



North West Leicestershire District Council

Local Plan Partial Review:

Sustainability Appraisal

Adoption Statement



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1 Introduction

The Partial Review of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The 'Partial Review' relates solely to the amendment of Policy S1 and some of the supporting text of the adopted Local Plan.

The Council submitted the Partial Review to the Planning Inspectorate on the 18th February 2020. A wider more 'Substantive Review' of the Local Plan which addresses the longer term need of the district is being carried out in parallel to the Partial Review work.

This document is the SA Adoption Statement for the Partial Review of the Local Plan following adoption by the Council on the 16th March 2021 after public consultation on the proposed modifications to Policy S1 (Future Housing and Economic Development Needs) and the accompanying SA report.

An SA Adoption Statement is required as part of the process for adopting a Local Plan. The local planning authority has to make publicly available a copy of the plan and an SA Adoption Statement, in line with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and in accordance with the SEA Regulations (Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 16(3) and (4)). The SEA Regulations require the statement to contain the following:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme (see Section 2 of this document);
- how the environmental report has been taken into account (see Section 2 of this document);
- how opinions were expressed in response to:
 - the invitation in Regulation 13(2)(d); and
 - action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with Regulation 13(4); have been taken into account (see Section 3 of this document);
- How the results of any consultations entered into under Regulation 14(4) have been taken into account (see Section 3 of this document);
- the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (see Section 4 of this document); and



- the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme (see Section 5 of this document).

2 How sustainability & environmental considerations & the SA Report have been integrated into the Local Plan

2.1 Scoping

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) (2017¹) and also the SA Scoping Report for the Local Plan (2014²). It culminated in the presentation of a framework of SA objectives against which the Local Plan Partial Review and its reasonable alternatives will be tested. The SA framework is presented in Table 2.1.

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 the Scoping Report.

In updating the SA framework, the 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.

All of the alternative options were assessed against the updated SA Framework.

¹ 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

² North West Leicestershire Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014



The Scoping Report was consulted on with the statutory consultees for a period of 6 weeks between 20th November 2019 and 8th January 2020. Comments reviewed on the Scoping Report were recorded in a 'recommendations tracker' and used to update the Scoping Report.

Table 2.1: SA Framework

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

Table 2.1: SA Framework

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

Table 2.1: SA Framework

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce congestion in locations where it impacts on road safety, local amenity, causes severance, or adversely impacts on the economy. • 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.
Air, Noise & Light Pollution	SA9 Reduce air, light and noise pollution to avoid damage to natural systems and protect human health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Avoid exacerbating light pollution by keeping external lighting to the minimum required for safety and security.
Climate Change	SA10 Reduce carbon emissions throughout the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support proposals for decentralised (i.e. small and micro renewables) and low carbon energy generation. • Support large scale low carbon grid schemes where appropriately located. • All new development should be built to high energy efficiency standards.
	SA11 Ensure the District is resilient to the impacts of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the sequential test in Planning Practice Guidance in the allocation of sites in flood risk areas. • Ensure new development does not exacerbate the risk of flood off-site, for instance through use of sustainable drainage. • 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. • Ensure new development contributes to Green Infrastructure within the District, where possible.

Table 2.1: SA Framework

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	SA12 Protect and enhance the District's biodiversity and protect areas identified for their nature conservation and geological importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that development results in a net gain in biodiversity and contribute to the achievement of BAP targets. • Protect sites designated for their nature conservation importance from adverse impacts of development, including the river Mease SAC. • Enhance access to the natural environment, including integrating greater biodiversity into urban areas. • Reduce habitat fragmentation and extend ecological corridors • Protect geological designations from adverse impacts of development. • Ensure that all water courses are achieving at least 'Good' ecological status
Landscape, Townscape & Land	SA13 Conserve and enhance the quality of the District's landscape and townscape character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the character and distinctiveness of the District's landscape. • Help implement objectives for the National Forest and the Charnwood Forest Regional Park. • Enhance townscape character, particularly in Coalville Town Centre. • Enhance the transition for urban to rural at the edge of towns and villages. • Enhance the relationship between new and existing communities • Built design should help in creating vibrant places, making those approaching on foot a priority. • Help deliver built environment improvements though high quality design.

Table 2.1: SA Framework

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
	<p>SA14 Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development on previously developed land. • Whenever possible protect the best quality agricultural land. • Encourage development at densities which are appropriate to the location and the local environment. • 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. • Protect soil quality and avoid soil pollution. • Avoid the loss of and enhance the natural capital assets of the District.
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>SA15 Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the District’s built and historic heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and conserve buildings and structures of recognised historic or architectural interest, and their settings. • Maintain and increase access to cultural heritage assets. • Protect and enhance the local historic environment and ensure new development respects the character of the historic environment. • Respect archaeological remains and protect or record according to guidance.
<p>Water</p>	<p>SA16 Protect water resources and ensure they are used efficiently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure developments are designed to a high level of water efficiency. • Ensure surface and groundwater water resources are protected from pollution.

Table 2.1: SA Framework

SA Topic	SA Framework	
	Objectives	Sub-objectives
Waste & Minerals	SA17 Ensure the efficient use of natural resources, including reducing waste generation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new development incorporates space for waste sorting and storage to aid recycling. • Encourage sustainable construction making use of recycled and recyclable building materials. • Ensure the re-use of demolition waste. • Ensure minerals deposits and sites allocated for waste management are not sterilised through inappropriately located development.

2.2 Appraisal

North West Leicestershire District Council reviewed the existing wording for Policy S1 'Future housing and economic development needs' (see Box 2.1 below) and defined five alternative options for amending it as shown in Table 2.2.

These options have been appraised against the SA framework. Potential effects have been identified against each SA Objective using the notation set out in Table 2.3.

Following Examination, the main modifications proposed to the pre-submission Policy S1 have also been assessed against the SA framework as the final policy wording and this further option appraised is referred to as the 'Final Policy S1' option (MM8) (see Table 2.2 below).

Box 2.1: 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.

Table 2.2: Summary of Policy S1 Alternatives	
Alternative Policy Option Number	Description
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>
Final Policy S1 (MM8)	The policy wording is broadly the same as alternative options 2, 3, 4 and 5. However, it differs in that the policy goes on to state clearly that: “A replacement Local Plan (the Substantive Review) will be submitted for Examination within 18 months of the date of whichever is the sooner of either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SOCG being agreed by the HMA/FEMA authorities; or • 21 May 2021.

Table 2.3: Significance	
Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives
++	Policy or option supports the achievement of this objective and all of the decision making criteria and could result in a potentially significant beneficial effect e.g. improved access by walking and cycling modes to a local or town centre
+	Policy or option supports the achievement of this objective although it may have only a minor beneficial effect
0	Policy or option has no impact or effect and is neutral insofar as the benefits and drawbacks appear equal and neither is considered significant
?	Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine the appraisal at this stage
-	Policy or option appears to conflict with the achievement of this objective and may result in minor adverse effects
--	Policy or option works against the achievement of this objective and may result in a potentially significant adverse effect e.g. loss of all or part of a designated ecological site of national importance.

3 Consultation

3.1 Introduction

Consultation, including with the public and environmental authorities, has provided an opportunity to comment on the SA at key stages throughout the plan's development.

3.2 Scoping

The Scoping Report was consulted on with the statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) for a 6-week consultation period between 20th November 2019 and 8th January 2020.

Other interested parties were also invited to comment on the report via notification of those on the Council's Local Plan consultation database and the document was made available on the Council's website.

Following the consultation period, the comments received on the Scoping Report were reviewed and changes and updates were made to the Scoping Report in response to the comments.

Actions taken in response to the consultation comments have included:

- Additional figures were added to show European sites, SSSIs and local wildlife sites and nature reserves;
- Data gap added that habitat mapping was not available at the time of writing the report;
- Revision of information in Appendix A (Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes) with revised data and suggested document titles supplied by consultees; and
- Revision of the SA framework to include all water resources achieving at least 'good' ecological status.

The log of comments which resulted in changes to the SA are presented within Appendix A of this document.

3.3 SA Reports

A previous version of the SA Report (September 2019) presented findings of the Pre-Submission Local Plan Partial Review and was consulted on alongside the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Partial Review– Draft Plan during 20th November 2019 and 8th January 2020.



Following this consultation and consideration of the comments made, the Council decided to submit the Local Plan Partial Review and supporting SA Report for examination to the Planning Inspectorate on 18th February 2020.

In response to the examination hearings, the Council proposed Modifications to the submitted Partial Review Plan in relation to Policy S1 and a further iteration of the SA Report was consulted on during the period 30th November 2020 and the 10th January 2021.

The public, other stakeholders and the statutory consultees were invited to comment on the SA Reports. No comments were received on the SA Reports.

4 The reasons for choosing the Local Plan as adopted

4.1 Introduction

North West Leicestershire District Council reviewed Policy S1 and defined five alternative options for amending the policy wording of Policy S1 as detailed in Section 2.2 of this statement .

4.2 Choice of Local Plan Policy S1

The rationale for identifying the final wording of Policy S1 as seen in the final Policy S1 (MM8) option of the Local Plan Partial Review has been informed by a range of relevant factors, including the SA, the recommendations from the Partial Review Examination and subsequent modifications to the policy wording following the Examination. The Main Modifications from the Examination provided greater clarity to the existing wording of Policy S1 of how the unmet need will be addressed through a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) and how a timetable for submission of the substantive review will be provided.

For each alternative option (2 to 5), the bulk of the policy wording remained the same as the existing Policy S1. It was 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 showed that the potential sustainability effects associated with each alternative are likely to be broadly similar.

The SA of the Policy S1 options assessed concluded that for the final Policy S1 (MM8), the bulk of the policy wording remains the same as the existing options for Policy S1 (Options 2-5). It is only the addition of new wording relating to a specific timeframe for submission of the substantive review and clarity of how the issue of unmet need in Leicester City will be addressed that differs. Alternative Options 2, 3 and 4 were all predicted to result in the same effects, as can be seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of Potential Sustainability Effects of Policy S1 Alternative Options

SA topic	Significance Scores																
	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
MM8 (Final Policy S1)	0	0	++	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0

Potential significant positive effects were 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).

Other policies within the adopted Local Plan, such as Policy IF1 Development and Infrastructure, would 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 did 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 was identified for SA3 for policy alternative options 2, 3 and 4. In contrast, a minor positive effect was identified for SA3 for Option 5 due to the inclusion of the commitment to establishing a SOCG with neighbouring authorities and the submission of a replacement Local Plan within 18 months of the date at which the SOCG is agreed by all of the authorities.

A minor positive effect was 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 would help to guide employment development to well performing employment sectors.



A potential minor negative effect was 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.

Overall, the assessment of the final Policy S1 (MM8) wording identifies that the majority of the potential sustainability effects are the same as for the alternative options (Options 2-5) except for SA3 where a potential significant positive effect has been identified. The modification will help to support the delivery and commitment to meeting housing need in the District and is why it is the 'preferred' option.



5 The Monitoring Framework

The SEA Regulations requires monitoring of the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan. SA monitoring will 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