66 hectares of land for employment purposes (B1, B2 and B8 of less than 9,000sq metres)

Provision will also be made for 7,300sq metres for shopping purposes.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to establish the scale and distribution of any additional provision that may be necessary in North West Leicestershire and elsewhere in the HMA as a result of the inability of one or more authority to accommodate its own needs as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.

**This will be done through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will follow upon completion of this work.**

**Alternative Option 5 ('Preferred Approach')**

Under this approach, the policy wording remains the same as currently used in the adopted Local Plan except for the omission of last paragraph as per options 2, 3 and 4. However, the difference between this alternative and the other alternative options is the addition of new wording to the end of the policy as follows:

*"This will be done through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will take place within 18 months of the date at which the SOCG is agreed by all of the authorities."*

The full policy wording for this approach is shown in Box 6.6 below

Under this option a review of the policy will be undertaken within 18 months, which considers the needs of other local authorities. It also shows that there is a clear mechanism in place for how any agreement with other HMA authorities will be reached. This option has been identified by North West Leicestershire District Council as their 'preferred option' as it is considered to provide the most certainty.

**Box 6.6 Policy wording for Option 5**

**Policy S1 – Future housing and economic development needs**

Over the plan period to 2031 provision will be made to meet the housing and employment land needs of the district as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017).

This means that:

- provision will be made for the development of a minimum of 9,620 dwellings (481 dwellings per annum) which is the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) and Housing Requirement for the district;
- provision will be made for 66 hectares of land for employment purposes (B1, B2 and B8 of less than 9,000sq metres)

Provision will also be made for 7,300sq metres for shopping purposes.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to establish the scale and distribution of any additional provision that may be necessary in North West Leicestershire and elsewhere in the HMA as a result of the inability of one or more authority to accommodate its own needs as identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.

**This will be done through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and the submission of a replacement Local Plan will take place within 18 months of the date at which the SOCG is agreed by all of the authorities.**

## **7 Findings of the Assessment of Policy S1 and its alternative options**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This section presents the findings of the assessment of four alternative options (alternative options 2 to 5) for the Partial Review of the Local Plan. Policy Option 1 'do nothing' is deemed not to be a reasonable alternative and therefore does not require assessment.

The four alternatives assessed are described in Section 6. The detailed assessment of each alternative can be found in Appendix C.

The S1 policy alternative options 2 to 5 were assessed using the criteria set out in Section 2 of this report in tables 2.1 and 2.2.

### **7.2 Sustainability Effects of Alternatives**

For each alternative option (2 to 5), the bulk of the policy wording remains the same as the existing Policy S1. It is only the addition of new wording relating to the timeframe and commitment of delivering the partial review that differs. Consequently, the assessments of the alternative options show that the potential sustainability effects associated with each alternative are likely to be broadly similar.

Table 7.1 presents the potential effects of each of the alternative options (see Table 2.2 for key to symbols).

These are summarised below and presented in full in Appendix C.

#### **Alternative Options 2, 3 and 4**

Alternative Options 2, 3 and 4 are all predicted to result in the same effects, as can be seen in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Summary of Potential Sustainability Effects of Policy S1 Alternative Options**

	Significance Scores																
SA topic	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17
Option 2	0	0	?	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Option 3	0	0	?	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Option 4	0	0	?	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Option 5	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0

Potential significant positive effects have been identified for each option against SA4 (Provide good quality homes that meet local needs in terms of number, type and tenure in locations where it can deliver the greatest benefits and sustainable access to services and jobs), as the alternative options should all help to deliver housing in the district which meets the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN). Thus, a potential significant positive effect has been identified for SA4.

Other policies within the adopted Local Plan, such as Policy IF1 Development and Infrastructure, will ensure that the community infrastructure required to support new development is put in place through developer contributions. A sub-objective of SA3 (Help create the conditions for communities to thrive) relates to planning for the District in the context of the wider region. Policy alternative options 2, 3 and 4 do this to a certain degree but they contain differing commitments to how the collaboration will be undertaken, and no timeframes are provided for the submission of a replacement Local Plan. Therefore, an uncertain effect is identified for SA3 for policy alternative options 2, 3 and 4.

A minor positive effect has been identified for SA5 (support economic growth throughout the District) for each of the alternative options as Policy Ec2 allows for economic growth if a need or demand has been identified and a number of locational criteria have been met. This should help to guide employment development to well performing employment sectors.

A potential minor negative effect has been identified for each of the alternative options 2, 3 and 4 in relation to SA14 (ensure land is used efficiently and effectively), due to the high number of new dwellings required to be delivered. This could lead to the development of sites with densities which are not appropriate to the location and the local environment including loss of best quality agricultural land, soil resources and other natural capital assets. For this reason, a potential minor negative effect has been identified.

### Option 5 (Preferred Option)

Option 5 performs very similarly to alternative options 2, 3 and 4 but is more positive in relation to SA3 (Help create the conditions for communities to thrive). This is because the option should achieve the sub-objective of SA3 (relating to planning for the District in the context of the wider region) with positive effect through the inclusion of several commitments within the policy wording. The commitments are to establish a SOCG with neighbouring authorities and the submission of a replacement Local Plan within a set timeframe of 18 months of the date at which the SOCG is agreed. A minor positive effect is therefore identified in relation to SA3 for this option and these commitments address uncertainty identified within the assessments of the other policy alternative options.

With regards to SA4, the policy option includes a set timeframe and mechanism for collaboration with neighbouring authorities through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) which should also help to ensure that the consideration of the needs of the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) is carried out in a fair and amenable manner. A significant positive effect is identified in relation to SA4 as it also is for the other policy alternative options assessed.

## 7.3 Potential Cumulative Effects

Potential cumulative effects have been identified within the assessments of the alternative options. These are detailed within Table 7.2 which shows that the assessment of Option 5 identified an additional, potential cumulative effect resulting from that option compared with the other three alternative options assessed.

<b>Table 7.2: Potential Cumulative Effects of the Alternative Options</b>		
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Potential Cumulative Effects</b>	<b>Alternative Options Causing the Potential Effect</b>
SA3 Help create the conditions for communities to thrive.	A potential significant positive cumulative effect is identified in respect of helping to create the conditions for communities to thrive, particularly in the context of the wider region.	Option 5
SA4 Provide good quality homes that meet local needs in terms of number, type and tenure in locations where it can	A potential significant positive cumulative effect on housing provision which meets the needs of existing residents changing household size.	Alternative options 2, 3, 4 and 5

deliver the greatest benefits and sustainable access to services and jobs.		
SA5 Support economic growth throughout the District	A potential significant positive cumulative effect on economic growth in the District.	Alternative options 2, 3, 4 and 5
SA14: Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively	A potential significant negative cumulative effect on land use resulting in the loss of best quality agricultural land, soil resources and other natural capital resources through the development of the housing and employment uses identified within this policy option.	Alternative options 2, 3, 4 and 5

## 7.4 Mitigation / Enhancement Measures Proposed

Mitigation has been identified for significant negative effects or uncertain effects identified in the assessment tables in Appendix C for each of the alternative policy options.

One potential significant negative cumulative effect has been identified in relation to each of the alternative options 2 to 5 against SA14 (Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively). Uncertain effects have been identified in relation to alternative options 2 to 4 against SA3

Table 7.3: Mitigation	
SA objective	Mitigation Proposed
SA 3 (Help create the conditions for communities to thrive)	For each of the alternative options 2 to 4 the mitigation proposed is to ensure that each option includes a timeframe and mechanism for collaboration with neighbouring authorities, as well as a timeframe for submission of a replacement Local Plan, within the policy wording. The inclusion of these commitments would reduce uncertainty.
SA14 (Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively)	It would not be possible to mitigate the loss of best quality agricultural land and / or natural capital assets of the District. However, SA of potential development sites would help to identify the most sustainable sites for allocation within next iteration of the Local Plan (i.e. as part of the Substantive Review of the Local Plan).

No enhancement measures have been identified within the assessments of the alternative policy options.



## 7.5 Residual Effects of Preferred Policy S1

No mitigation has been recommended for the preferred option (alternative policy option 5) and therefore the residual effects of the Preferred S1 Policy are as follows:

Table 7.4: Summary of Potential Residual Sustainability Effects of Preferred Policy S1																	
	Significance Scores																
SA topic	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17
Preferred Policy S1 (Option 5)	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0

## **8 Proposed Monitoring Framework**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The SEA Regulations require monitoring of the significant environmental effects of a plan. SA monitoring should cover the significant economic and social effects, as well as the environmental ones.

There is no requirement for any additional monitoring as a result of this SA of the Local Plan Partial Review. The adopted Local Plan already has monitoring in place to cover the Policy S1 implementation. The monitoring schedule established through the SA of the adopted Local Plan can be found within the SA and SEA Statement October 2017, accessible here:

[https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local\\_plan](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local_plan)

## 9 Next Steps

Following consultation on the Publication version of the Local Plan Partial Review, comments received on the Partial Review and the SA Report will be considered. Any necessary changes will be made to the SA Report in response to consultee comments. Changes may be made to the proposed Policy S1 and these will be reviewed by the SA consultants and the assessment and SA Report updated as necessary.

Table 9.1 sets out the proposed timetable for the Local Plan Partial Review up until submission.

<b>Table 9.1: Local Plan Partial Review Timetable</b>	
<b>Local Plan Activity</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Consultation on Publication Local Plan Partial Review (Regulation 19)	7 October – 18 November 2019
Consultation comments considered	January 2020
Submission of Local Plan Partial Review	February 2020

Work on the Substantive Review of the Local Plan will continue in parallel to the Partial Review.